

Energy Flux through Ecosystems

4.6 Ga

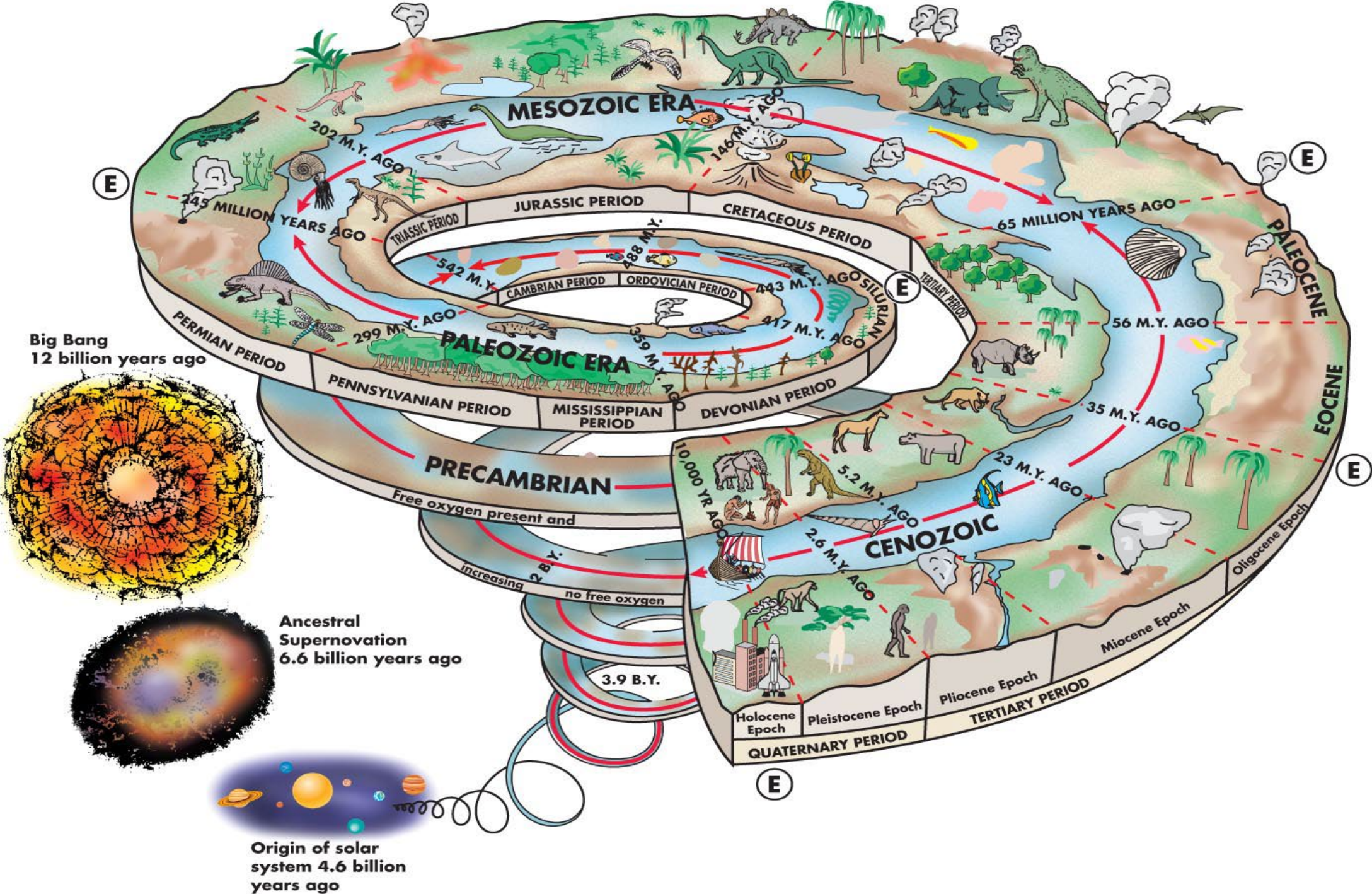


TABLE 1.2 Geologic Time with Important Events

Era	Period	Epoch	Million Years before Present	Events		Million Years before Present	True Scale (Million Years before Present)
				Life	Earth		
Cenozoic	Quaternary	Holocene	0.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extinction event Modern humans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Age Formation of Transverse Ranges, CA 	2.6	Cenozoic
		Pleistocene					
	Tertiary	Pliocene	2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grasses Whales Extinction event Mammals expand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of Andes Mountains Collision of India with Asia forming Himalayan Mountains and Tibetan Plateau Rocky Mountains form 		
		Miocene	5.2				
		Oligocene	23				
		Eocene	34				
		Paleocene	56				
Mesozoic	Cretaceous		65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dinosaur extinction¹, extinction event Flowering plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emplacement of Sierra Nevada Granites (Yosemite National Park) 	65	Mesozoic
		Jurassic	146	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supercontinent Pangaea begins to break up 		
	Triassic	202	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mammals Dinosaurs 	251		Paleozoic	
Paleozoic	Permian		251	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extinction event Reptiles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Age 	542	Precambrian
	Carboniferous		299	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees (coal swamps) Extinction event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appalachian Mountains form 		
		Devonian	359				
	Silurian		416	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land plants Extinction event 			
	Ordovician		444	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish 			
