

# **World Geography Latin America**

## **Notes**

**Physical**

# Latin America

- Latin America spans 7,000 miles
- from U.S.-Mexico border to Tierra del Fuego
- part of North America, all of Central and South America, & Caribbean





# Major Islands of the Caribbean

- **Bahamas** - Hundreds of islands off southern Florida, north of Cuba
- Nassau is largest city and capital
- The **Greater Antilles** - Larger islands in Caribbean: Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico
- Hispaniola divided between Haiti, Dominican Republic
- The **Lesser Antilles** - Smaller islands southeast of Puerto Rico





BERMUDA

FLORIDA

BAHAMAS

TURKS & CAICOS

CAYMAN ISLANDS

JAMAICA

HAITI

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

PUERTO RICO

VIRGIN GORDA

TORTOLA

ST. JOHN

ST. THOMAS

ST. MARTEN/  
ST. MARTIN

ST. CROIX

SABA

ST. VINCENT &  
THE GRENADINES

GRENADA

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

CURAÇAO

ARUBA

BONAIRE

ANGUILLA

ST. BARTHS

ST. EUSTATIUS

ST. KITTS  
& NEVIS

ANTIGUA  
& BARBUDA

MONTSERRAT

GUADELOUPE

DOMINICA

MARTINIQUE

ST. LUCIA

BARBADOS

# Mountains

- Andes Mountains-called the Rockies in the United States, Sierra Madre in Mexico.
- World's longest mountain range
- The Andes mountain range is the highest mountain range outside Asia. The highest peak, Aconcagua, rises to 22,840 ft.







# Plains for Grain and Livestock

- **Llanos**—grassy, treeless areas used for livestock grazing, farming
- Located in Colombia and Venezuela



# Plains for Grain and Livestock

- **Cerrado**—flat savannas with moderate rainfall, good for farming
  - Found in interior of Brazil in mostly undeveloped Amazon River Basin







# Plains for Grain and Livestock

- **Pampas**—areas of grassland, rich soil, used for cattle and wheat
- Located in Argentina and Uruguay
- Home to gaucho culture centered on horsemen





# Rivers & Waterways

- **Rio Grande** - forms border between U.S. and Mexico





USA

Pecos River

Rio Grande/Bravo

Rio Conchos

Mexico



# Rivers & Waterways

- **Amazon River** – Longest river in the western hemisphere
  - flows 4,000 miles, from west to east, to Atlantic
  - branches start in Andes
  - fed by over 1,000 tributaries
  - carries more water than next seven largest rivers combined







