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UNIT 5: WORLD BIOMES AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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1. In this chapter...

A biome is a large geographical area with characteristic types of plants and animals. The type of biome in a region depends on its climate and geography.

The natural environment means all of the living and non-living things in an area.

In this chapter, we will find out what biomes are found in different climates.

We will also find out about how the natural environment influences the way humans live, and how humans change their environment.



1.1 TYPES OF BIOME

TUNDRA:

Tundra is found in places where the ground is frozen for most of the year. There is only low vegetation like moss and lichen.



DESERT:

Deserts are found in very dry areas. There are only a few plants, like cacti, that can survive in very dry conditions.



GRASSLAND

The main vegetation type in grasslands is grass. Areas with short grasses are called steppes and areas with tall grasses are called prairies.



SAVANNA

A savanna is an area where there is mainly grassland, but there are also some shrubs and trees.



FOREST

A forest is an area where there are lots of trees. There are different types of forest in different climates



The type of biome in an area depends on the type of vegetation, the plants that grow there.

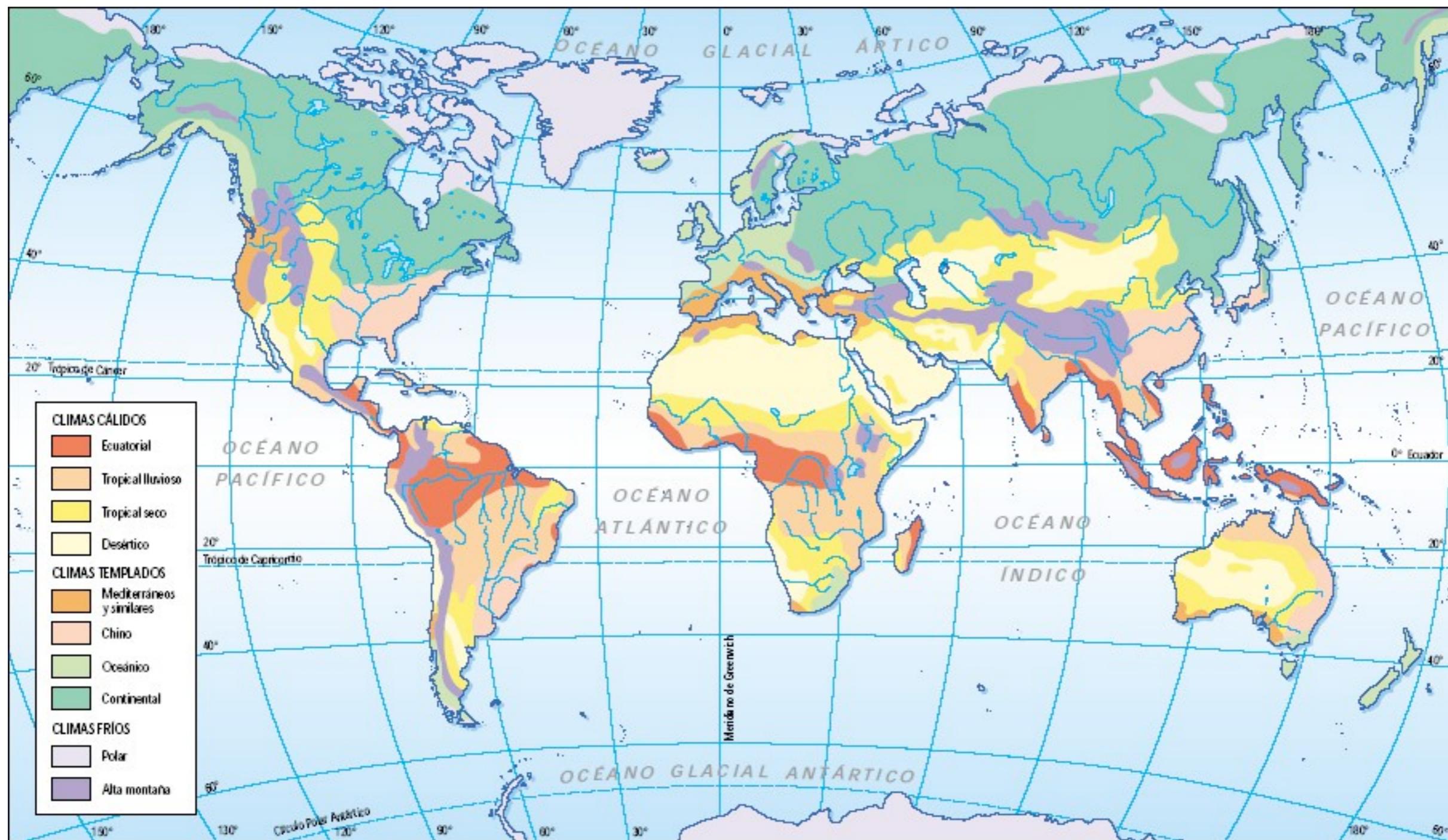
The amount and type of vegetation depends on the climate: the hotter and wetter it is, the more vegetation there is.