	Cambrian		488	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explosion of organisms with shells 			
Precambrian			542	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicelled organisms Free oxygen in atmosphere and ozone layer in stratosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Age 	4600	
			2500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primitive life (first fossils) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Age 		
			3500		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oldest rocks 		
			4000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age of Earth 		
			4600			4600	

TABLE 1.3 How We Became 6 Billion heading to 8+ billion 2050 est. 9.7 billion

40,000–9,000 B.C.: Hunters and Gatherers

Population density about 1 person per 100 km² of habitable areas;¹ total population probably less than a few million; average annual growth rate less than 0.0001% (doubling time about 700,000 years)

9,000 B.C.–A.D. 1600: Preindustrial Agricultural

Population density about 1 person per 3 km² of habitable areas (about 300 times that of the hunter and gatherer period); total population about 500 million; average annual growth rate about 0.03% (doubling time about 2,300 years)

A.D. 1600–1800: Early Industrial

Population density about 7 persons per 1 km² of habitable areas; total population by 1800 about 1 billion; annual growth rate about 0.1% (doubling time about 700 years)

A.D. 1800–2000: Modern

Population density about 40 persons per 1 km²; total population in 2000 about 6.1 billion; annual growth rate at 2000 about 1.4% (doubling time about 50 years)

Energy Flow

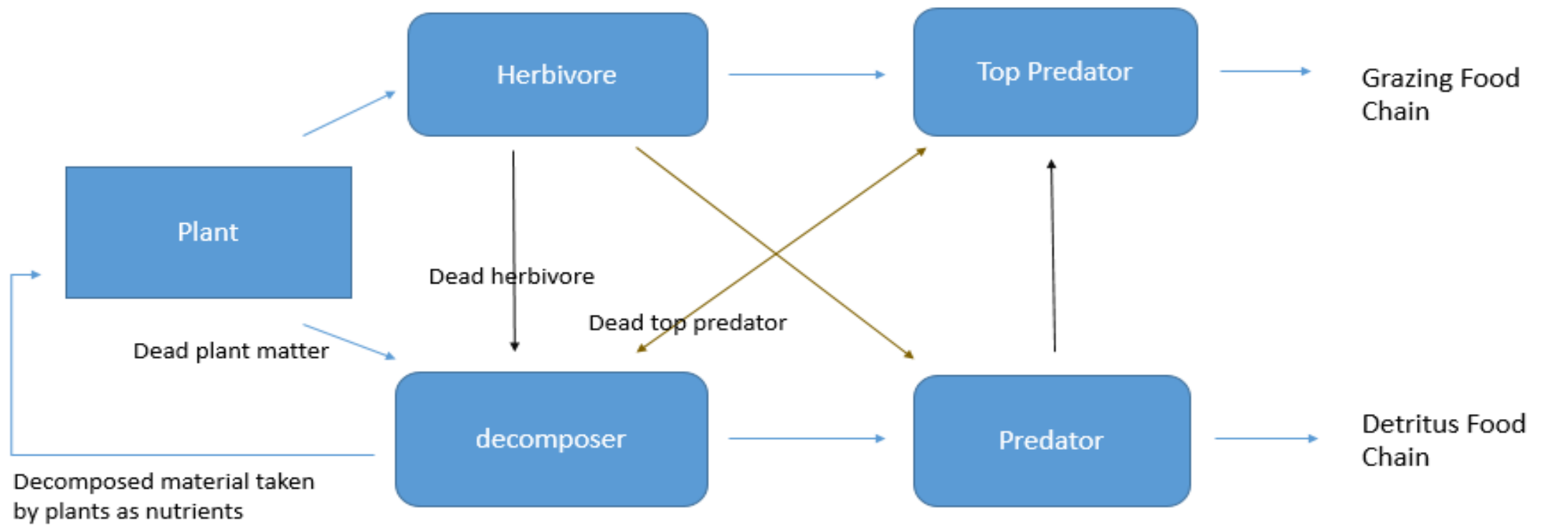
- Endogenic = Energy generated from within the Earth E.g.?
- Exogenic = Energy derived from outside the Earth E.g.?
- Anthropogenic = Human altered... concentrated... changed...

