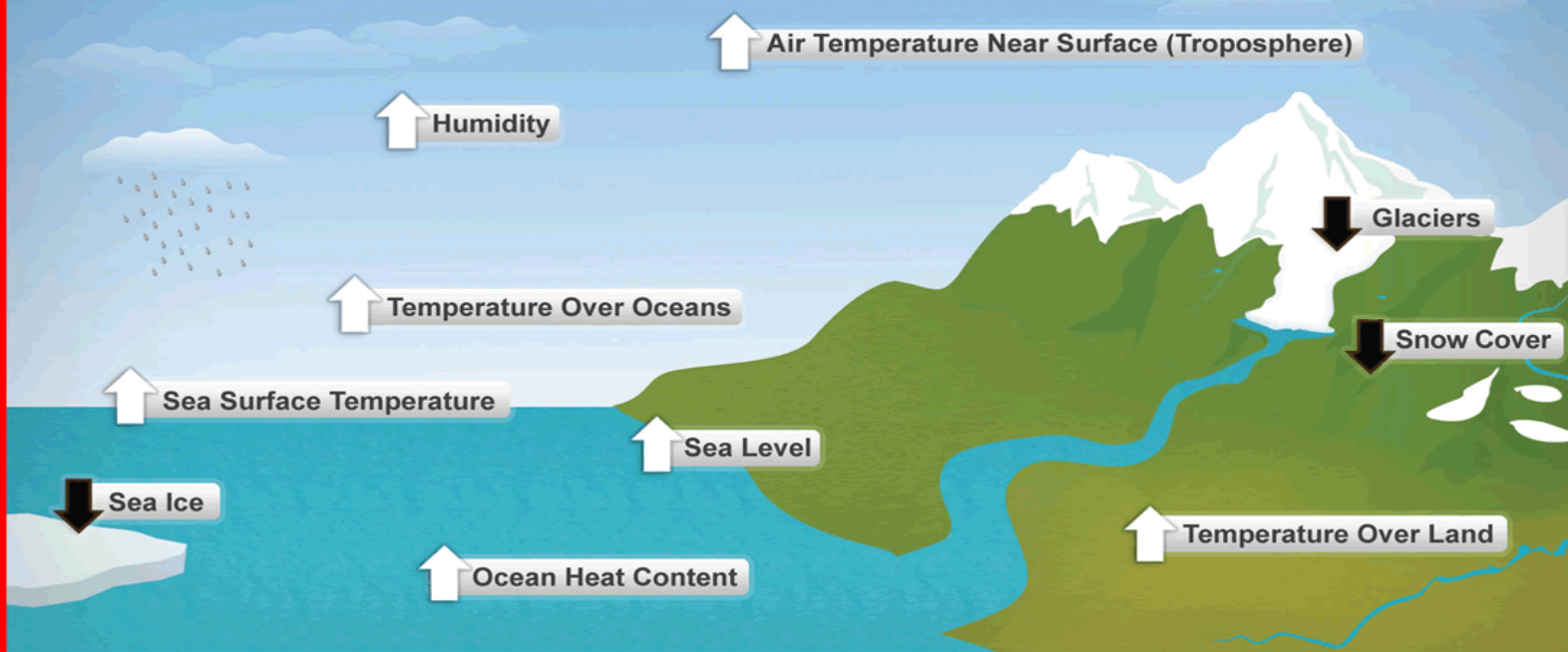


American Journal of Climatic Studies (AJCS)

