



# Fundamentals of the Physical Environment: Fourth Edition

*Peter Smithson, Ken Addison, Ken Atkinson*

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*Fundamentals of the Physical Environment* has established itself as a well-respected core introductory book for students of physical geography and the environmental sciences. Taking a systems approach, it demonstrates how the various factors operating at Earth's surface can and do interact, and how landscape can be used to decipher them. The nature of the earth, its atmosphere and its oceans, the main processes of geomorphology and key elements of ecosystems are also all explained. The final section on specific environments usefully sets in context the physical processes and human impacts.

This fourth edition has been extensively revised to incorporate current thinking and knowledge and includes:

- a new section on the history and study of physical geography
- an updated and strengthened chapter on climate change (9) and a strengthened section on the work of the wind
- a revised chapter (15) on cryosphere systems - glaciers, ice and permafrost
- a new chapter (23) on the principles of environmental reconstruction
- a new joint chapter (24) on polar and alpine environments
- a key new joint chapter (28) on current environmental change and future environments
- new material on the Earth System and cycling of carbon and nutrients
- themed boxes highlighting processes, systems, applications, new developments and human impacts
- a support website at [www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415395168](http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415395168) with discussion and essay questions, chapter summaries and extended case studies.

Clearly written, well-structured and with over 450 informative colour diagrams and 150 colour photographs, this text provides students with the necessary grounding in fundamental processes whilst linking these to their impact on human society and their application to the science of the environment.



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