Comprehensive Systems

Ecosystems
Environments
Landscapes

Characterizing, modeling, interpreting Earth System requires...

1. Calculating energy and mass balance 'budgets'
2. Quantifying changes in exo and endo energy sources
 - a. Intensities
 - b. Distributions



3. An understanding of the Earth's oceans! They are very important in understanding energy distribution, storage, and transfer throughout all systems.

4. Recognize and account for humanity's ability to concentrate energy and power (energy per unit of time)

Earth - A System

Components

- Atmosphere
- Hydrosphere
- Biosphere
- Lithosphere



Anthropogenic
manipulation

Systems contain components that mutually adjust, so that changes in one part of the system bring about changes to other parts.

Principle of Environmental Unity

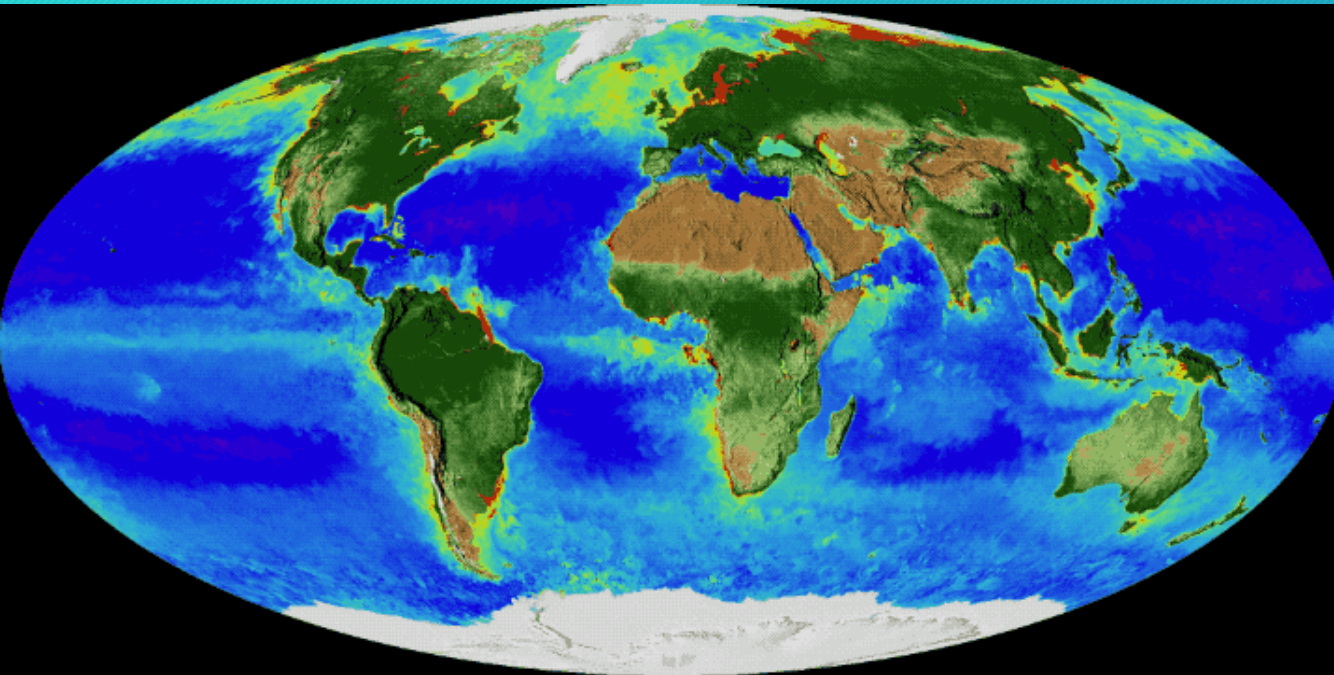
“Anything affects
Everything else”

“Everything affects
Everything else”



Gaia Hypothesis - Earth as an organism

James
Lovelock



1. Life significantly affects planetary environments.
2. Life affects environments for the planets betterment.
3. Life deliberately OR consciously controls the global environment.

