



CLIMATE There are 4 main climate zones which include tropical, cold, dry and temperate. The countries which are on the Earth's equator (Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia) are humid and wet. Summers are very hot and winters are mild/warm.

LONGEST RIVERS



Amazon (Brazil) - 6400km

Paraná (Brazil/Paraguay) - 4880km

Madeira (Brazil) - 3380km

TALLEST MOUNTAINS



Aconcagua (Argentina) 6962m
Ojos del Salado (Chile) 6893m
Monte Pissis (Argentina) 6793m

LARGEST POPULATIONS

Brazil
(212 million people)



Colombia
(48 million people)



Argentina
(43 million people)



SOUTH AMERICA

Physical Features

Amazon Rainforest



This is the world's largest rainforest, taking up 5.5million km² and most of north-western Brazil, extending into Colombia, Peru and other countries. It is famous for its biodiversity.

The Andes



The Andes are the longest mountain range in the world forming a continuous highland in the west, passing through 7 countries from Venezuela in the north to Chile and Argentina in the south.

Galapagos Islands



Part of the Republic of Ecuador, this volcanic archipelago are known for their many species of plants and animals studied by Charles Darwin which contributed to his theory of evolution.

Lake Titicaca



A large, deep lake in the Andes on the border of Peru and Bolivia. Once inhabited by the Incas between 1200A.D. and 1400A.D., they have even found an underwater temple here.

Human Features

Deforestation



Industrial-scale cattle ranching, soybean production and logging for wood (e.g. mahogany) for the world market means the Amazon has lost 20% off its trees in the last 40 years at a rate of 20,000km² per year.

Machu Picchu



Located in southern Peru, on a 2430m high mountain ridge, archaeologists believe it was constructed as an estate for an Inca emperor. Built around 1450A.D., it could home up to 750 people, mostly working as servants to the emperor and keeping llamas and alpacas.

Colonisation



In 1498 Christopher Columbus, on his third voyage to the Americas, landed in Venezuela. Portuguese and Spanish ships arrived, began to claim the land as their own, introducing western diseases, and contributed to the rapid decline of the native populations.



FACT BOX

Spanish is the main language in South American countries, only in Brazil people speak Portuguese. 90% are Catholic.

Key Vocabulary

archipelago	sea or stretch of water having many islands
Atlantic Ocean	covers 20% of the Earth's surface and lies between the Americas and Europe/Africa
Atacama Desert	West of the Andes and one of the driest places on Earth
biodiversity	the variety of plant and animal life
canopy	uppermost branches of trees in a rainforest
El Nino	an event every 2-5 years where the Pacific Ocean warms, causing more rain in the Americas
evolution	idea that animals adapt and humans developed from apes
landlocked	Countries surrounded by only land (e.g. Paraguay)
mining	Chile has the largest open pit and underground mines in the world, for mining copper and iron
native	original inhabitants of an area
Pacific Ocean	covers 30% of the Earth's surface and is the largest, deepest ocean on the planet separating the Americas with Asia/Australasia
reforestation	the process of replanting an area with trees
Rio Carnival	annual festival held in the Brazilian capital of Rio de Janeiro before Lent (Christian religious observance)
temperate	non-extreme temperatures, neither too hot or cold
tropical	wet and dry seasons, frost-free with high temperatures

FAUNA (ANIMALS)



Examples: sloths, jaguars, caiman, tapirs, llamas, parrots and capuchins (also - toucans, giant anteaters and capybaras).

FLORA (PLANTS)



Rubber tree orchids Kapok tree cacao tree coffee plant