



SOUTH AMERICA NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Landforms

- The Andes Mountains stretch along entire Pacific coast
 - Created by volcanic activity (Ring of Fire)
 - Frequent earthquakes
- Lake Titicaca —massive fresh water lake that lies within the Andes
- Home of Angel Falls (world's highest waterfall; almost 3,000 feet high)



Angel Falls
(Venezuela)

Landforms

- Center of South America covered by
 - Llanos in the north
 - Amazon River Basin around the Amazon River
 - Gran Chaco in the center of the continent
 - Grassland in Argentina called
 - Patagonia on the southern end
- Atlantic coast has highlands formed from
 - Guiana Highlands in north
 - Brazilian Highlands in center

South America Landforms



Rivers

- 3 major river systems:
 - in the north
 - Amazon in the middle
 - World's river (not longest)
 - Sea-worthy ships can sail up it to
 - in the south



HydroSHEDS

Amazon Basin

River network derived
from SRTM elevation data
at 500 m resolution



Only
major
rivers and
streams are
visualized

River line width
proportional to
upstream basin area

0 500 1000
Kilometers

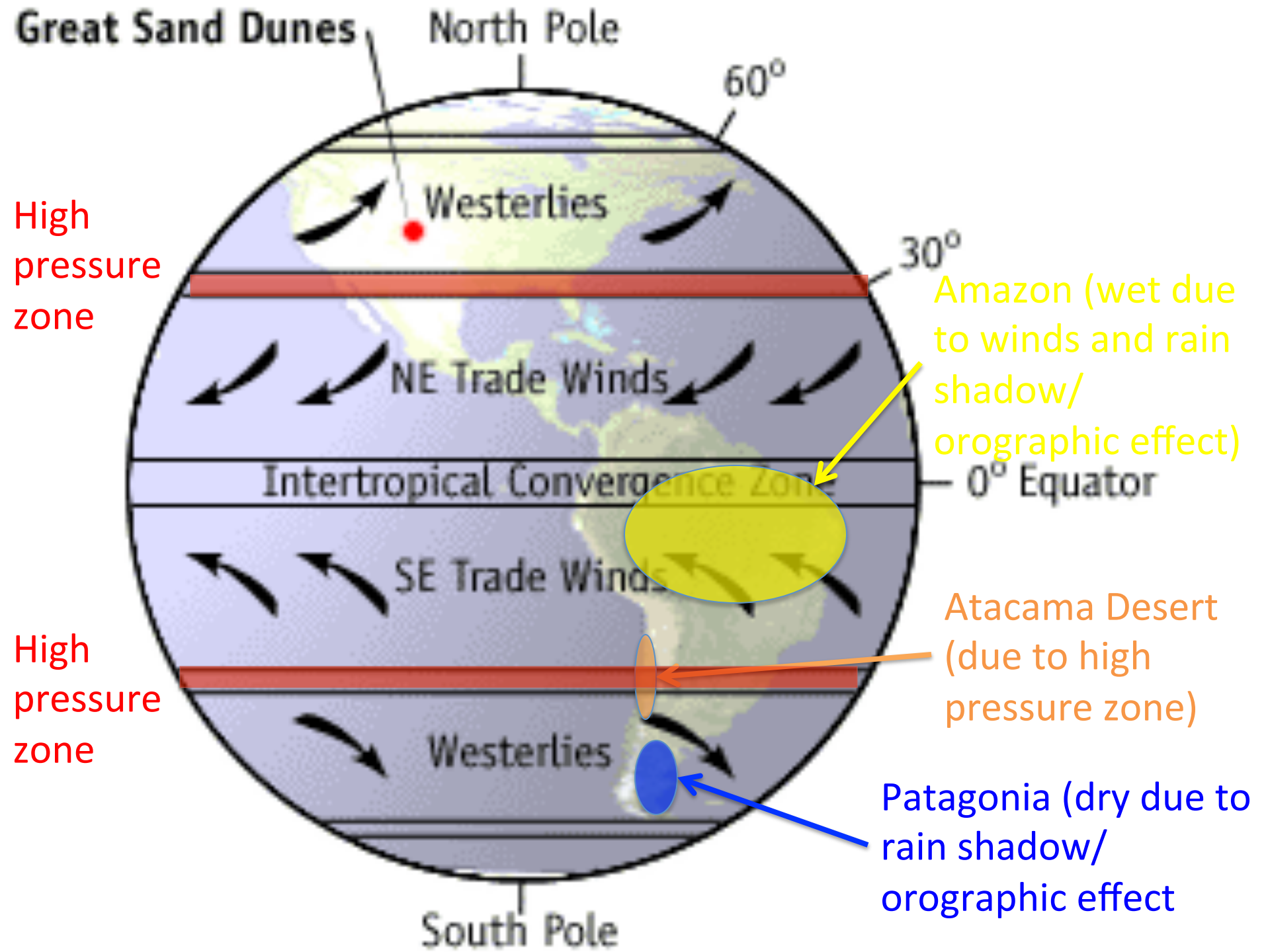


Climates, Plants, and Animals

- Amazon River Basin is home to the world's largest
 - Greatest on Earth
 - New are discovered often
- Elevation of the Andes creates 5 different climate zones
 - Hot and humid at sea level
 - Ice-covered peaks above
 - Line of elevation above which trees
- Most other areas have distinct wet and dry seasons

Climates, Plants, and Animals

- and dictate the climates of South America
 - Andes create a rain shadow in southern Argentina causing the Pampas to be so dry
 - Atacama Desert in Chile is one of the driest places on Earth
 - Created by high pressure and lack of wind
 - West coast of continent is affected by the El Nino/La Nina weather patterns
 - El Nino—Pacific becomes warmer causing drought in South America
 - La Nina—Pacific cools causing heavy rain in South America



Natural Resources

- Many rivers are dammed for _____ and _____
- Amazon Rainforest
 - _____ from the trees
 - Nuts and medicinal plants
- Mineral deposits
 - _____ in Brazil and Colombia
 - Copper in _____
 - _____, mostly in Venezuela (member of _____)