

# CH. 7 South America Geography and History





# 1.1 Physical Geography

- Mountains
  - Andes run 5,500 miles along the western side of South America
  - Guiana Highlands are located in the northern part of South America ( Venezuela, Guyana, and Suriname) Angel Falls is located within these highlands
  - Brazilian Highlands are located in eastern South America





# Amazon River Basin

- Largest basin in the world – 2,700.000 sq. miles
- Located in the north central part of South America
- Climate is hot and wet( equatorial)

A satellite-style map of South America with the Amazon River Basin highlighted by a thick yellow border. The basin covers a large portion of the continent, including parts of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Guyana. The text "Amazon River Basin" is overlaid in white on the central part of the basin.

**Amazon River Basin**





# Northern Grasslands and Southern Plains

- Llanos
  - Wide open areas used for grazing and crop production
  - Warm climate with adequate rainfall
- Pampas
  - Rich soil and grassy plains used for grazing and crop production
  - Mild climate with adequate rainfall





# 1.2 Life at Different Elevations



# 1.2 Life at Different Elevations

- Tierra Caliente
  - 0 to 2500ft.
  - Lowest elevation includes the Amazon Basin
  - Hot and humid
  - Adequate to heavy rainfall
  - Crops: bananas, peppers, sugarcane, and cacao

# 1.2 Life at different Elevations

- Tierra Templada
  - 2,500-6,000 ft.
  - Includes the Llanos, Pampas, and Coastal plains
  - Moderate in both temperature and rainfall
  - Crops: beans, corn, wheat, coffee, and vegetables
  - Cattle ranching very important

# 1.2 Life at Different Elevations

- Tierra Fria
  - 6,000- 12,000 ft.
  - Cool to cold
  - Some rainfall
  - Crops: wheat , barley, and potatoes

# 1.2 Life at Different Elevations

- Tierra Halada
  - 12,000 – 15,000 ft.
  - Cold to very cold
  - Little rainfall
  - No substantial crops



# Using the Land

- Andes mostly subsistence farming and herding
- Plains produce cattle and large scale farms
- Amazon basin produces hot weather crops