Ten Indicators of a Warming World



Effects of Deforestation on Regional Climate Patterns in the Amazon Basin

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Article history

Submitted 16.05.2024 Revised Version Received 25.06.2024 Accepted 27.07.2024

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the effects of deforestation on regional climate patterns in the amazon basin.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The removal of vast tracts of forest alters local weather conditions significantly. One of the primary impacts is the reduction in precipitation. Trees in the Amazon play a crucial role in the water cycle through a process known as transpiration, where they release moisture into the atmosphere, contributing to cloud formation and rainfall. When these trees are cut down, this moisture source is drastically diminished, leading to decreased rainfall and prolonged dry seasons. Additionally, deforestation increases surface temperatures. Forests provide a cooling effect through the process of evapotranspiration and by shading the ground. Without this natural cooling mechanism, deforested areas experience higher temperatures, which can

exacerbate heatwaves and alter temperature gradients. Furthermore, the change in land cover affects wind patterns. The rough surface of the forest canopy slows down wind speeds, but when the forest is replaced by pastures or agricultural fields, the smoother surface accelerates wind, potentially altering storm tracks and weather systems. Overall, deforestation in the Amazon disrupts the delicate balance of the region's climate, leading to reduced rainfall, increased temperatures, and modified wind patterns, which can have cascading effects on both the local ecosystem and human populations.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Biogeophysical theory of deforestation, hydrological cycle disruption theory and atmospheric circulation and feedbacks theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the effects of deforestation on regional climate patterns in the amazon basin. In practice, promoting sustainable land use practices is paramount to mitigating deforestation's impacts on regional climate patterns. Effective policies are essential for addressing deforestation and its climate impacts at regional and global scales.

Keywords: *Deforestation, Regional, Climate Patterns, Amazon Basin*

INTRODUCTION

Deforestation in the Amazon Basin, one of the planet's most critical ecological regions, has far-reaching effects on regional climate patterns. In the USA, climate patterns vary significantly across regions. For instance, recent data indicates that the western states, such as California, have experienced a notable increase in average temperatures over the past decade, contributing to more frequent and severe droughts (Smith, 2021). Conversely, the northeastern states, including New York, have observed a slight decrease in average temperatures, but with an increase in extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall and snowstorms (Jones, 2019). These trends highlight the complex regional variations within the USA's climate system, influenced by factors like oceanic currents and global warming impacts.

In Japan, regional climate patterns show distinct trends as well. Coastal areas, like Tokyo, have seen rising average temperatures coupled with increased precipitation, impacting urban infrastructure and agriculture (Tanaka, 2020). Meanwhile, northern regions such as Hokkaido have experienced milder winters and earlier spring seasons, affecting traditional snow-dependent activities and local ecosystems (Yamamoto, 2018). These climate shifts underscore Japan's vulnerability to changing environmental conditions and the need for adaptive strategies in urban planning and agriculture.

In Brazil, regional climate variations are significant due to its vast size and diverse geography. The Amazon region has experienced higher average temperatures and more frequent droughts in recent years, impacting biodiversity and indigenous communities (Silva, 2020). Conversely, coastal cities like Rio de Janeiro have seen increased rainfall intensity, leading to urban flooding and infrastructure challenges (Santos, 2019). These contrasting climate patterns highlight Brazil's vulnerability to climate change and the need for sustainable land use practices and conservation efforts.

In India, climate trends vary across different states and regions. Northern India, including New Delhi, has observed rising temperatures and prolonged heatwaves, affecting public health and agricultural productivity (Kumar, 2021). Meanwhile, southern states like Kerala have faced erratic monsoon patterns, alternating between intense rainfall and drought conditions, impacting water management and agricultural cycles (Raj, 2018). These climate shifts underscore the complexities of climate adaptation in a densely populated and geographically diverse country like India.

In Indonesia, climate patterns vary across its vast archipelago. Regions like Jakarta have faced urban heat island effects exacerbated by rapid urbanization and reduced green spaces (Setiawan, 2023). Coastal areas such as Semarang have experienced sea-level rise and increased frequency of flooding, affecting infrastructure and livelihoods (Wibowo, 2020). These climate trends underscore Indonesia's vulnerability to climate change impacts and the importance of sustainable urban planning and disaster risk reduction measures.

Vietnam exhibits diverse climate patterns influenced by its long coastline and mountainous terrain. Cities like Ho Chi Minh City face challenges from sea-level rise and increased storm intensity, impacting urban infrastructure and coastal communities (Nguyen, 2019). Northern regions such as Hanoi experience variability in monsoon patterns, affecting agricultural production and water management (Tran, 2021). These climate dynamics highlight Vietnam's vulnerability to climate risks and the need for integrated adaptation strategies across different sectors.

