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Amazon "flips" to be source of CO2 emissions – 17th July, 2021

Level 4

Scientists have revealed that parts of the Amazon emit more carbon dioxide than they absorb. The rainforest is producing over a billion tons of CO2 a year. It used to be a carbon "sink" where CO2 disappeared. It is becoming a source of carbon dioxide. Reasons for this flipping from sink to source are deforestation and forest fires. Researchers predict the rainforest will create CO2 at an accelerating rate in the future. It was once called "the lungs of the world".

Researchers analysed 600 profiles of CO2 emissions produced by fires in the Amazon between 2010 and 2018. The fires produced about 1.5 billion tons of CO2 a year, while the forest removed 0.5 billion tons. The billion-ton difference is the same as the annual emissions of Japan - the world's fifth-largest polluter. A researcher said: "The south-east Amazon sink-to-source story is yet another stark warning that climate impacts are accelerating."

Level 5

Environmental scientists have shocking news that parts of the Amazon are emitting more carbon dioxide than they are absorbing. The rainforest is now producing over a billion tons of CO2 a year. The Amazon used to be a carbon "sink" where CO2 was sucked up and converted into oxygen. It has now become a source of carbon dioxide. The biggest reasons for this flipping from sink to source are logging, deforestation and forest fires. The Amazon is losing its nickname of being the lungs of the world. Researchers predict the rainforest will create CO2 at an accelerating rate in the future.

The research on CO2 emissions is published in the journal "Nature". Researchers analysed 600 profiles of CO2 emissions produced by fires at sites in Brazil's Amazon between 2010 and 2018. They found the fires produced about 1.5 billion tons of CO2 a year, while forest growth removed just 0.5 billion tons. The difference of one billion tons is equivalent to the annual emissions of Japan - the world's fifth-largest polluter. Researcher Professor Simon Lewis said: "The south-east Amazon sink-to-source story is yet another stark warning that climate impacts are accelerating."

Level 6

Environmental scientists have revealed shocking news that parts of the Amazon rainforest are emitting more carbon dioxide than they are absorbing. The scientists said the forest is now producing over a billion tons of CO2 a year. They say the Amazon used to be a carbon "sink". This is where CO2 was sucked up and converted into oxygen. However, it has now become a source of carbon dioxide. The forest is at risk of losing its moniker of being the lungs of the world. Researchers are predicting the rainforest will create more CO2 at an accelerating rate in the future. The biggest culprits for the Amazon's flipping from sink to source are logging, deforestation and a growing number of forest fires. The research on the Amazon's CO2 emissions has been published in the journal "Nature". Researchers analysed 600 profiles of CO2 and carbon monoxide emissions produced by fires at various sites in Brazil's Amazon between 2010 and 2018. They found that the fires produced about 1.5 billion tons of CO2 a year, while forest growth removed just 0.5 billion tons. The researchers said the difference of one billion tons left in the atmosphere is equivalent to the annual emissions of Japan, which is the world's fifth-largest polluter. Professor Simon Lewis, from University College London, said: "The south-east Amazon sink-to-source story is yet another stark warning that climate impacts are accelerating."