

# Geographic Regions of South America



# South American Introduction

- 4<sup>th</sup> Largest continent
  - 6.88 million square miles
  - 375 million people
- Incredibly diverse ecosystems
  - Highlands, Rainforest, Desert, Savanna, Grassland, and Mediterranean
  - Largest river in the world by volume (Amazon)



# The Amazon Basin

- Refers to the system of rivers and forests that surround/feed into the Amazon River
  - Primarily Tropical Rain Forest, Savanna, and Floodplain Forest
  - Countries of Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Venezuela



# Amazonian Biodiversity

- It is estimated that 10% of the world's biodiversity lives within the Amazon Basin
  - Around 17% of basin has been deforested resulting in loss of Habitat
- Home to around 30 million people
  - 9% are classified as indigenous



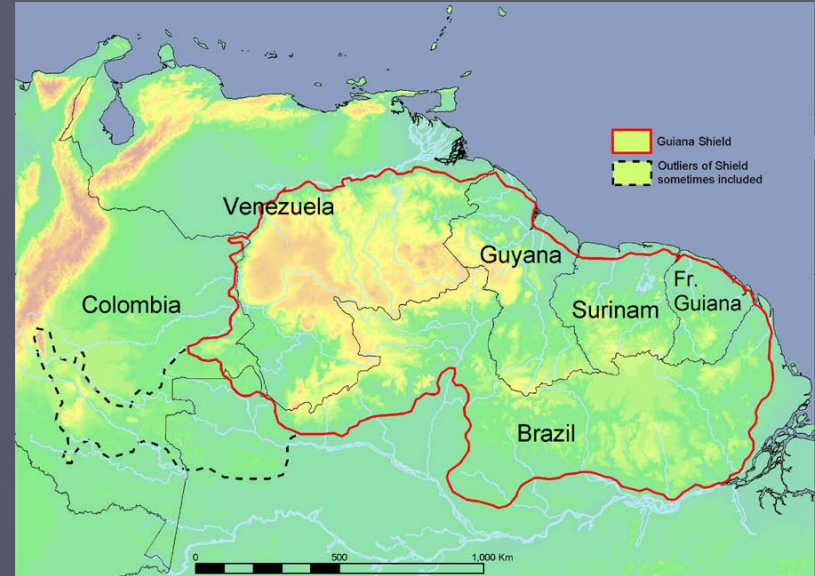
# The Brazilian Highlands

- Located in Southeastern Brazil
  - Southern border of Amazon Basin
- Consists of foothills, small mountains, and plateaus
  - Geographically similar to Guiana Highlands



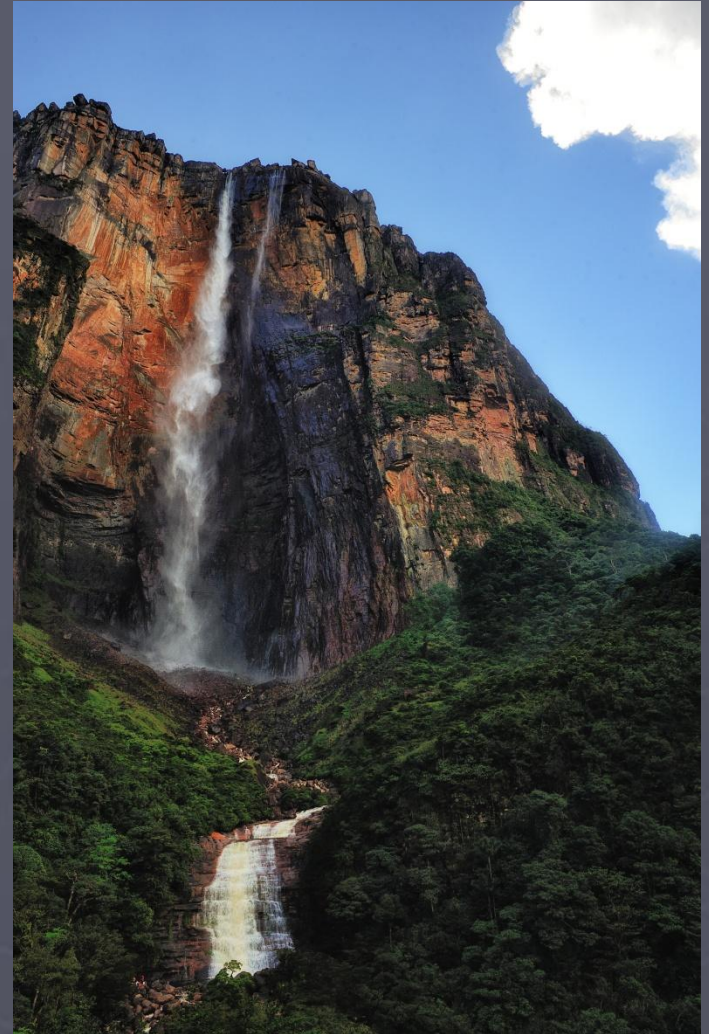
# Guiana Highlands

- Located in Northern Amazon region
  - Primarily rain forest
- Consist of foothills, low mountains, and large Tepui Mountains
  - Tabletop Mesas



# Angel Falls

- Located in Guiana Highlands in Venezuela
- Tallest Waterfall in the World
  - Water falls off the edge of a tepui
  - Falls fed purely by rainfall
    - Not glacier fed or river fed



# The Andes Region

- The Spine of South America
  - Longest mountain range in the world
  - Created by convergence of Nazca and South American tectonic plates





# Human Adaptations: Living at high altitude

- The Cocoa Plant – Tropical Plant that when eaten alleviates the symptoms of altitude sickness
- The Coffee Bean – warm (but not hot) climate and plenty of rain allows ideal growth of coffee beans



# The Llanos and Pampas

- Large Grasslands
  - Llanos located in Venezuela and Colombia
    - Tropical grassland
  - Pampas in Eastern Argentina and Uruguay
- Agricultural Lands
  - Good for animal grazing



# Atacama and Gran Chaco

- Large deserts formed by coastal rain shadows
- Atacama driest hot desert on earth
  - Nothing lives, in some places no recorded rainfall ever



# Patagonia

- Large plateaus and mountains covering southern Argentina
  - Southern range of Andes Mountains
- Primarily desert, semi-arid, and grasslands
  - Heavily glaciated



# Sources

- Encyclopedia Britannica
- World Wildlife Foundation