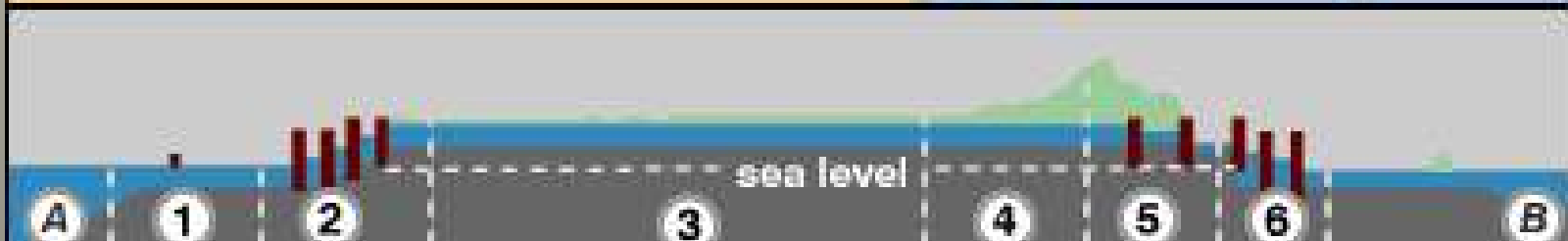
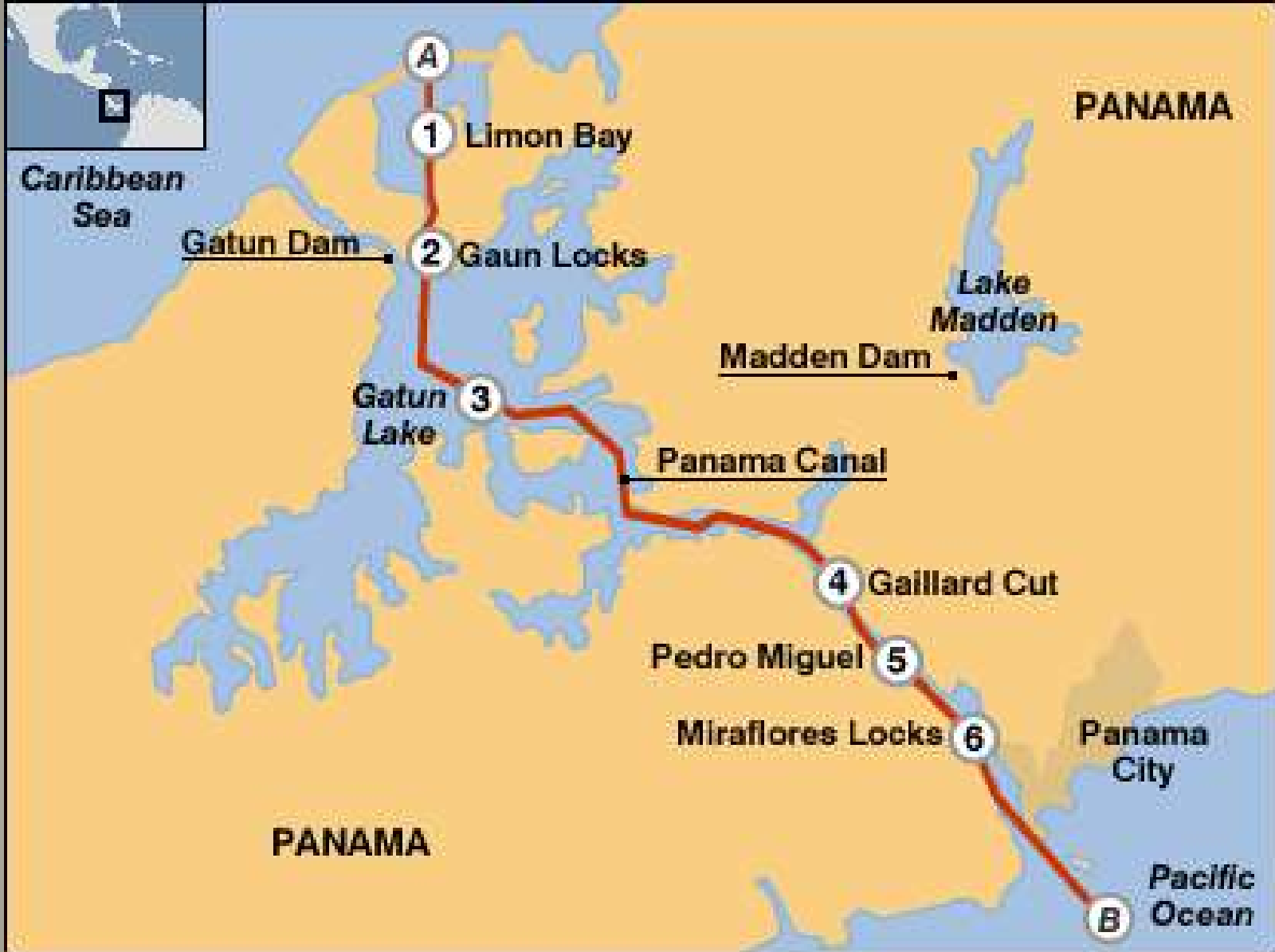
# Rivers & Waterways

- **Panama Canal** - cuts through land bridge, connects Atlantic, Pacific
- canal traffic makes Panama an important crossroads of world-trade









# Lakes

- **Lake Maracaibo** – regions largest lake





# Angel Falls

- Located in Venezuela
- World's largest waterfall (3,212 ft)
- The base of the falls feeds into the Kerep River
- Named after Jimmie Angel, a US pilot
- The height of the fall is so great that before getting anywhere near the ground, much of the water is evaporated or carried away as a fine mist by the strong wind.

