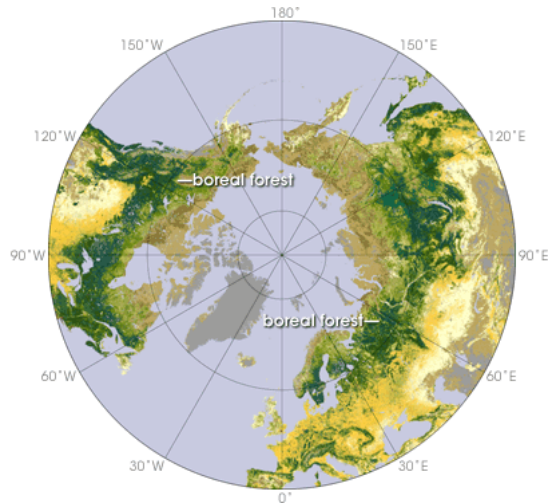


What is a Boreal Forest?



- The northernmost and coldest forest zone in the Northern Hemisphere is the boreal forest.
- The boreal forest is a continuous belt going 1000 km north and south across North America, Europe, and Asia.
- This forest lies between the northern tundra and the southern grasslands.
- Globally, the boreal forest makes up 25% of the world's closed canopy forest as well as vast expanses of open transitional forest.
- The boreal forest plays an important role in the earth's environmental balance. It provides oxygen and absorbs and stores carbon dioxide. It has a critical role in mitigating global warming.
- The boreal forest is characterized by having a large percentage of coniferous trees which first occurred 12 to 15 million years ago.
- This area has had to adapt to forces of fire, glacial ice, insect infestation and diseases. These natural disturbances are necessary for the maintenance of the boreal forest's ecological balance.
- However, human activities such as tree harvesting, mining, manufacturing, resource development, and recreational use are causing stress and changes to the land. These effects will cause far-reaching and potentially disastrous changes to the forest.

Interesting Facts:

-----The common loon is very common and is cherished. 70% of its population relies on the boreal forest to nest and breed each year.

-----The boreal forest is used by nearly one-half of the birds in North America each year.

-----As well, the boreal forest contains wetlands that filter millions of litres of water each year.

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