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Half the Amazon Rainforest to be Lost by 2030

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 by: David Gutierrez | Key concepts: [rainforest](#), [Amazon rainforest](#) and [deforestation](#)

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(NaturalNews) Due to the effects of global warming and deforestation, more than half of the Amazon rainforest may be destroyed or severely damaged by the year 2030, according to a report released by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The report, "Amazon's Vicious Cycles: Drought and Fire," concludes that 55 percent of the world's largest rainforest stands to be severely damaged from agriculture, drought, fire, logging and livestock ranching in the next 22 years. Another 4 percent may be damaged by reduced rainfall caused by [global warming](#). This is anticipated to destroy up to 80 percent of wildlife habitat in the region.

By 2100, the report adds, global warming may cause [rainfall](#) in the Amazon to drop by 20 percent and temperatures to increase by 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit). This combination will increase the occurrence of forest fires, further accelerating the pace of [deforestation](#).

The Amazon contains more than half of the planet's surviving [rainforest](#) and is a key stabilizer of global climate. The report notes that losing 60 percent of it would accelerate the pace of global warming, affecting rainfall as far away as India.

WWF warned that the "point of no return" for the Amazon rainforest, from which ecological recovery will be impossible, is only 15-25 years in the future, much sooner than has previously been supposed.

"The Amazon is on a knife-edge," said WWF-UK [forests](#) head Beatrix Richards, "due to the dual threats of deforestation and [climate change](#)."

She called for the countries discussing global climate change at an international conference in Bali to take the importance of forests into account.

"At the international negotiations currently underway in Bali, governments must agree a process which results in ambitious global emission reduction targets beyond the current phase of Kyoto," she said. "Crucially, this must include a strategy to reduce emissions from forests and help break the cycle of deforestation."

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