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STUDY NOTES

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CLASS- VIII (All Section)

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Science

CHAPTER: 7 Biodiversity and conservation of Flora and Fauna

Today's Topic: Effect of Deforestation

A high level of biodiversity is usually considered to be important and is desirable. Forests are only few regions on earth that harbour rich biodiversity.

A species is a group of living organisms consisting of similar individuals and a common characteristic. The members of a species can breed and produce healthy species only with the members of their own species and not with members of other species. 80-90 per cent of the entire species of the world are found in tropical rainforests, which make about 6 per cent of the surface areas with the earth. However, rainforests are destroyed at an alarming rate of the world, which has already led to the loss of biodiversity. To estimate, about 50,000 species are lost every year due to the destruction of rainforests.

During heavy rainfall, forests absorb and store great amounts of water and prevent it from flowing away. When forests are cut down, the barren land is not able to check the flow of water. Hence, as it

rains, almost the entire rainwater flows away causing flood which the lower reaches. After the rains stop, a lesser amount of water is available, which is to a **drought** in the affected area.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide for photosynthesis and thus forests act as a large sink for this greenhouse gas, which is believed to be responsible for global warming. When forests are cut down, the major sink is lost, leading to an increase in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This becomes a major contributing factor to climate change.

Apart from wood and bamboo being used for construction and making paper, forests also produce has of other useful products for humans. These include gum and resin, sandalwood, oilseeds and several important medicinal plants. As forests are destroyed, these products are a longer available.

Species: A group of organisms whose members can inter breed .

Tropical rainforests: Dense forests found in the topics with heavy rainfall containing a high diversity of species.

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