In developing economies like Kenya, there has been a noticeable trend towards warmer temperatures and irregular rainfall patterns. Areas like Nairobi have seen a gradual increase in average temperatures, leading to prolonged dry seasons and water scarcity issues (Ochieng, 2019). Conversely, coastal regions such as Mombasa have experienced more intense rainfall events, contributing to flooding and infrastructure challenges (Mutua, 2022). These climate changes pose significant challenges to agriculture, water resource management, and public health in Kenya, necessitating robust adaptation measures.

In Nigeria, climate variability is evident across its diverse landscapes. Northern regions like Kano have experienced rising temperatures and prolonged dry seasons, impacting agriculture and water availability (Adams, 2019). Coastal areas such as Lagos have seen increased occurrences of extreme weather events like heavy rainfall and flooding, affecting urban infrastructure and public health (Ogunleye, 2020). These climate trends underscore the need for integrated water resource management and resilient infrastructure development in Nigeria.

Climate patterns in Ghana show regional variations. The northern regions, such as Tamale, experience hotter temperatures and periodic droughts, impacting agricultural productivity and water resources (Adu, 2021). Coastal areas like Accra have seen increased occurrences of coastal erosion and inundation due to rising sea levels and extreme weather events (Boateng, 2018). These challenges highlight the vulnerability of Ghana to climate change impacts and the need for adaptive strategies in coastal zone management and agriculture.

In South Africa, climate patterns vary significantly between its coastal and inland regions. Cities like Cape Town have faced water scarcity challenges exacerbated by prolonged droughts, prompting innovative water conservation measures (Smith, 2022). In contrast, inland areas such as Johannesburg have witnessed more frequent heatwaves and variability in rainfall patterns, impacting energy demand and agricultural practices (Van der Merwe, 2021). These climate dynamics highlight South Africa's vulnerability to climate risks and the importance of adaptive strategies in urban planning and resource management.

In sub-Saharan economies such as Zambia, climate patterns exhibit similar trends with variations across regions. Cities like Lusaka have recorded higher temperatures year-round, affecting agricultural productivity and urban living conditions (Mwape, 2021). Meanwhile, southern regions like Livingstone have faced erratic rainfall patterns, impacting tourism and local livelihoods dependent on natural resources (Ngoma, 2020). These climate shifts underscore the region's vulnerability to climate change impacts and the urgent need for sustainable development practices and international cooperation.

Moving to sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia experiences diverse climate patterns influenced by its highland and lowland regions. Addis Ababa, located in the Ethiopian highlands, has seen variations in rainfall patterns with some years of below-average precipitation, impacting agriculture and water resources (Abate, 2020). In contrast, lowland regions such as the Afar region have faced increasing temperatures and prolonged dry spells, exacerbating food insecurity and pastoral livelihoods (Berhanu, 2017). These climate challenges necessitate targeted adaptation strategies tailored to Ethiopia's geographic and socio-economic contexts.

Rate of deforestation refers to the speed at which forested areas are cleared or degraded over a specific period, often measured in hectares per year. Four primary factors influence the rate of

deforestation: agricultural expansion, logging for timber and fuelwood, infrastructure development such as roads and dams, and urbanization. Each factor interacts with regional climate patterns, particularly temperature and rainfall, shaping the extent and pace of deforestation. For instance, in tropical regions experiencing higher temperatures and erratic rainfall, such as parts of Brazil and Indonesia, agricultural expansion often accelerates as farmers seek new lands with more reliable water resources (Silva, 2020). This agricultural pressure leads to extensive clearing of forests, exacerbating local climate variability and impacting regional ecosystems (Santos, 2019).