Major Earth System Types

- **Open** - A system that exchanges material and energy with its surroundings.
- Sun's Exogenic energy
 - Some is absorbed/received
 - Some is reflected
- **Closed** - Most of the Earth's material is continuously recycled.
- Mass/material is neither gained or lost just changed.
- Rock and Water cycles

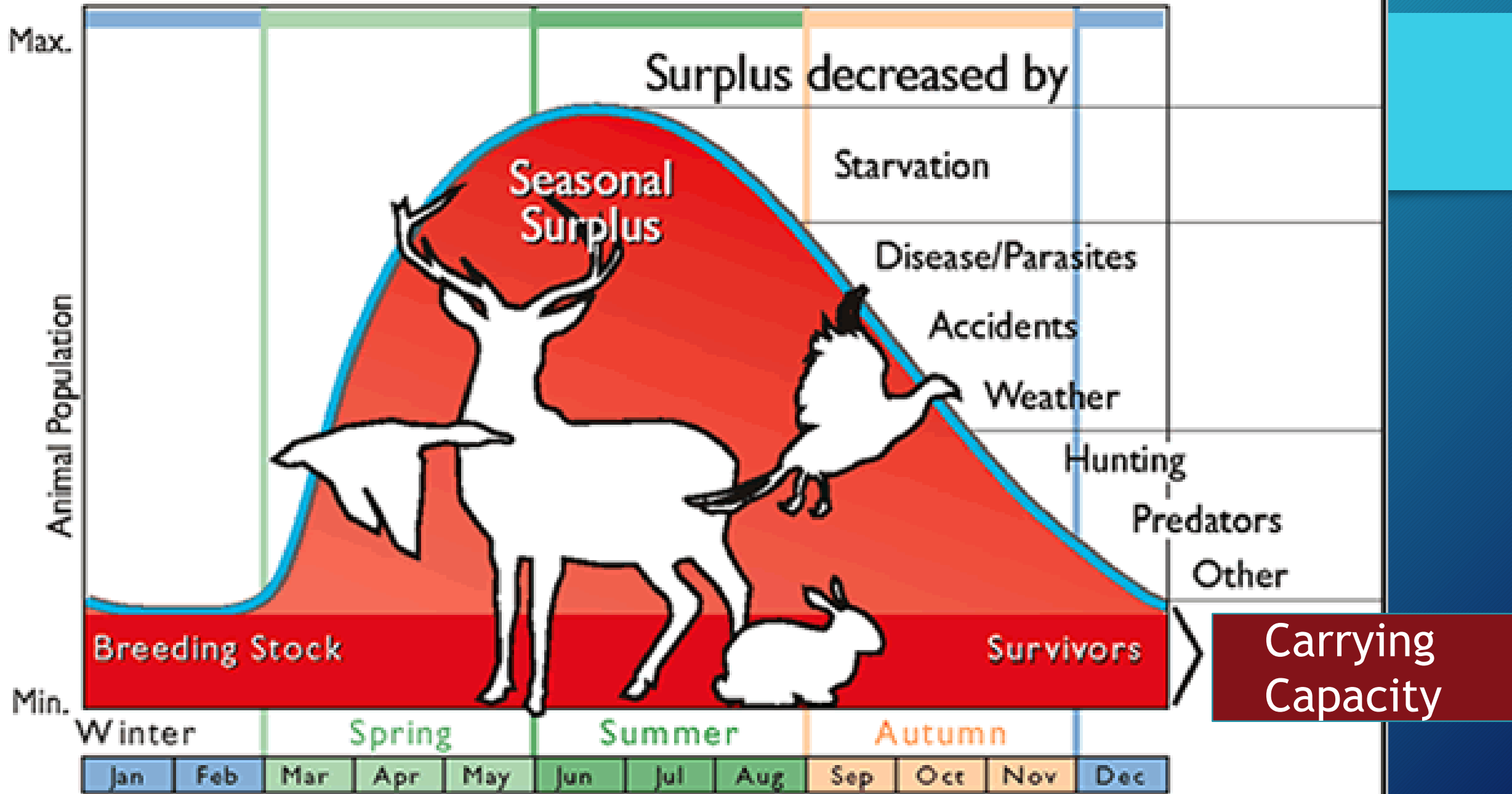
System complexity



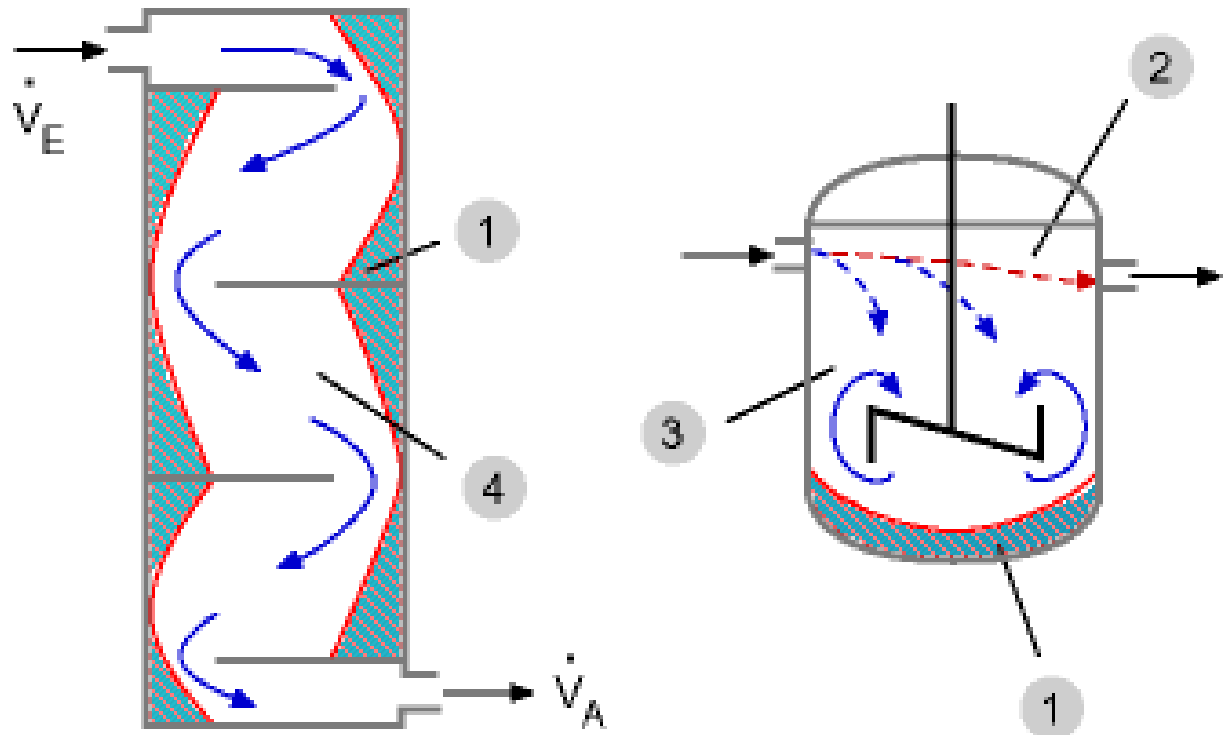
The Greenhouse Effect

- **Feedbacks**
 - Positive
 - Negative

Atmosphere



Residence time



- A measure of the time it takes for the total stock/supply of a material to move through a system
- $rT = S/F$
 - S = size of stock
 - F = rate of transfer

