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Earth Science
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Rainforests and Deserts: Distribution, Uses, and Human Influences

California Education and the Environment Initiative

Approved by the California State Board of Education, 2010

The Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum is a cooperative endeavor of the following entities:

California Environmental Protection Agency
California Natural Resources Agency
California State Board of Education
California Department of Education
Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

Key Partners:

Special thanks to **Heal the Bay**, sponsor of the EEI law, for their partnership and participation in reviewing portions of the EEI curriculum.

Valuable assistance with maps, photos, videos and design was provided by the **National Geographic Society** under a contract with the State of California.

Office of Education and the Environment

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Lesson 1 California’s Desert Blooms

None required for this lesson.

Lesson 2 Global Distribution of Rainforests and Deserts

None required for this lesson.

Lesson 3 Rainforests’ and Deserts’ Influence on Humans

None required for this lesson.

Lesson 4 Human Influences on the Distribution of Rainforests and Deserts

None required for this lesson.

Lesson 5 The Effects of Biome Distribution on Human Cultures

None required for this lesson.

Lesson 6 Science and Decision Making for California’s Deserts

None required for this lesson.

Assessments

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Rainforests and Deserts: Distribution, Uses, and Human Influences

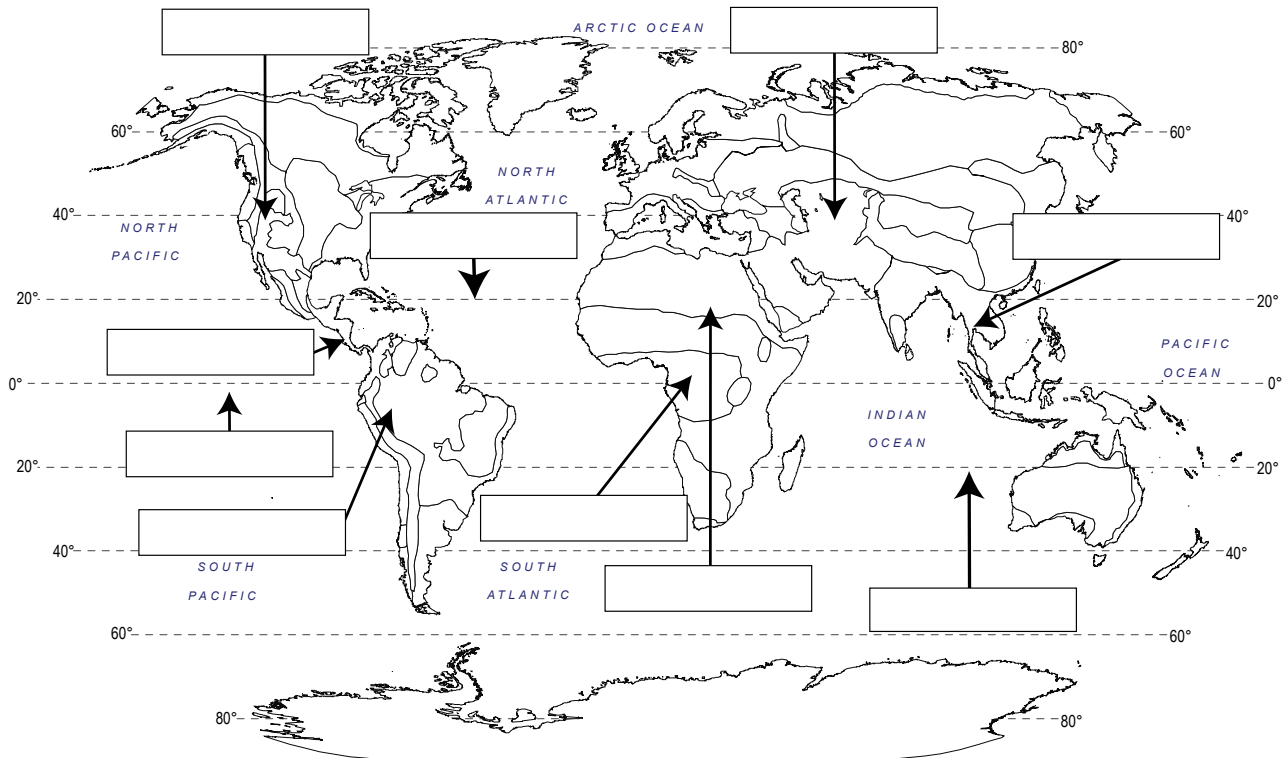
Traditional Unit Assessment Master | page 1 of 4

Name: _____

Part 1

Instructions: Label each of the boxes on the map below.