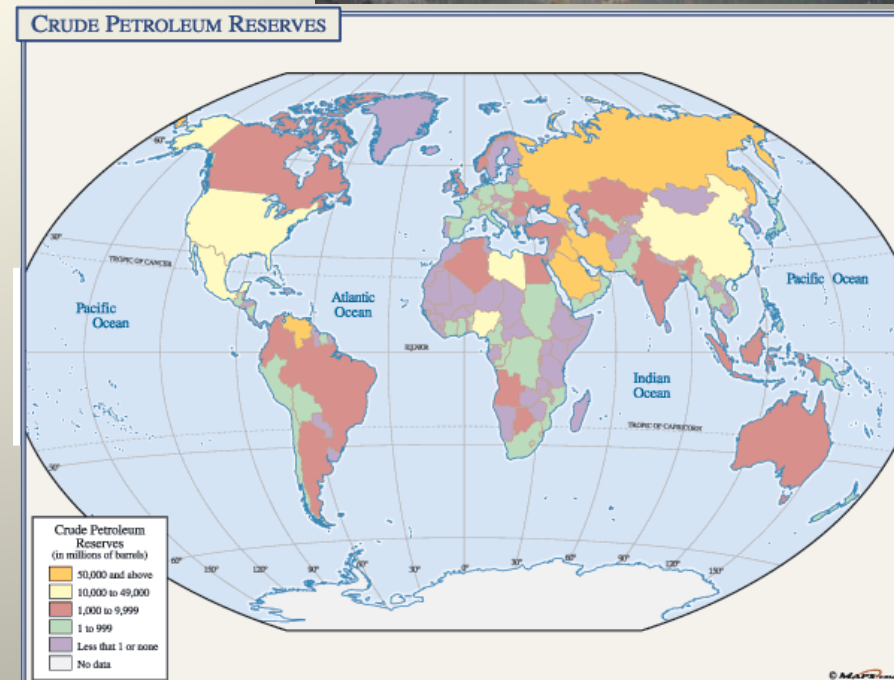


# Natural Resources of Latin America

- Region is rich with minerals, energy resources, agriculture, forests
- Minerals- gold, silver, iron, copper, bauxite (aluminum ore), lead, nickel
- South America is a world leader in mining, & exporting raw materials

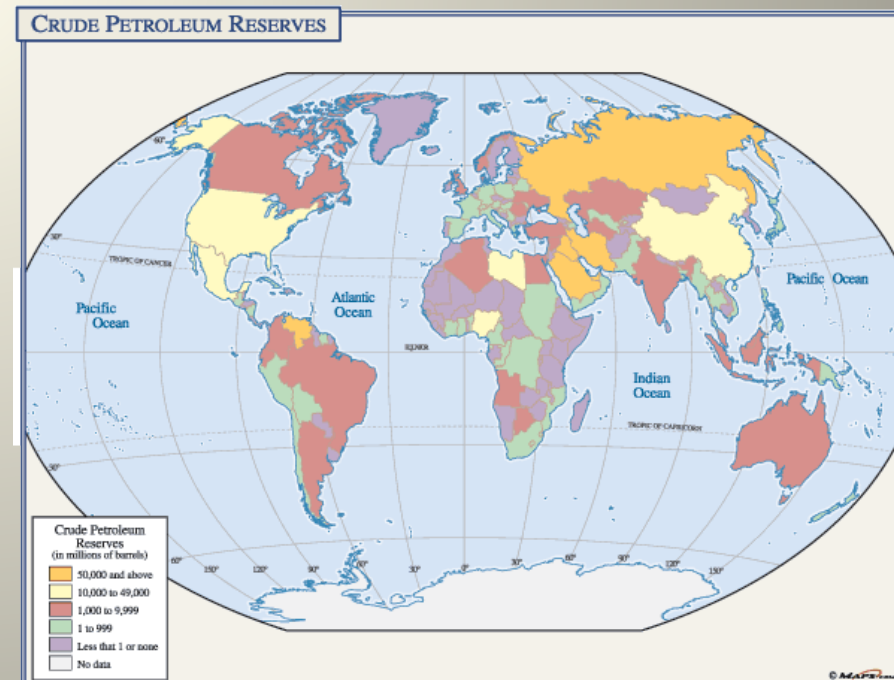
# Natural Resources of Latin America

- Jamaica began bauxite mining to reduce dependency on agriculture, tourism
- Oil, coal, natural gas, uranium & hydroelectric power are plentiful

