



Fundamentals of the Physical Environment: Fourth Edition

By 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 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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Editorial Review

Review

'I still believe this book to be the best available introductory level text in the field.' – *Matthew Bampton, University of Southern Maine*

'The ideal text for environmental students to provide the foundation they need for understanding how the natural world works. This is plainly superior to standard earth system science treatments used in undergraduate teaching for its easily explored depth of enquiry, for the holistic picture it provides, for the clear graphical treatment of complex topics and for its simple and very natural organization. An overview of this scope and accessibility should be a "must read" for everyone concerned about the world's natural environment.' – *Rick Hazlett, Pomona College, California*

'The fourth edition takes this textbook firmly into a global society that is increasingly interested in the effects of climate change. New, updated and modernised chapters on current and future environmental change, weather-forming systems, climate forcing, and polar environments will strengthen its position amongst the top educational resources in physical geography and environmental sciences.' – *Jaco H. Baas, Bangor University*

'The best text for my first-year physical geography courses for over ten years...The authors are to be complimented on their clear and easy style.' – *Chris Young, Christchurch University College, Canterbury*

'If this book had been available during my undergraduate years, it would have saved me a lot of time and effort searching for several texts when this one book would have been sufficient... At such a reasonable price, this book is highly recommended for first year undergraduates who require a broad background in this field.' – *International Journal of Environmental Education and Information, Vol 17, No.1, Jan 98*

'This fourth edition contains numerous updated, in-depth discussions on topics organized under a systems approach and important to comprehensive study of the physical environment and Earth-based processes...Recommended.' – *Choice, May 2009*

About the Author

Peter Smithson is former Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography at the University of Sheffield. His research interests include: precipitation climatology (applications in UK, Sri Lanka and Brazil); cave climatology; and climate change, especially in semi-arid environments. He has over 50 publications, and over 40 refereed research papers in journals.

Ken Addison is Senior Lecturer at the School of Applied Sciences, University of Wolverhampton, and Fellow and Tutor in Physical Geography at St Peter's College, University of Oxford. His research interests include: Quaternary stratigraphy and geomorphology, with special interest in Wales; geotechnical and geomorphological studies of recent and contemporary slope stability; earth science conservation strategy and practice; and Medieval environmental change.

Ken Atkinson is former Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of Leeds. His research interests include: soil science; ecosystems; and resource management. He has worked on environmental management in Canada for a number of years, and has co-organised six international conferences on Canadian resource management and planning.

Users Review

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Frances Heath:

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