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Colombia, Deforestation

Deforestation of the Amazon in Colombia

The Amazon Rainforest is not only the biggest rainforest in the world, but also one of, if not the most important places in the world for resources. This jungle is home to many different species and covers a large majority of South America, including more than 50% of Colombia. Even with its importance, however, the forest is being chopped down at alarming rates, thus leading to mass deforestation. This is a major problem because the Amazon is home to so many living creatures and people so it is very important for their survival. Many different things in Colombia have been done to try and slow down or stop deforestation, but trends have been showing that it isn't helping as much as it needs to. An idea that seems so simple but yet so difficult to properly conduct, is the idea of replanting all the lost trees instead of just saying sayonara. I believe that with enough effort and cooperation, this plan could be done successfully and help out a ton with this problem.

Colombia is a developing country in northwest South America that has a population of around 51.5 million people. It is in a very tropical climate with it being on the equator and in a big part of the Amazon. It also has a quite mountainous expanse which is usually where most farming occurs. Over 40% of the land is cultivated which helps to feed the population, of which the mass majority is in urban areas. The most commonly farmed things in Colombia are bananas and coffee beans with Colombia ranking among 5 countries to be the highest exporter of Coffee beans. The common family usually consists of three people with an average income of 4,690,000 COP (1,060.43 USD). Agriculture itself counts for around 14% of the total GDP of the country.

Some problems that often conflict Colombia are major drug abuse with it being the highest cocaine producer in the world. Because of all these grown drugs, illegal farms and businesses will illegally destroy forest land in order to make room for the cocaine planting. This is also seen with lumber industries that illegally deforest areas for more product. There are laws in place made to prevent these scenarios, but judging by the trends of deforestation in the Amazon in Colombia, it isn't helping as much as is needed. The main challenges then fall into the hands of what these companies decide to do. If they illegally cut down forest land, then there is not much that can be done. This is where a solution to deforestation comes into mind: try to promote businesses that follow forest safety and even help fight back against deforestation. Some businesses have deals where if you buy from them or promote them, they will replant trees in result. Some lumber industries also only harvest a certain area of trees that are then replanted so they only use that certain spot. These industries help alleviate a lot of the pressure built up by the many other companies leading to deforestation. If these safe industries are better promoted and more people buy their products rather than the other one, they would do much better which would help promote what they are doing while also blocking money from the businesses doing it illegally. A major problem with this solution, however, is that it needs many other people to be

with it; they all need to come together and likely spend even more money just to prevent deforestation. With this in mind, there are still ways to make these safe businesses even more helpful.

Even if safer businesses were promoted, it wouldn't stop the cocaine farms or even all of the illegal businesses. One option to prevent deforestation that is talked about quite often is the idea of replanting trees that are lost. This sounds simple at first, but in reality, it is quite difficult and there are many barriers that get in the way. First off, the process of planting includes a lot of materials and work, for example the bags of fertilizer used to help them grow, or covering the ground to lock in moisture and prevent weed growth. To replant these trees in a quick and timeless manner, heavy equipment is often used which often means burning fossil fuels. Both of these problems don't exactly lead to deforestation, but they do worsen one of the problems that also is caused by deforestation. Another problem regarding this method of replanting trees is that land that ends up reforested, will often not be maintained afterward, which means that someone else can come in and take this land and just deforest it again. If the solution to deforestation is replanting, then all these problems must be kept in mind, so what can be done about it? Well one answer is simple, but not so easy: public cooperation.

A cooperation organization or company of individuals that replant the trees they cut down for lumber, could also be used to promote an organization for reforestation efforts. The plan would be to have as many people as possible help to plant trees without the use of burning fossil fuels. Any plastic that is used for planting and/or protection will be recycled. Lastly, the land that is replanted will need to be monitored and constantly watched as too avoid more illegal deforestation. What this would need is a good amount of support from many people and government to allow clean and good work done to save the forest. I believe this could be done as there are many people in the world who are willing to start things cooperations like this, with the Youtuber known as "Mr. Beast" being one example. He is known for his huge and generous donations to society and one of his biggest ones was the "Teamtrees" campaign. It was launched to help plant over 20 million trees and it proved very successful. This shows that even someone as mainstream as a popular youtuber who is primarily watched by kids can raise awareness and get help to something as big as replanting over 20 million trees proving it is very possible for this generation to do such a thing.

All of this together will allow for a business that cuts lumber in an eco friendly way to be a part of a group of people to use very environmentally friendly methods to replant trees. While this alone will not fully stop deforestation, it would certainly help. The major concern here is who would be on board with allowing it to happen. To gain the popularity needed to reach this, the organization would need to advertise the good they are doing as much as possible, which may prove to be somewhat costly. Some of these methods would involve going onto territory that is protected or owned by other people, and if they do not want people their, then these reforestation efforts are not possible. With enough community and government support, however, these barriers would be minimized.

Other countries could also play a huge role in offering the help that Colombia needs to get the trees needed to plant. China, U.S, and Russia are some allies with Colombia that could aid in the support of reforestation by shipping over trees to the country to help with the process. This could prove beneficial in multiple ways to as it could strengthen the bond between Colombia and whichever country decides it will do the shipments with. The US is already known to make shipments quite often with Colombia and does already ship a sizable amount of live trees. If this number were to be increased, there would need to be more given in exchange which Colombia could up its shipments of tree-related products to make a cycle. The US gives trees to Colombia which are planted in safe and reliable environments. These trees can help produce products like coffee beans that Colombia can then exchange more of for more trees. They could even export more resources like food to make more farm fields less necessary, This solution could easily be expanded upon, but I believe if done correctly, it could be a great cycle to maintain the reforestation efforts whilst also benefiting the economy of multiple countries. While the idea of exporting is one of the more common one, another common way to continue reforestation comes in the form of Authority.

Laws could also be put into to place that are able to prevent deforestation. This is something that many other countries have started doing, including the U.S. The reforestation act was created to protect many trees across the United States that were in danger of being lost. It's main purpose is to remove the \$30 million funding cap on the Reforestation Trust Fund allowing more money to be taken by the tariffs on wood. It is predicted that it would quadruple the amount of money made to pay for replanting after a devastating event in which deforestation occurs. This is an example of how any setbacks like a fund cap can prove to only hurt process of reforestation and that acts can be passed to fix it.

In conclusion, a solution for deforestation is as simple as replanting the trees, but as complex as how to raise money and awareness to this project to stop money and low support from hindering the reforestation. One plan's main goal is to be supported enough to get as much attention and support as possible because the more who support it, the bigger impact this will have. Other countries with bigger economies could help by exporting trees and crops allowing for a simpler and easier resource availability to give more room for the roforestation. Government intervention would be needed for something like this as it would need to be heard about and laws and resource management would play a big factor in how it turns out. This may sound bad to some but if enough people advocate for it and enough voices are heard, they will act. In the world, there are all sorts of people that would be willing to help out and chime to make this something meaningful.

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