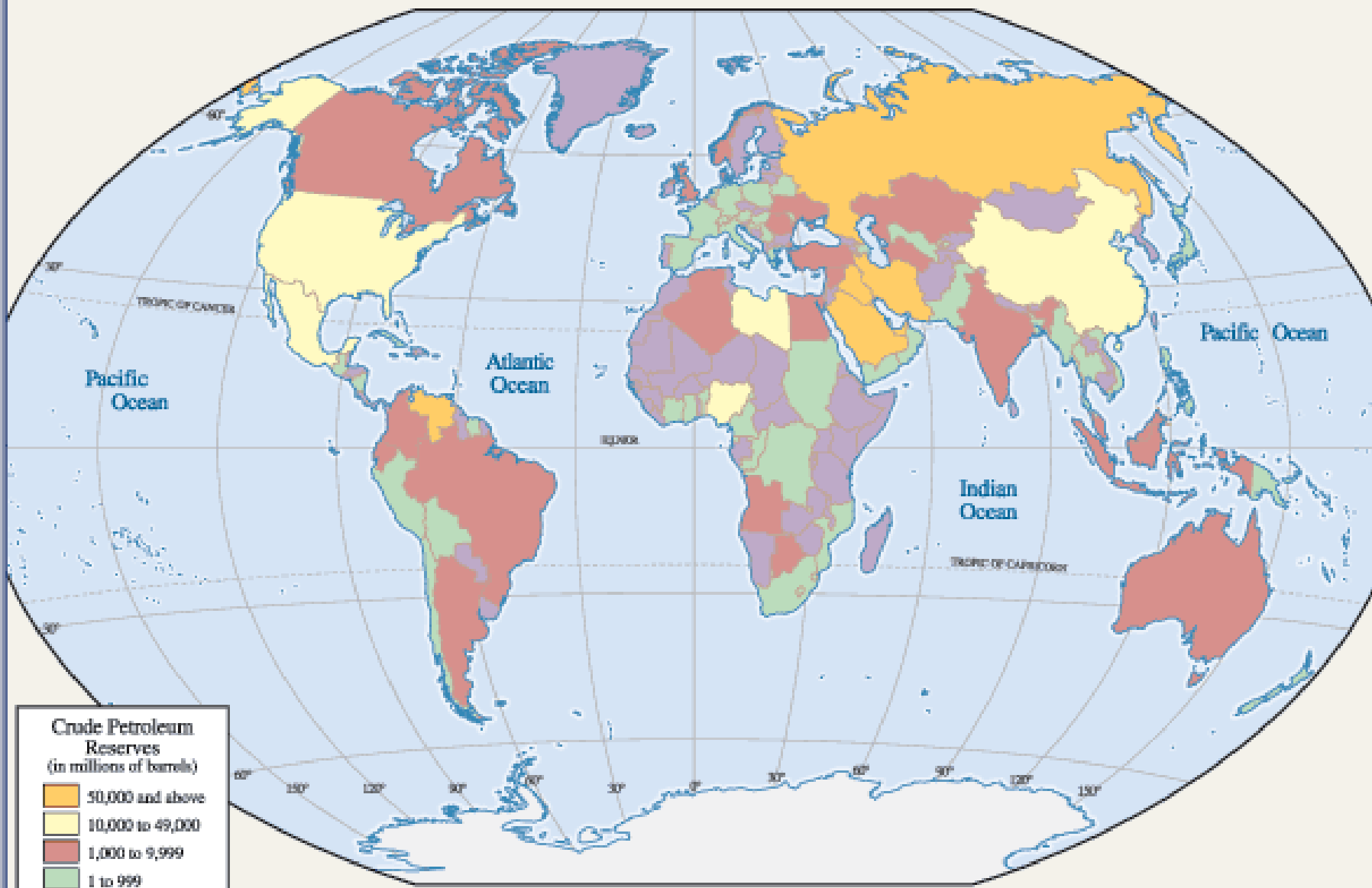


# Natural Resources of Latin America

- Brazil rich in **hydroelectric power** oil, & gas
- Venezuela & Mexico have major oil deposits, export oil to world



# CRUDE PETROLEUM RESERVES



**Crude Petroleum Reserves**  
(in millions of barrels)

- 50,000 and above
- 10,000 to 49,000
- 1,000 to 9,999
- 1 to 999
- Less than 1 or none
- No data

# Climates

- **Rain forests**—dense forests with different species of trees (hot and rainy all year)
- unique **ecosystem**—community of plants, animals living in balance



# Climates

- Largest is **Brazil's Amazon rain forest** with 2 million square miles
- 2,500 types of Amazon trees
- animals include anaconda, jaguar, piranha
- Savannas found in Brazil, Colombia, Argentina (hot with seasonal rain)











# Climates

- Desert- **Atacama Desert** located in north Chile
- Highlands - Varies from moderate to cold due to elevation, wind, sun, & landscape
  - found in mountains of Mexico and South America