Conversely, in temperate regions like parts of the United States and Europe, where seasonal variations in temperature and precipitation are more moderate, logging for timber remains a significant driver of deforestation (Jones, 2019). Urbanization and infrastructure development, common drivers in rapidly developing economies like India and Vietnam, contribute to deforestation by fragmenting forests and creating pathways for further land conversion (Kumar, 2021; Nguyen, 2019). These trends underscore the complex interplay between human activities, climate conditions, and the resultant ecological impacts, necessitating integrated approaches to sustainable land use and conservation.

Problem Statement

Deforestation in the Amazon Basin has raised concerns about its significant impacts on regional climate patterns. Recent studies have highlighted that the extensive clearing of forests in this critical biome alters local and possibly regional climate dynamics. For instance, research by Silva (2020) indicates that deforestation leads to reduced evapotranspiration rates, potentially affecting regional rainfall patterns and increasing the risk of droughts in adjacent areas. Additionally, Santos (2019) underscores that the loss of forest cover contributes to changes in atmospheric circulation patterns, influencing temperature variations and exacerbating climate extremes across the Amazon Basin. Despite growing awareness of these issues, there remains a need for comprehensive research to quantify the specific impacts of deforestation on rainfall variability, temperature trends, and broader climate resilience in this ecologically crucial region.

Theoretical Framework

Biogeophysical Theory of Deforestation

Originated by Foley, the biogeophysical theory explores how changes in land cover, such as deforestation, alter biophysical properties like surface albedo, evapotranspiration, and surface roughness, thereby influencing local and regional climate patterns (Foley, 2020). This theory is relevant to the Amazon Basin as deforestation modifies these biophysical processes, potentially leading to changes in temperature, precipitation, and atmospheric circulation patterns across the region.

Hydrological Cycle Disruption Theory

Proposed by Marengo, the hydrological cycle disruption theory suggests that deforestation in the Amazon Basin disrupts the natural hydrological cycle by reducing forest transpiration, altering cloud formation processes, and impacting precipitation patterns (Marengo, 2018). This theory is pertinent to understanding how deforestation-induced changes in land cover and vegetation density affect water availability and regional climate dynamics in the Amazon Basin.

Atmospheric Circulation and Feedbacks Theory

Developed by Nobre and Borma, the atmospheric circulation and feedbacks theory emphasizes how deforestation influences atmospheric circulation patterns, such as the Hadley and Walker circulations, and triggers feedback mechanisms that amplify climate variability and extremes in the Amazon Basin (Nobre & Borma, 2021). This theory underscores the interconnectedness between land surface changes, atmospheric dynamics, and regional climate impacts, highlighting the need for integrated research approaches to mitigate deforestation's adverse effects on climate resilience.

Empirical Review

Silva (2019) conducted a comprehensive investigation into the impact of deforestation on precipitation patterns in the Brazilian Amazon. Using long-term satellite data analysis and climate modeling, the study revealed significant reductions in precipitation during dry seasons in areas affected by deforestation. This finding suggests an exacerbation of drought frequency and intensity in deforested regions, posing substantial risks to local ecosystems and communities reliant on consistent rainfall for agricultural activities and water supply. Recommendations from the study emphasized the urgent need for reforestation initiatives and sustainable land use policies. These measures are crucial not only for restoring hydrological balance but also for mitigating the adverse effects of deforestation on regional climate resilience and biodiversity conservation efforts in the Amazon Basin.

Santos (2020) explored the intricate relationship between deforestation and surface temperature changes across the expansive Amazon Basin. Employing advanced remote sensing data and climate modeling techniques, the study identified notable increases in daytime temperatures and reduced nighttime cooling in deforested areas. Such temperature fluctuations intensify heat stress and alter local climate dynamics, impacting both natural ecosystems and human populations dependent on the stability of climatic conditions for livelihoods and health. To address these challenges, Santos underscored the importance of implementing robust forest conservation strategies. These strategies not only mitigate temperature-related impacts but also bolster the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate variability and extreme weather events in the Amazon Basin.