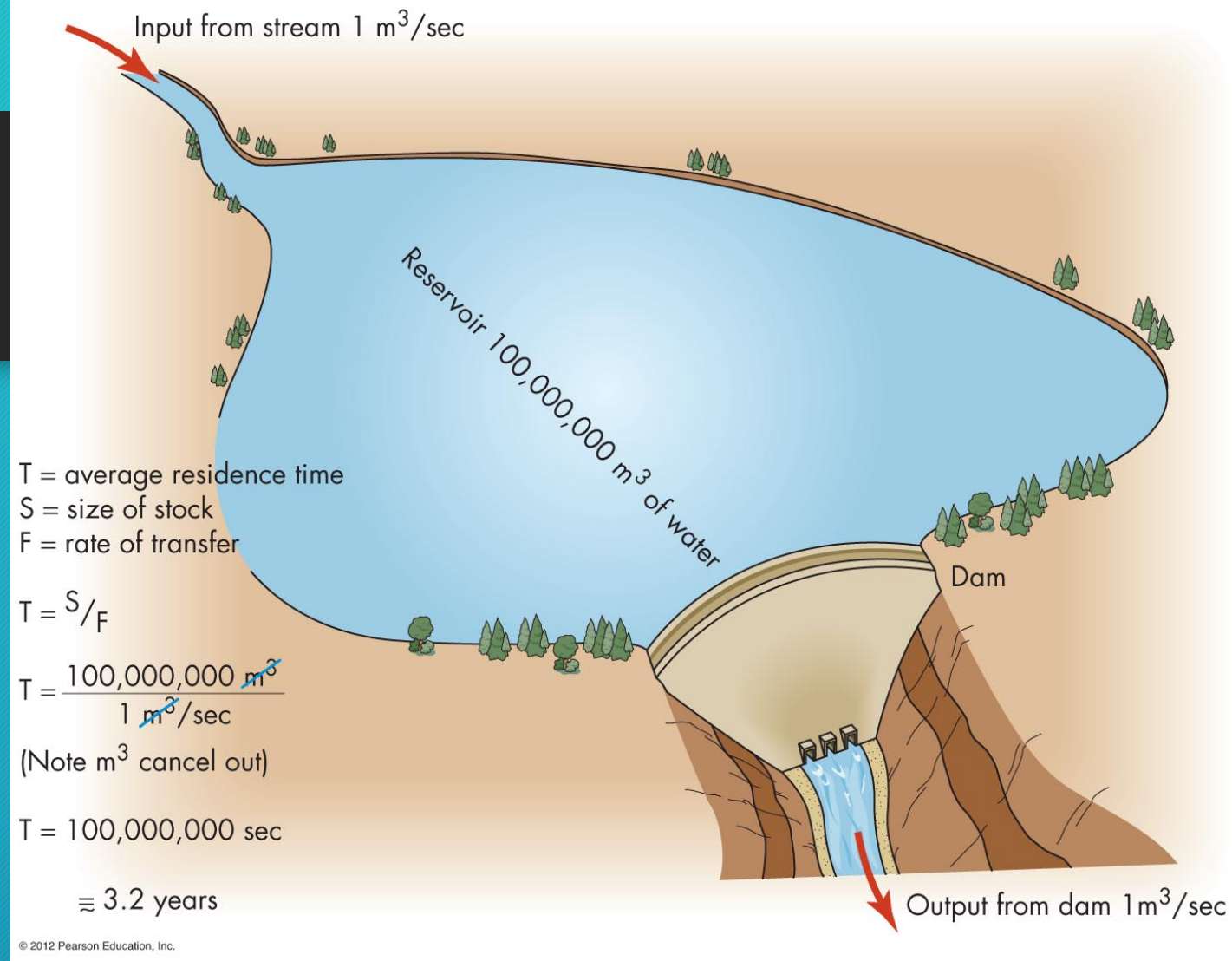
Question

- How long (in years) does it take for a cubic meter of water to move through a reservoir (e.g. lake)?

• E.g.

$$S = 100,000,000 \text{ m}^3$$

$$F = 1 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$$



Challenge question

How long does it take for a cubic meter of water to move through Lake Superior?

Its average depth is 80.5 fathoms (147 m) with a maximum depth of 222.17 fathoms (406 m). Lake Superior contains **12,100 km³ of water**. (approx. 10% of the Earth's fresh water!)