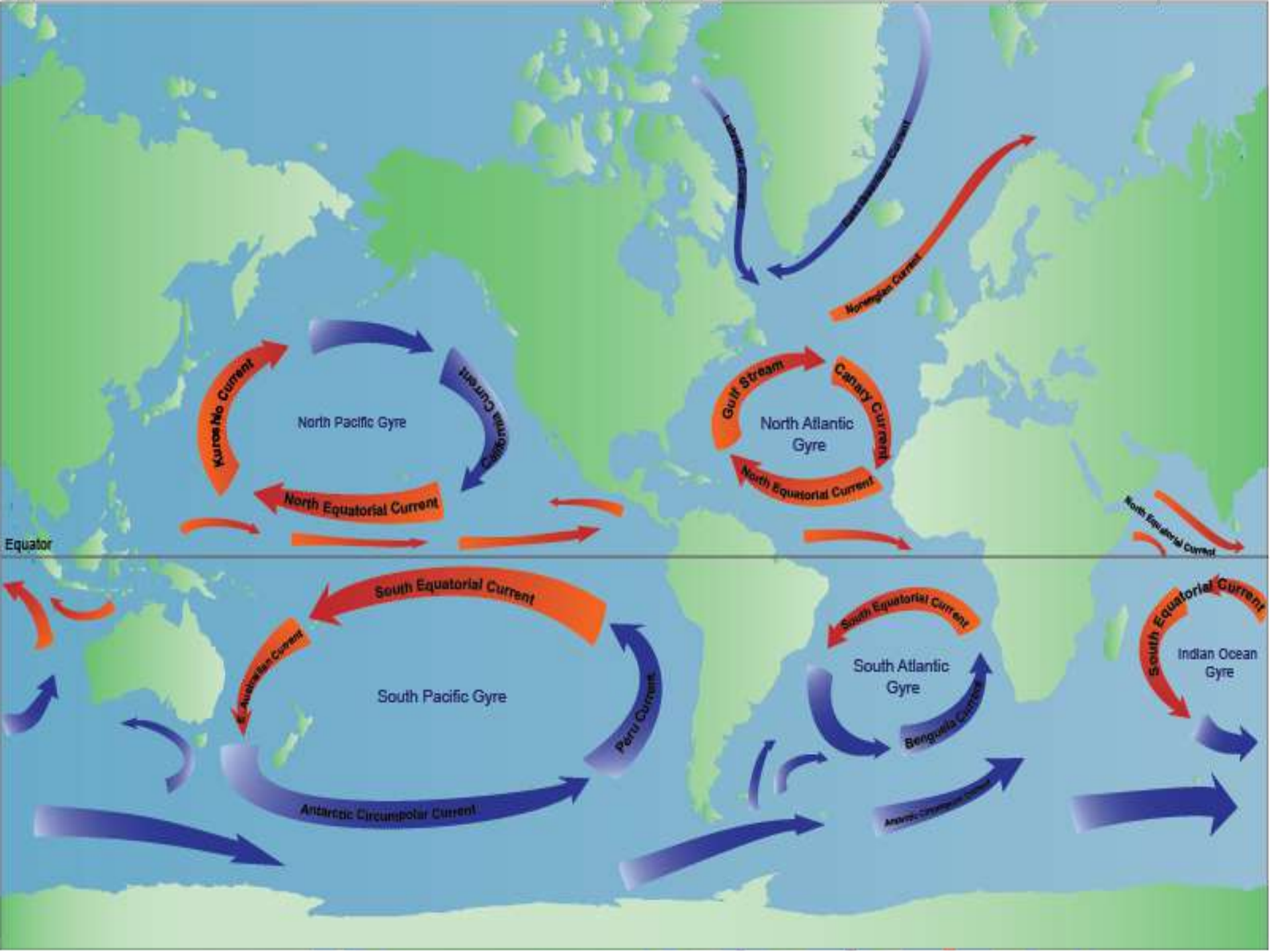


# 1.3 The Amazon River

- 4,000 miles long making it the second longest river in the world
- Has the largest volume of water of any river in the world
- Has more than 1000 tributaries
- Supports a vast amount of plant, insect and animal life
- Floods bring rich nutrients to the rainforest floor

# 1.3 Amazon River

- Today's growing population threatens the rainforest
  - Mining
  - Deforestation – logging
  - Farming
  - Land development



# 1.4 Cold and Warm Currents

- Western South America
  - Generally cool and dry because of cold water currents and cold winds from the South Pole
  - Peru current brings cold waters from depths of the Pacific Ocean
    - Brings nutrients from the depths
    - Fish thrive off the coasts of Chile, Peru and Ecuador

# 1.4 Cold and Warm Currents

- Eastern South America
  - Brazil current brings warm water from the Atlantic Ocean
  - Area also receives warm and humid winds
  - Andes block warm moist air from reaching the western side- rain shadow effect

## 1.4 Cold and Warm Currents

- Reversal of winds and ocean currents
- Brings warm winds and ocean currents to the western side of South America, causing heavy rainfall and unusual weather patterns



# 1.5 Rainforest and Climate Change

- Rainforest produce moisture and clouds through the process of transpiration.
- This moisture spurs growth in the rainforest and surrounding areas
- The rainforest also absorbs greenhouse gases and helps clean the air and prevent heat from being trapped

# 1.5 Changes in the Rainforest

- Amazon rainforest has lost 20% in the last 40 years
- Threatens biodiversity in the Amazon
- Fewer trees to absorb greenhouse gases and to produce moisture and cloud cover

# 1.5 Global Climate Change

- Global warming
  - 1.4 degrees warmer since 1900, caused by heavy releases of carbon dioxide
- Answers
  - Protect the Amazon and other rainforest
  - Limit the use of fossil fuels
  - Pollution control