2. Climatic zones

In Chapter 4, we saw that the Earth is divided into five main climatic zones:

- **Hot Zones (Equator):** Equatorial Climate, Tropical Wet and Dry Climate and Arid or Desert Climate.
- **Temperate Zone:** Mediterranean Climate, Maritime Climate and Continental Climate
- **Cold zones:** Polar Climate

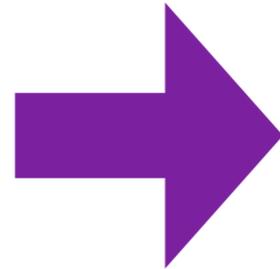




2.1 Hot climate types and biomes

a) EQUATORIAL CLIMATE

Location: tropics, near the equator. Climate type: hot and humid, not much change in temperature by season or between day and night. High precipitation (more than 2.000 mm per year) which is regular throughout the year.



TROPICAL RAINFOREST (JUNGLE)

Forest with many different plants. Mainly broadleaf evergreen trees including ebony and mahogany. Plants grow quickly in the hot and damp conditions



b) ARID OR DESERT CLIMATES

Location:

Hot Desert Climates: edge of the Tropics.

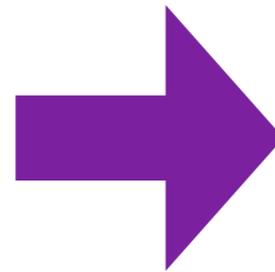
Cold Desert Climates: temperate zones

Climate type:

Hot Deserts: very hot during the day and cold at night

Cold Deserts: hot in summer and cold in winter

Very low precipitation (less than 250 mm per year)



DESERT

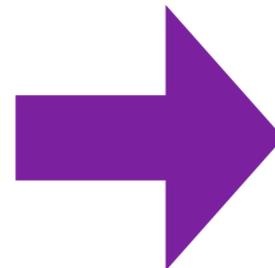
Very few plants can grow, except plants that are adapted to dry conditions, like cacti

c) TROPICAL WET AND DRY CLIMATE

Location: edge of the tropics.

Climate type: hot, not much change in temperature by season or between day and night. High precipitation (500 to 2000 mm per year) which is variable through the year.

There is a dry season and a rainy season



SAVANNA

Grassland with some deciduous shrubs and trees, including: baobab and acacia

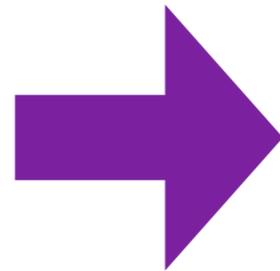


2.2 Temperate climate types and biomes

a) MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE

Location: around the Mediterranean Sea plus other areas including parts of California.

Climate type: Hot in summer and mild in winter. Fairly low precipitation, mainly in winter. Very dry in summer.



MEDITERRANEAN FOREST

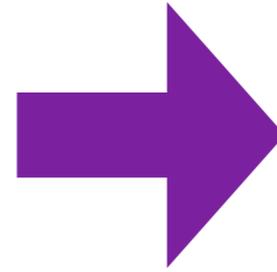
Forest with evergreen trees including cork oak, holm oak and pine. Shrubs like lavender and rosemary.



b) OCEANIC CLIMATE

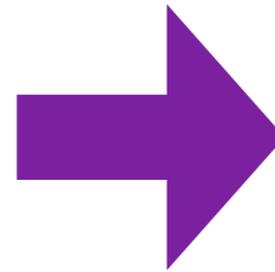
Location: most of northern and central Europe, plus many other parts of the world, including New Zealand.

Climate type: Mild all year and high precipitation all year.



HEATHLAND

Unfertile land with shrubs and low vegetation. In higher, wetter areas, this type of vegetation is sometimes called moor.