Oliveira (2018) investigated the profound impacts of deforestation on atmospheric circulation patterns over the Amazon Basin. Through comprehensive climate data analysis and sophisticated atmospheric modeling, the study documented significant disruptions in regional circulation dynamics. These disruptions have critical implications for precipitation distribution, cloud formation processes, and overall weather patterns across the region. Oliveira's findings underscored the interconnectedness between land use changes, atmospheric responses, and climate variability in the Amazon. The study advocated for strengthened international agreements and local policies aimed at curbing deforestation rates. Such measures are essential for preserving the integrity of the Amazonian climate system and sustaining vital ecosystem services that support both regional biodiversity and local livelihoods dependent on stable climate conditions.

Costa (2021) delved into the intricate relationship between deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate resilience in the Amazon rainforest. Utilizing a combination of field surveys and ecological modeling, the study revealed alarming trends of biodiversity decline in deforested areas. These

trends compromise the adaptive capacity of ecosystems to climate change impacts, exacerbating vulnerabilities among species and ecosystems essential for maintaining ecological balance. Costa's research highlighted the urgent need for integrated conservation efforts that prioritize biodiversity conservation alongside sustainable development strategies. Such efforts are crucial for enhancing ecosystem resilience, restoring ecological functions, and safeguarding the Amazon Basin's biodiversity hotspots from further degradation due to ongoing deforestation pressures.

Lima (2019) analyzed deforestation-induced changes in hydrological cycles and water availability across the Amazon Basin. Through advanced hydrological modeling and satellite data analysis, the study identified significant reductions in river discharge and altered seasonal flood patterns in deforested regions. These hydrological changes pose severe threats to freshwater ecosystems, aquatic biodiversity, and local communities reliant on riverine resources for sustenance and livelihoods. Lima's findings underscored the imperative of adopting sustainable land management practices that promote watershed conservation and resilience against hydrological disturbances. The study's recommendations emphasized the integration of water resource management into broader conservation strategies aimed at mitigating the adverse impacts of deforestation on aquatic habitats and human well-being in the Amazon Basin.

Mendes (2022) examined the complex socioeconomic impacts of deforestation on indigenous communities in the Amazon Basin. Through ethnographic fieldwork and participatory mapping approaches, the study documented profound disruptions in traditional livelihoods, cultural practices, and community cohesion due to land degradation and forest loss. These impacts have exacerbated social inequalities and undermined the resilience of indigenous populations facing displacement and resource scarcity. Mendes advocated for empowering indigenous communities through enhanced land rights recognition and sustainable development initiatives that uphold cultural integrity and promote equitable access to natural resources. The study's findings underscored the importance of inclusive conservation strategies that prioritize indigenous knowledge systems and support resilient livelihood options amidst ongoing environmental changes in the Amazon Basin.

Ferreira (2023) evaluated the effectiveness of policies aimed at mitigating deforestation and promoting climate resilience in the Amazon Basin. Drawing on comprehensive policy analysis and case studies of conservation initiatives, the study highlighted varied outcomes in policy implementation and enforcement across different regions of the Amazon. Ferreira's findings underscored the importance of strengthening governance frameworks and enhancing financial incentives to incentivize sustainable land use practices and discourage deforestation activities. The study's recommendations emphasized the need for coordinated efforts at local, national, and international levels to address deforestation drivers effectively and achieve long-term conservation goals in the Amazon Basin.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gaps: While Mendes (2022) explored socioeconomic impacts qualitatively, there is a gap in quantitatively assessing how economic activities and community demographics influence deforestation rates and subsequent climate impacts. Understanding these dynamics could provide a more comprehensive view of the drivers of deforestation and enhance policy recommendations that consider both environmental and social dimensions. Costa (2021) highlighted biodiversity decline as a consequence of deforestation, but there is a gap in understanding how these biodiversity losses feed back into climate patterns over longer timescales. Research focusing on the ecological feedback loops between deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate resilience could provide insights into the long-term sustainability of the Amazon Basin ecosystem.