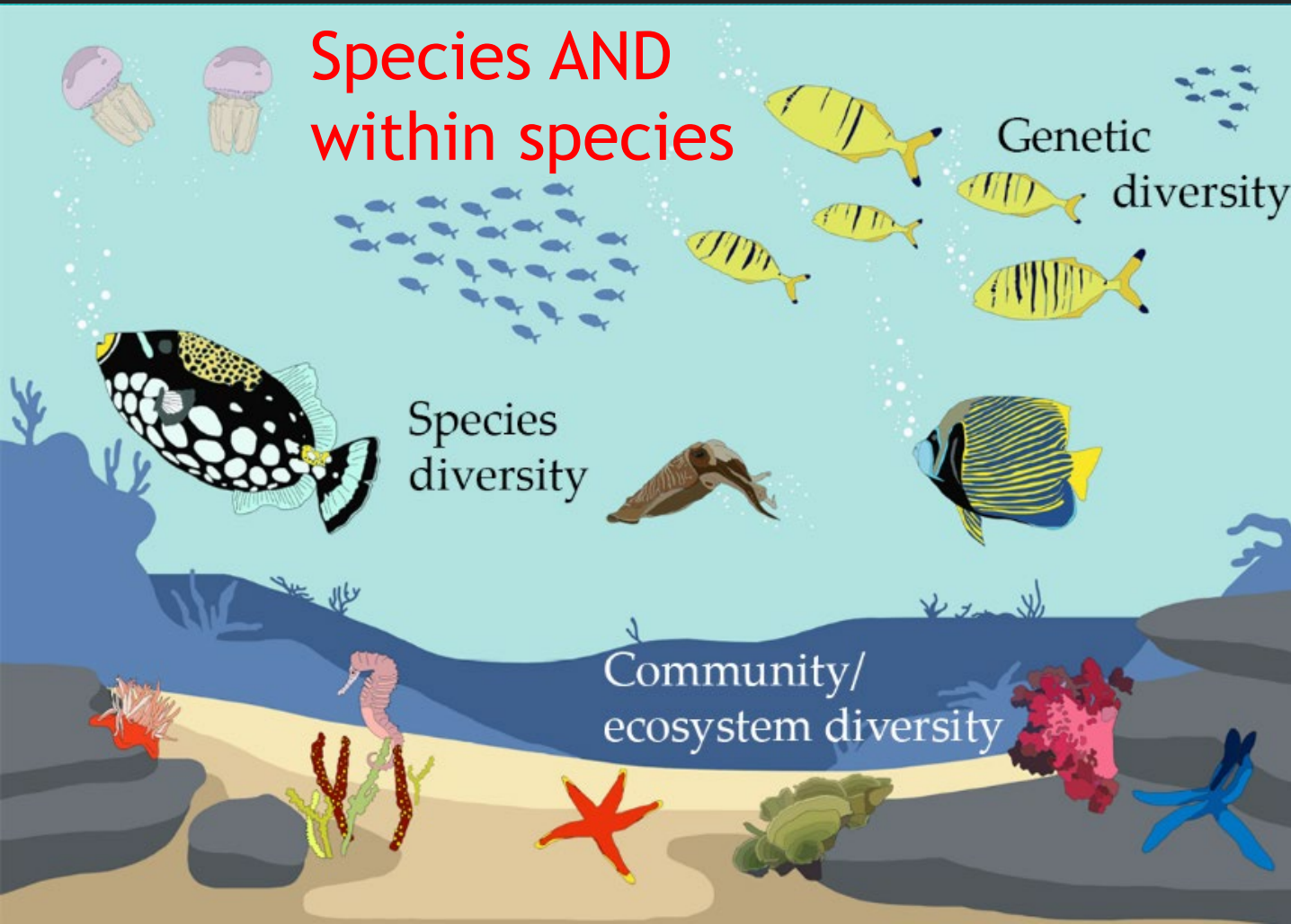
Transfer rate = 2,124 cubic meters per sec.



Exponential Growth

- Human population
- On Sunday 2/7/21 at 10am
- 7,844,324,527
- Are we at or beyond the Earth's carrying capacity?
- What factors determine this?
- Humans vs All life?
- Importance?
- Specific links to Earth Science?

Biodiversity



Number or abundance of species in and environment or ecological community.