1. Label the following: Tropic of Cancer, desert, Equator, tropical rainforest, and Tropic of Capricorn.
(Note: "Desert" and "tropical rainforest" will each appear several times.) (1 point each)



Part 2

Instructions: Select the best answer and circle the correct letter. (2 points each)

2. A physical property that defines a desert is _____.
a. mild temperatures
b. a specific longitude
c. low amount of precipitation
d. many cacti
3. Which best represents the definition of a biome, such as desert or rainforest?
a. function of climate and geography
b. function of human activity
c. function of map companies
d. function of legal system

Name: _____

4. Which of the following locations has a tropical rainforest?
 - a. Costa Rica in Central America
 - b. Sitka, Alaska
 - c. Patagonia in South America
 - d. Green Sahara

5. The one physical property that best defines a rainforest is _____.
 - a. very low temperatures
 - b. high amount of precipitation
 - c. low biodiversity
 - d. dominated by old growth vegetation

6. Land set aside because of its unique physical or cultural value, and regulated for human activities by assigned agencies is called a _____.
 - a. national park
 - b. wilderness area
 - c. preserve
 - d. All of the above.

7. Which of the following practice(s) can change the local distribution (presence) of rainforests?
 - a. mining
 - b. logging
 - c. agriculture
 - d. All of the above.

8. The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 _____.
 - a. was passed immediately and unanimously
 - b. established new national parks, wilderness areas, and preserves
 - c. was not opposed by off-road vehicle groups
 - d. is no longer needed as a law

9. Human practices significantly damage rainforest ecosystems in which of the following ways?
 - a. urban development
 - b. erosion from mining
 - c. flooding by building dams to provide power
 - d. All of the above.

Name: _____

10. Scientific knowledge provides _____ for policy and management decisions.
- a. long-term monitoring data
 - b. special interest group opinion
 - c. legal status
 - d. a biased approach
11. An example of an ecosystem service is _____.
- a. timber
 - b. food
 - c. decomposition of waste
 - d. pharmaceuticals

Part 3

Instructions: Complete the following tasks in the spaces provided. (5 points each)

12. Identify two physical properties that define a tropical rainforest.

13. Identify two physical properties that define a desert.

14. Describe two human practices that contribute to destruction of rainforests.

Name: _____

15. Define “desertification” and name two causes of desertification.

16. Explain why the tropics experience high levels of annual rainfall.

17. What evidence is there that the Sahara Desert once had lakes, forests, and ancient human cultures?

Uses and Human Influences on the Distribution of Rainforests

Alternative Unit Assessment Master | page 1 of 5

Name: _____

Instructions: Read the bulleted items in the writing prompt. Write a 1–2 page essay (400 words) that answers each item in order. Use the entire class period.

Writing prompt:

- Describe the location and properties of tropical rainforests.
- Explain the importance of rainforests to human lives and communities.
- Identify factors that affect the geographic distribution of rainforests on Earth and provide examples of the human practices that can affect the local distribution (presence) of rainforests.
- Explain how changes to the geographic distribution of rainforests can influence humans and human communities, economies, and cultures.
- Describe the role of scientific knowledge in making policy and management decisions about human activity related to rainforest ecosystems.

Use the scoring tool on the next two pages to guide your writing.

Uses and Human Influences on the Distribution of Rainforests

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Uses and Human Influences on the Distribution of Rainforests Scoring Tool

Component	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Identifies the location and properties of tropical rainforests	Uses latitude to accurately locate tropical rainforests and describes four properties.	Accurately locates tropical rainforests and describes three properties.	Locates tropical rainforests and describes two properties.	Locates tropical rainforests or describes one property.
Explains the importance of tropical rainforests to human lives and communities	Identifies and describes two ecosystem goods and two ecosystem services important to human lives and communities.	Identifies and describes one ecosystem good and one ecosystem service important to human lives and communities.	Identifies and describes one ecosystem good or one ecosystem service important to human lives and communities.	Identifies one ecosystem good or one ecosystem service important to human lives and communities.
Identifies factors that affect geographic distribution of rainforests and provides examples of the human practices that can affect the local distribution of tropical rainforests	Identifies and describes four factors that affect geographic distribution and provides at least two examples of human practices that can affect the local distribution.	Identifies and describes three factors that affect geographic distribution and provides one example of human practices that can affect the local distribution.	Identifies and describes two factors that affect geographic distribution or provides one example of human practices that can affect the local distribution.	Identifies two factors that affect geographic distribution.

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Name: _____

Uses and Human Influences on the Distribution of Rainforests Scoring Tool (continued)

Component	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Explains how changes to the geographic distribution of tropical rainforests can influence humans and human communities and cultures	Identifies climate change as a factor that can influence human communities and cultures and describes two cultures that may have been affected by climate change.	Identifies climate change as a factor that can influence human communities and cultures and describes one culture that may have been affected by climate change.	Identifies climate change as a factor that can influence human communities and cultures or describes two cultures that may have been affected by climate change.	Identifies climate change as a factor that can influence human communities and cultures.
Describes the role of scientific knowledge in making policy and management decisions about human activity in tropical rainforests	Uses three examples to describe role of scientific knowledge in making policy and management decisions about human activity.	Uses two examples to describe role of scientific knowledge in making policy and management decisions about human activity.	Describes scientific knowledge as important in making policy and management decisions about human activity.	States that scientific knowledge is important in making land use decisions.

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