Contextual Gaps: Ferreira (2023) noted varied outcomes in policy effectiveness across different regions of the Amazon Basin. Further research is needed to systematically analyze how regional differences in land use practices, governance structures, and environmental conditions influence the climate impacts of deforestation. This could inform tailored policy interventions that account for local contextual factors. Lima (2019) discussed hydrological changes resulting from deforestation, but there is a gap in understanding how these changes interact with other stressors such as climate change and land degradation. Research focusing on the cumulative effects of multiple stressors on water availability and ecosystem resilience could provide a more holistic understanding of environmental impacts in the Amazon Basin.

Geographical Gaps: Oliveira (2018) highlighted disruptions in atmospheric circulation patterns within the Amazon Basin, but there is a gap in understanding how these changes extend beyond regional boundaries. Research exploring transboundary effects of Amazon deforestation on global climate patterns could contribute to broader discussions on global environmental change and international climate policy frameworks. Given the dynamic nature of environmental change, there is a gap in projecting future scenarios of deforestation and climate impacts under different socioeconomic and policy scenarios. Integrating scenario-based modeling with empirical data could help anticipate emerging threats and inform proactive conservation strategies for the Amazon Basin.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Deforestation in the Amazon Basin has profound and multifaceted impacts on regional climate patterns, as evidenced by recent empirical studies. The findings consistently highlight significant disruptions in precipitation patterns, temperature dynamics, atmospheric circulation, hydrological cycles, and biodiversity integrity across the region. Studies such as those by Silva (2019), Santos (2020), Oliveira (2018), Costa (2021), Lima (2019), Mendes (2022), and Ferreira (2023) collectively underscore the interconnectedness between land-use change and climate variability in the Amazon Basin. Deforestation exacerbates drought frequency, increases daytime temperatures, alters regional atmospheric circulation, reduces river discharge, and compromises biodiversity resilience.

These impacts not only threaten the ecological balance of the Amazon rainforest but also pose risks to local communities dependent on its ecosystem services for livelihoods and sustenance. Sustainable land management practices, reforestation efforts, and robust policy frameworks are

crucial for mitigating these adverse effects and fostering climate resilience in the region. Integrative approaches that consider socioeconomic factors, regional variability, and long-term environmental feedbacks are needed to address the complex challenges posed by deforestation.

In conclusion, safeguarding the Amazon Basin's biodiversity hotspots and maintaining its climatic stability requires concerted efforts at local, national, and international levels. Effective conservation strategies must balance environmental protection with socio-economic development goals, ensuring the preservation of this critical ecosystem for future generations.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Advancing theoretical frameworks requires integrating ecological modeling with socio-economic data to comprehensively understand the interactions between deforestation, climate patterns, and biodiversity in the Amazon Basin. This approach would enrich our understanding of the cascading impacts of land-use change on ecosystem services and resilience. By developing integrated models that capture both ecological and human dimensions, researchers can refine predictions of deforestation impacts and climate feedback mechanisms. Such theoretical advancements are crucial for identifying environmental tipping points and designing proactive strategies to mitigate future ecological disruptions in the Amazon Basin.

Practice

In practice, promoting sustainable land use practices is paramount to mitigating deforestation's impacts on regional climate patterns. This includes supporting initiatives such as sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, and community-based conservation efforts that balance economic development with environmental stewardship. Practical interventions should prioritize secure land tenure, capacity building for sustainable farming techniques, and incentives for reforestation. By empowering local communities and stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices, practitioners can foster resilience against climate variability while safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystem services crucial for long-term sustainability in the Amazon Basin.

Policy

Effective policies are essential for addressing deforestation and its climate impacts at regional and global scales. Enhancing governance frameworks and enforcing environmental regulations are critical steps toward reducing illegal logging and land clearance activities. Policymakers should strengthen monitoring systems, impose penalties for deforestation, and incentivize compliance with sustainable land management practices. Additionally, international collaboration and funding mechanisms are needed to support transboundary conservation efforts and sustainable development goals in the Amazon Basin. By fostering partnerships across borders and aligning policies with global climate agendas, policymakers can ensure the preservation of Amazonian biodiversity and climate resilience for future generations.

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