An indicator of environmental health

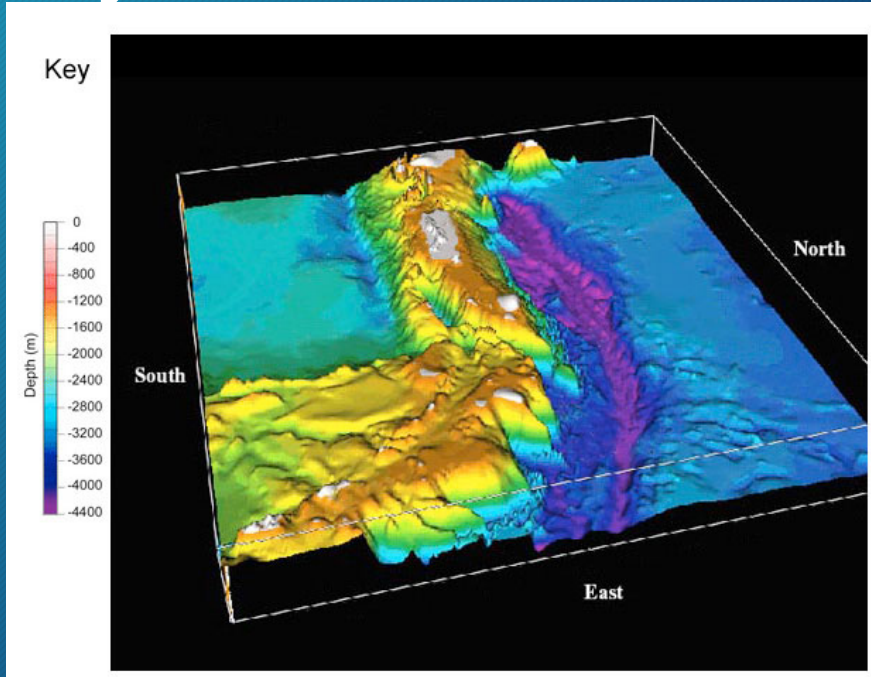
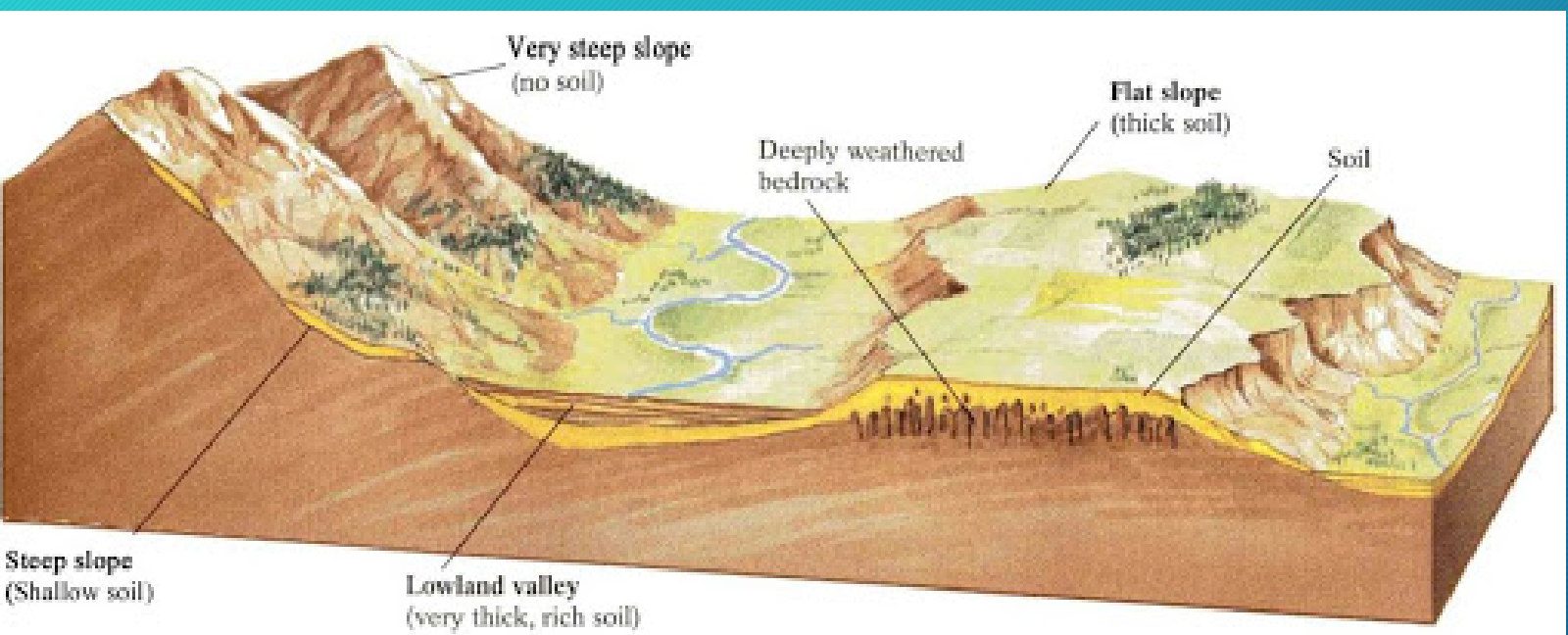
Geology's influence in Biodiversity

Small scale

Minerals available to soil development

Large scale

Plate tectonics to ocean bathymetry and currents



Biodiversity's role in Geology

Keystone species - Two or more organisms interacting in complex ways that affect other organism and their environments.

TROPHIC CASCADE MODEL



Other ecosystem responses

TROPHIC CASCADE WITHOUT WOLVES

Wolves absent (1926-1995)



Elk browse woody species unimpeded by predation risk



Decreased recruitment of woody browse species (aspen, cottonwood, willow, and others)



Loss of riparian functions



Channel incision and widening, loss of wetlands, loss of hydrologic connectivity between streams and floodplains



Loss of beavers



Loss of food web support for aquatic, avian, and other fauna

TROPHIC CASCADE WITH WOLVES

Wolves restored (1995)



Elk foraging and movement patterns adjust to predation risk



Increased recruitment of woody browse species



Recovery of riparian functions



Channels stabilize, recovery of wetlands and hydrologic connectivity



Recolonization of beavers



Recovery of food web support for aquatic, avian, and other fauna

References

- <http://www.northshoreinfo.com/lakesuperior/>