

GCSE Geography: The Living World

Key Ideas of this module

Ecosystems exist at a range of scales and involve the interaction between biotic and abiotic components.

- Small-scale UK ecosystem, to illustrate inter-relationships within a natural system, producers, consumers, decomposers, food chain, food web and nutrient cycle
- The balance between components. The impact on the ecosystem of changing one component
- Overview of the distribution and characteristics of large scale, natural, global ecosystems

Tropical rainforest ecosystems have a range of distinctive characteristics.

- The physical characteristics
- The interdependence of climate, water, soils, plants, animals and people
- How plants and animals adapt to the physical environment
- Issues related to biodiversity

Deforestation has economic and environmental impacts.

- **Causes** of deforestation – subsistence and commercial farming, logging, road building, mineral extraction, energy development, settlement, population growth
- **Impacts** of deforestation - economic development, soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, contribution to climate change

Tropical rainforests need to be managed to be sustainable.

- Value of tropical rainforests to people and the environment.
- Strategies used to manage the rainforest sustainably: Selective logging and replanting, Conservation and education, Ecotourism and international agreements about the use of tropical hardwoods, Debt reduction

Cold environments (polar and tundra) have a range of distinctive characteristics.

- The physical characteristics
- The interdependence of climate, permafrost, soils, plants, animals and people
- How animals adapt to the physical conditions
- Issues related to biodiversity

Development of cold environments creates opportunities and challenges.

A case study of a cold environment to illustrate:

- **Development opportunities** in cold environments: mineral extraction, energy, fishing and tourism
- **Challenges** of developing cold environments: extreme temperature, inaccessibility, provision of buildings and infrastructure.

Cold environments are at risk from economic development.

- The value of cold environments as wilderness areas and why these fragile environments should be protected.
- Strategies used to balance the needs of economic development and conservation in cold environments: Use of technology, Role of governments, International agreements, Conservation groups

Read

- Rainforest: Dispatches from Earth's most vital frontlines, Tony Juniper
- Brazil, Michael Palin

Watch

- Anything David Attenborough has done! Planet Earth, Blue Planet, Seven Worlds one Planet, Frozen Planet, Life,
- Simon Reeves BBC documentaries

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