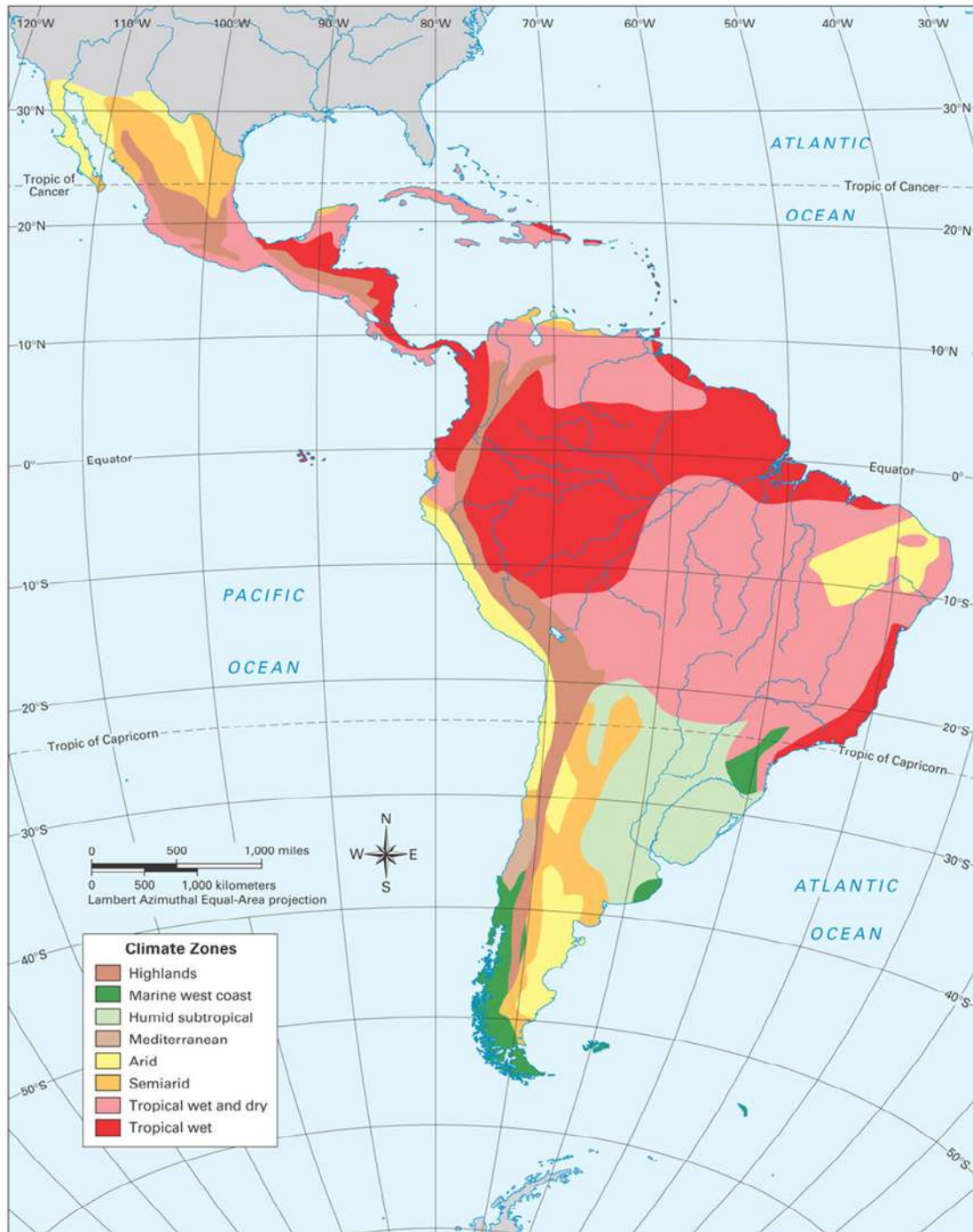


# Climatic Zones



Winkel Triplet Projection

# Climate Zones of Latin America



# Agriculture Reshapes the Environment

- **Slash-and-burn** - cut trees, brush, grass; burn debris to clear fields
  - used by native peoples and today by poor farmers in Amazon basin
  - they move to new area when soil is exhausted
  - one reason for shrinking rain forests



# Agriculture Reshapes the Environment

- **Terraced farming** - step-like farm fields cut into mountains, hillsides
- lets crops grow on steep land, cuts down on soil erosion
- used by Incas in Peru, Aztecs in Mexico