BOSQUE CADUCIFOLIO

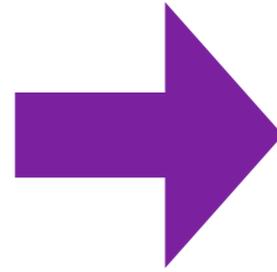
Forest with broad-leaved deciduous trees including oak, beech and ash.



c) CONTINENTAL CLIMATE

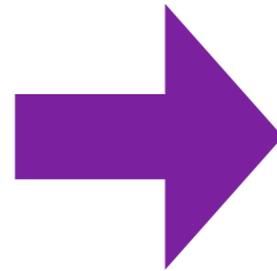
Location: northern parts of the northern hemisphere, particularly North America and Asia.
Climate type: hot in summer and very cold in winter.

Moderate precipitation only in summer.



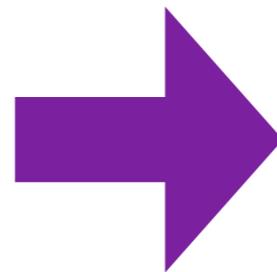
TAIGA

Forest with conifers like pine and fir. Found in northern areas with long winters



PRAIRIE

Grassland with tall grasses. Found in wetter, milder areas, especially inland on plains.



STEPPE

Grassland with short grasses. Found in warmer, drier areas.



2.3 Cold climate types and biomes

a) POLAR CLIMATE

Location: near the poles, in the Arctic and Antarctic. Climate type: cold, temperatures as low as -50°C in winter and up to 10°C in summer. Low precipitation (around 300mm per year, which falls as snow)

a) ALPINE CLIMATE

Location: high mountain areas all over the world (usually above 3000m). Climate type: very cold in winter and cold summer. High precipitation, often falls as snow. Temperatures are lower at higher altitudes

TUNDRA

Trees can't grow at very low temperatures. There are only small shrubs and low vegetation like moss and lichen. In many places the soil is permanently frozen, this is called permafrost

VEGETACIÓN POR PISOS

The vegetation changes with altitude. At the highest altitudes, there is only low vegetation.



Libreta

Para el próximo día tienes que tener los apuntes de esta parte en tu libreta

3. Humans and the environment

People choose the best places to live. Humans need natural resources like fresh water, fuel and building materials. They also need land for agriculture and to build towns.

Good transport links make it easier to trade with other people. More people live in places that have the resources that they need.

Example: London. London is one of the biggest cities in Europe. London has a maritime climate, so temperatures are moderate. It is located on a plain in the south of England, with land for agriculture nearby.

London is on the River Thames, which provides water for drinking and irrigation of crops. It is also near the coast, which is useful for trade and fishing.



4. Adapting to the environment

Some people live in areas where life is more difficult. They have to adapt their lifestyle to their environment. In the most extreme environments, resources are scarce, so people have to move around over a large area to find the things they need. People who move around are called nomads.

MAASAI:

The Maasai are cattle herders who live in the savanna of Kenya and northern Tanzania. They also farm sheep and goats. The Maasai have to keep moving to find water and grazing land for their animals.



TUAREG:

The Tuareg are nomads who live in the Sahara desert. They herd camels and goats, and also make and sell silver and leather products and textiles. They live in tents, which they carry with them. The Tuareg are called the “blue people” because of the blue clothes that they wear.



INUIITS:

The Inuits live in the Arctic in North America. They hunt lots of different animals, including whales, seals and caribou. The Inuits traditionally used dogs sleds and kayaks for transport.



TIBETANOS NÓMADAS:

Tibetan nomads in the Himalayas also have to move around to find grazings land for their yaks. Life is very hard because of the cold and high altitude.



These communities have a traditional lifestyle, but this is changing as they have more contact with the rest of the world. Some people leave the community to live in towns or cities.



