

Trees and Canada are like milk and cookies—they just go together. Of course, that isn't a big surprise when you remember we have a big maple leaf in the middle of our flag.

There are a lot of trees that grow in Canada. We have 9% of the world's forests, and they cover more than 40% of our land. If you put all of our forests together in one spot, it would be an area bigger than all of Ontario, Alberta, and Québec combined!

## How trees help fight climate change

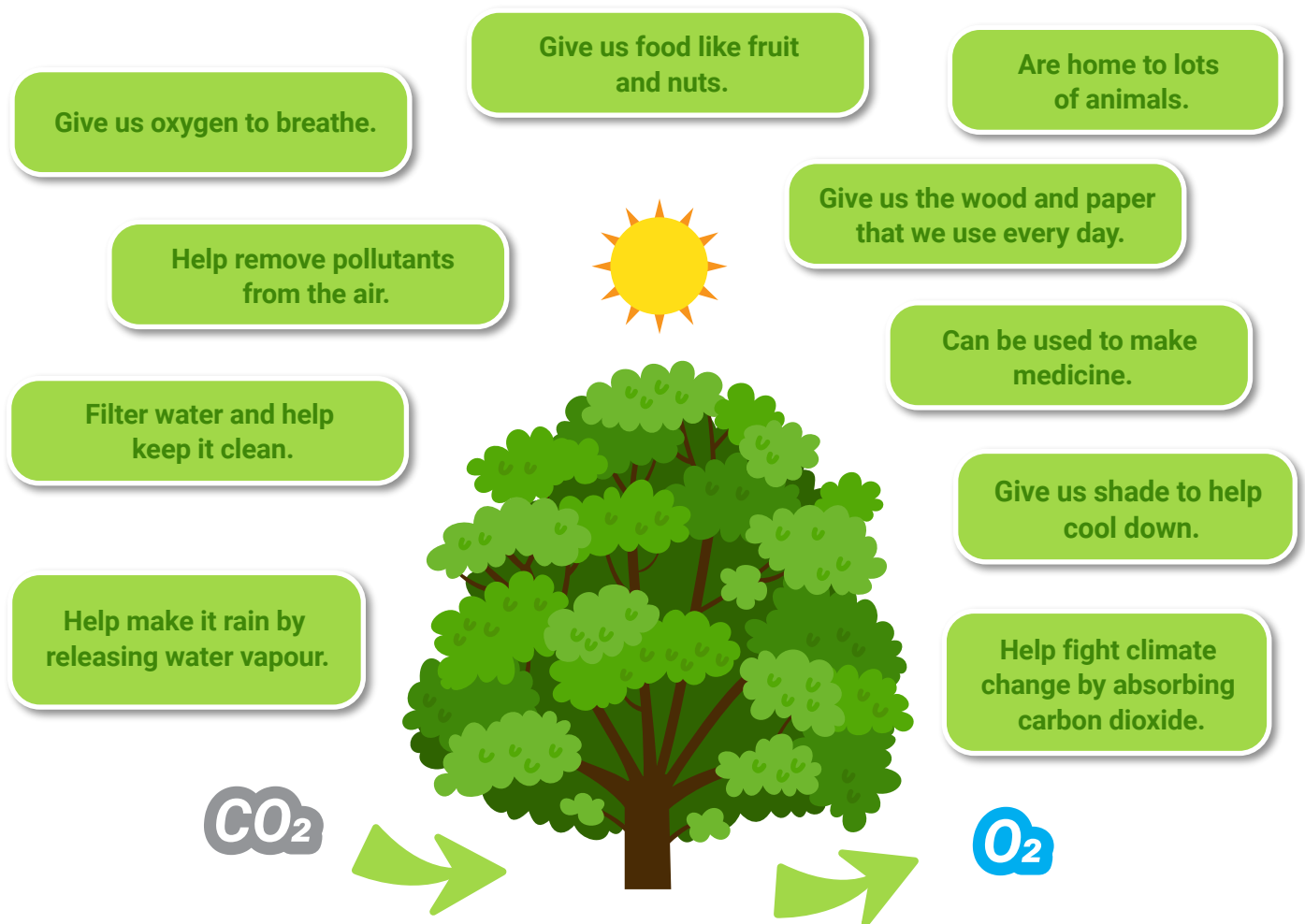
Not only do trees give us the oxygen that all living creatures need to survive, but they are also very important in the fight against climate change. Trees absorb greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the air and store it!

This is very helpful because today, humans are releasing more CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere than ever before. And that's a problem, because CO<sub>2</sub> traps heat from the sun and causes the temperature of the planet to rise and the climate to change. Climate change affects all living things on our planet! But the more trees we plant, the more CO<sub>2</sub> will be removed from the atmosphere, and the more we can help fight climate change.



## What trees do for us

We are really lucky to have so many trees. Not only are trees great for the planet, they also:



And of course, being around trees is just fun! Forests are great places to go camping, hiking, picnicking, and the list goes on! Getting outside, active and exploring is great for our bodies and minds.

Trees are also significant to Indigenous Peoples. For many, trees symbolize strength, wisdom, traditions and hope for the future. One Anishinaabe Elder shared that trees provide support throughout people's lives from babies and their cradleboards, to the elderly and their canes, helping them feel secure<sup>1</sup>. Wood and tree bark are used to build teaching lodges where traditional knowledge is shared. Other parts of trees can be turned into medicine or used to make things like arrows and snowshoes.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sciencerendezvous.ca/million-tree-project/fr/ressources/pourquoi-les-arbres-comptent-limportance-des-arbres-pour-les-premieres-nations/>

## Trees under threat

Trees are cut down for many reasons – like making wood, paper, and furniture. They're also cut down to make room for things like farmland, cities, and mines. The permanent removal of trees to make room for something other than forest is called deforestation.

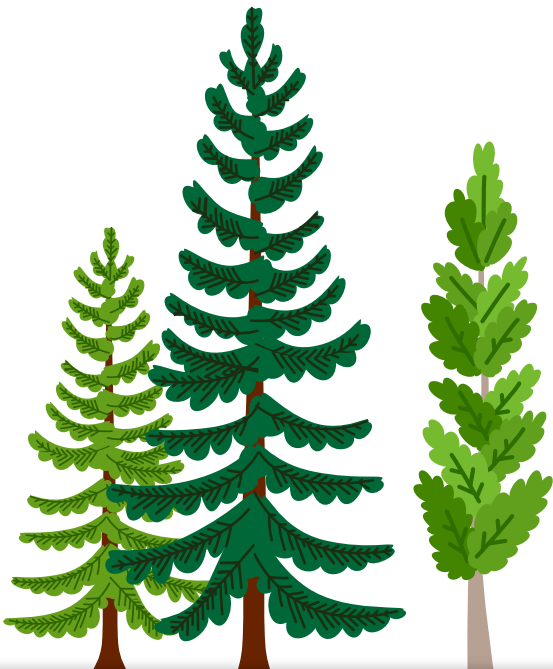
When deforestation happens, it causes a number of problems for the environment, like:

*Leaving fewer trees to absorb carbon dioxide, making climate change worse*

*Causing more natural disasters, like wildfires, landslides and flooding*

*Leaving animals homeless*

This is pretty gloomy stuff, right? The good thing is that there is a lot that we can do to help protect our trees. We can start by saving paper, planting trees, and making tree-friendly choices at the store, at school and at home!



Did you know that the Government of Canada has promised to plant 2 billion trees by 2030? That's right, **2 BILLION!** These trees will become homes for many animals, and be a HUGE help in the fight against climate change.