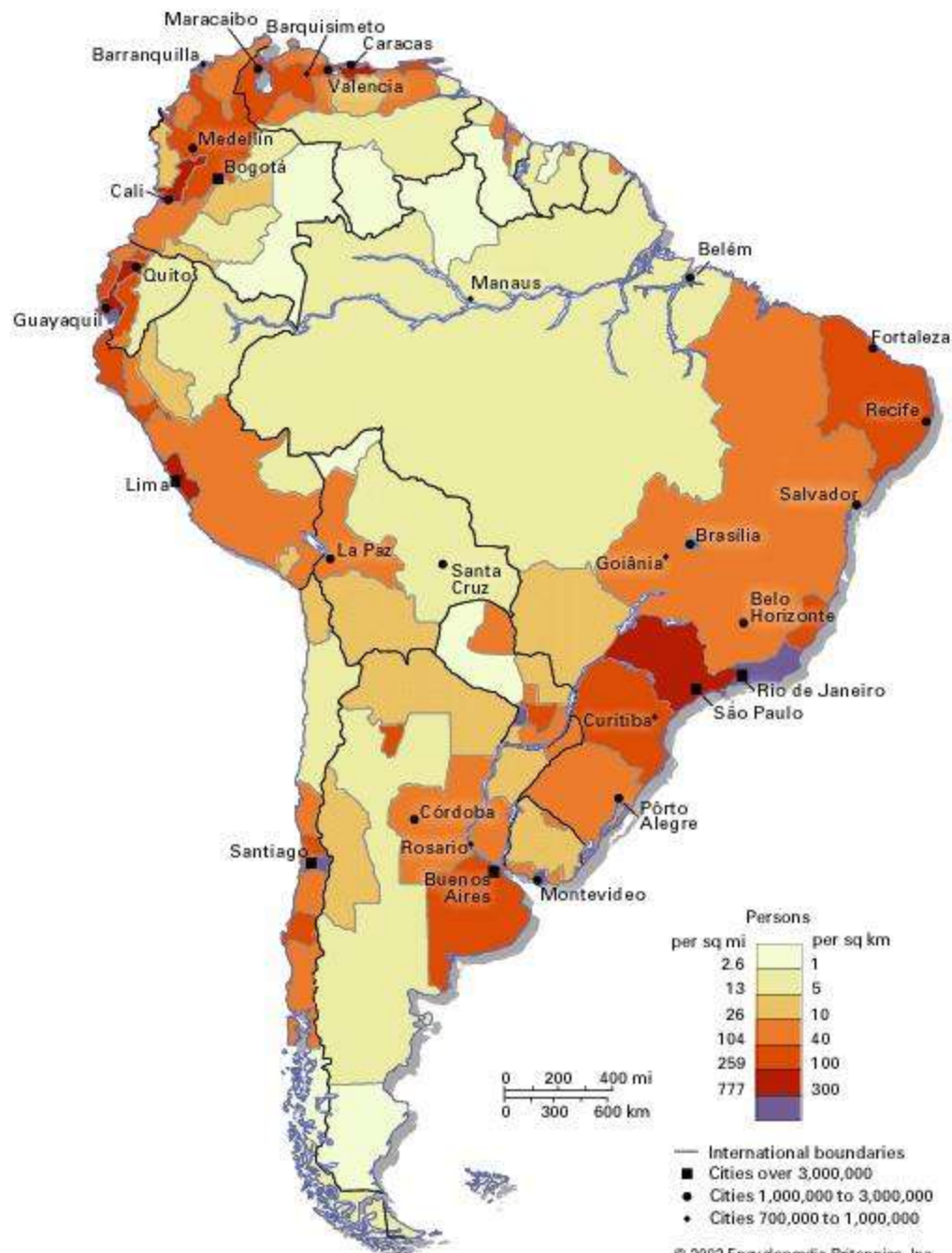








**Based on climate and physical features, what do you think are the most populated and least populated areas in Latin America?**



# Review Questions

What is a cerrado?

What country moved away from agriculture & began focusing on mining?

What natural resources are abundant in Latin America?

What mountain range in this region runs along the Pacific coast?

What is the largest river in the western hemisphere?

Where does the Amazon River begin & end?

What are llanos?

What are pampas?

What is the world's highest uninterrupted waterfalls?

What desert is located in Latin America?

What is slash- and – burn farming?

Why was Panama chosen as the site to build a canal that connects the Atlantic & Pacific Oceans?