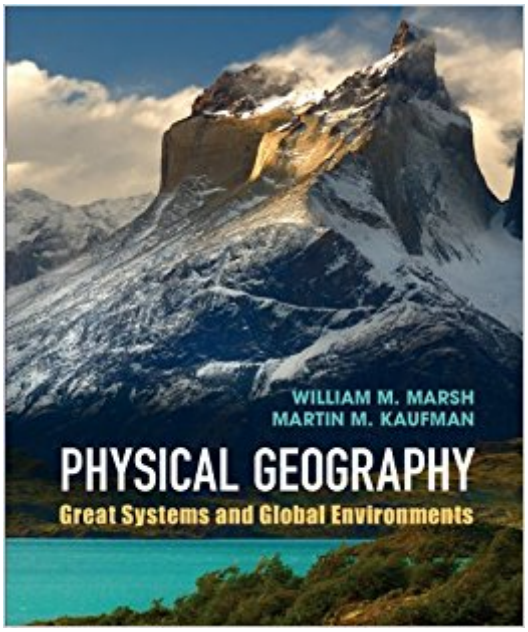
# Physical Geography: Great Systems And Global Environments



## Synopsis

The physical geography of Earth is explained through the systems that shape the planet's lands, waters, and atmosphere. Written in an easy narrative style, each chapter combines text with more than 40 single-concept illustrations. The result is a distinctive design that weaves words and illustrations together into an integrated whole. The presentation is uncluttered to keep students focused on the main themes. An entire chapter is dedicated to climate change, its geographic origins, likely outcomes, and influence on other Earth systems. A distinctive illustration program includes summary diagrams at the end of chapters that recap concepts and reinforce the systems approach. Section summaries within chapters, along with end-of-chapter review points and questions, are provided to highlight key concepts and encourage thoughtful review of the material. The instructor's guidebook highlights the core concepts in each chapter and suggests strategies to advance a systems approach in teaching physical geography.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Marsh and Kaufman eloquently link the science of physical geography with the impacts of human activities. As such this text is a perfect tool for encouraging students to become environmentally-informed citizens." Dean P. Lambert, Department of Geography, San Antonio College, Texas"At last, a textbook that successfully merges a graphic storyline with the text to describe the interconnectedness of Earth's great physical systems. The authors do a masterful job using this approach to explain the geographic character of the planet. This textbook will be understandable to both science and non-science majors." Dr Richard Crooker, Department of

Geography, Kutztown University, Pennsylvania"Authoritative, useful, balanced, and wise, this is more than a textbook. It is, rather, a modernized classic and comprehensive presentation of the physical geography perspective of the great natural systems operating on planet Earth ... should be successful with students and teachers alike as the scientific process and physical science fundamentals are presented with relevance to everyday life." Dean Fairbanks, Department of Geography and Planning, California State University, Chico"Will Marsh, an excellent scientist and a talented artist, has written the best textbooks in physical geography for three decades, and [this] new offering ... continues this tradition. The book's distinctive features include explanations that start from a comprehensible scale that the student can understand, along with gorgeous illustrations." Jeff Dozier, Bren School of Environmental Science and Management, University of California, Santa Barbara"... an all-encompassing textbook filled with stunning pictures and dozens of single-concept diagrams that, combined with clear text, eloquently describe Earth's physical geography ... a great tool to teach about naturogenic and anthropogenic factors of change, such as volcanic eruptions or human-made pollution, to science and non-science undergraduates alike ... The book is overall very well presented and organised: the structure of individual chapters and their presentation are excellent...The usefulness of Physical Geography as a teaching resource is further displayed in the companion volume and online materials ... Any textbook that encourages students to be the environmentally conscious citizens of tomorrow is welcome - and Physical Geography is an ideal volume." Barbara Ferriera, GeoQ"Text and graphics are complementary and well integrated. It is very much a 'learning and teaching' tool, and is backed by copious online resources. It should be suitable for [advanced high school] or undergraduate students ... In short, the book is excellent, providing not merely the details of its subject but demonstrating how to study physical geography from an inclusive, truly holistic viewpoint." Steve Rowlatt, The Geological Society"... the breadth of its coverage is far greater than [A-level textbooks] and goes well beyond [them] ... the book may serve to whet a curious student's appetite to study physical geography in further depth ..." Harriet Allen, Geological Magazine

The physical geography of Earth is explained with a systems perspective. Written in an easy narrative style, each chapter combines text with more than 40 single-concept illustrations in an integrated working whole. In-chapter summaries, summary diagrams and a comprehensive instructor's guide complete the package.

