

leased, are likely to also show increases. Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has announced a series of initiatives to decrease illegal logging as well as plans to increase the amount of tropical forest that Amazonian landowners are required to preserve from 50 to 80 percent.

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"The burning of the Amazon is not over. It's getting worse," stated Stephan Schwartzman, a senior scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington, D.C., following the Brazilian government's release of a report showing that slashing and burning of the Amazonian rainforests—home to 90 percent of the world's plant and animal species—has actually increased since 1992. Ironically, when the world community gathered in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Earth Summit, conservation and biodiversity preservation ranked among the top issues under discussion. The report shows a 34 percent increase in slashing and burning from 1991 to 1994: Approximately 11,000 square kilometers of forest were destroyed in the 1990–91 burning season compared to almost 15,000 square kilometers in 1994. The Brazilian Ministry of Environment, Water Resources, and the Amazon has not yet made its 1995 figures available, but Philip Fearnside, an ecologist with the National Institute for Research in the Amazon in Manaus, feels that those data, when re-