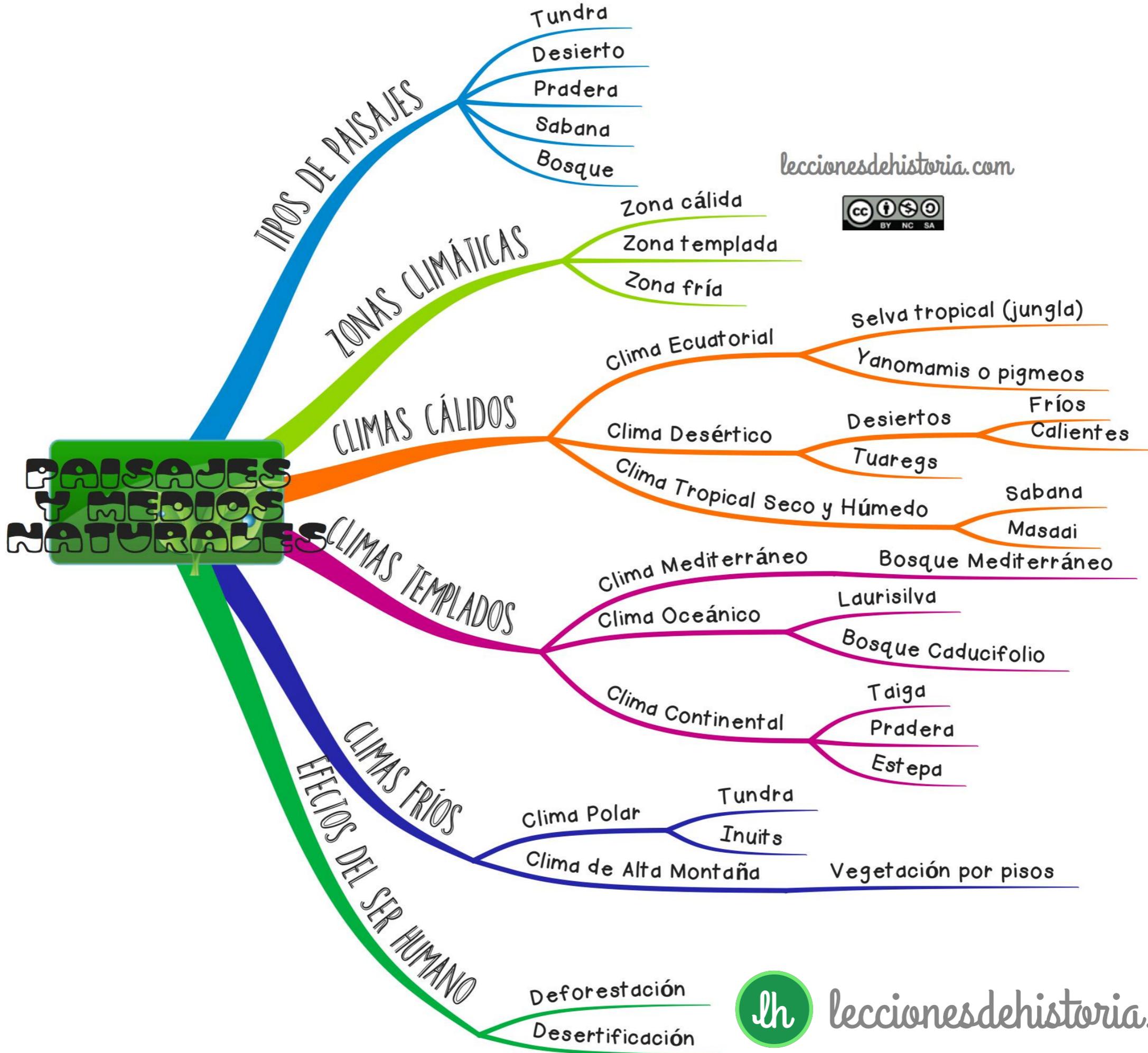
5. WHAT EFFECT DO HUMANS HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

- People make changes to the environment where they live by: using natural resources like wood, coal, oil and gas; building things like towns and roads; farming (agriculture).
- Many of these changes cause damage to the environment. Here are some examples:
- **DEFORESTATION:** It means removing forests by cutting down all of the trees. In Indonesia, trees are being cut down to make paper. Cutting down trees cause soil erosion and loss of biodiversity.
- **DESERTIFICATION:** is when the land turns into desert. The Kalahari desert in southern Africa is growing. In the area around the desert, sheep and goats are eating too many plants, this is called overgrazing. If there are less plants, there is more soil erosion. Eventually the land turns into desert. Desertification can also happen for other reasons, for example when there is soil erosion due to deforestation.



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Ejercicio en el blog:

Para la fecha que indique la profesora, hay que realizar el siguiente ejercicio en el blog:

- Investiga en internet y publica una entrada hablando sobre problemas causados por el ser humano al medio ambiente (Máximo 10 líneas)

Recuerda: Adjunta imágenes para que quede el blog completo y elegante.



Glossary

<http://www.students.linguaframe.com/gh1-audio-glossary>

Temperature, Hot, Cold, Temperate, Cool, Mild,
Humid, Cloud, Precipitation, Rain, Snow, Hail, Wind,
Breeze, Storm, Hurricane, Tropical cyclone, Eye,
High Pressure, Low Pressure, Anticyclone,
Depression, Climate, Weather, Evaporation /
evaporate, Condensation / condense, Day, Night,
Season, Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring, Year,
Water vapour, Flood, Drought