The last word on the page were not visible because the binding cut them off.

Ideal resource text for high school teachers in the English speaking Caribbean.

Would definitely purchase again. Very pleased with this purchase. Text was required for a class and I will definitely be keeping it.

served the purpose of a text book.

Overall, the kindle edition is good, but the page numbers go from 0-22026. There are really only 700 some pages, and the number increases by any number between 5 and 20 for every page, making it impossible to find a specific page.

Thank you very much, I received the book brand new like you mentioned. I will be recommending you to my friends and family.

In my three years teaching a college-level course in introductory Physical Geography, I have already read a very large number of textbooks. If you are an instructor, then you've probably done the same. What I've found is that many of the textbook offerings are nearly identical in terms of their basic content, explanatory styles, and visualizations. Certain books focus more on high-quality visualizations, but their spectacular images often seem to come at the price of reduced textual depth. Other books focus on textual depth, but introduce so many vocabulary terms and concepts that they seem guaranteed to overwhelm first- or second-year students. Despite such variations, most of the introductory physical geography textbooks that I've read share the following commonalities: (1) they explain the material in precisely the same way, even if some use greater numbers of details; (2) they all use the same basic images and figures, dressed up slightly differently; and (3) they are written with a regrettable lack of ear for language, and so they seem stilted or awkward or unengaging. Marsh and Kaufman's textbook has none of these flaws.In terms of explanation, this book manages to go into much greater depth than others in explaining how and where different physical phenomena occur. My sudden realization while reading Marsh and Kaufman's textbook was this: many of the competing textbooks are probably best read backwards. In other words, they are most useful when you start from the index and flip back to the indicated page for each particular concept. On that page you will find a truncated, two- or three-paragraph explanation that is probably only loosely connected to the preceding and succeeding sections of

text. Marsh and Kaufman’s book is quite different. It is most certainly meant to be read forward, not backward. The authors’ continual emphasis on physical systems (a focus that, incidentally, puts their textbook on theoretically more solid ground than many others) allows them to unfold their explanations in a logical and natural way over several pages or even over an entire chapter. This slow, steady integration makes it harder for students to flip backward from the index and find some kind of single-sentence answer; but it will be much easier for students to read the entire chapter in a forward direction, one page after another. This book is meant to be read, not referenced. As a result, while most physical geography textbooks seem to be peddling knowledge, "Great Systems and Global Environments" trades in a more elusive commodity: understanding.The visualizations in the book are conceived and executed in a similarly pleasing and logical manner. Again, they do not look like the figures in other physical geography textbooks. They are relatively small, they are placed next to the portion of the text they supplement, they are focused on very particular concepts, and they are often related quite logically to the preceding and succeeding images. In other words, you will not find a single page on which the publisher uses the "kitchen sink" strategy of visualizations: one or two paragraphs of text drowned out by multiple, brightly colored, complex figures. Nor will you find the same basic images as in other textbooks, simply dressed up in fancier graphics or different colors. The authors also refrain from the strategy of cramming ever more details into every image (often referred to as making them "more realistic"). While some readers may actually enjoy the current visualizations "arms race" in textbook publishing, to me the simplified, focused, and sequential quality of the images in this book comes as a much-needed breath of fresh air.Finally, in terms of language, this book simply glows. It is beautifully and engagingly written. I frequently assign textbook reading to my students, but I normally do so with great inner reluctance. The assigned texts are often so dense and so poorly written that I myself struggle to read through multiple pages in one sitting. By contrast, I find this textbook a delight to read, and not only for its use of language. Its explanations are crafted with great clarity, and it links together successive concepts in a logical and seamless way. Moreover, its use of textual detail is both quantitatively and qualitatively on target. In other words, it uses the right amount of detail (it left me neither overwhelmed with details, nor starving for more of them), while also choosing the right kinds of details: those that are probably the most helpful for student comprehension.Shortcomings? Certainly there are some, depending on your own particular preferences and objectives. For example, the systems focus is not very amenable to simple classifications or lists of seemingly static things. The book does not list as many different types of landforms as some books (but it explains far better the ones that its does include). It does not linger on traditional climate classifications (it runs through

them adequately, but expends far more effort examining climate as a "system of systems"). Likewise, the book does not linger on traditional biome classification (again, it runs through them but focuses equal attention on often-undersold topics like plant habits and animal migrations). So if you simply want an encyclopedic textbook that includes at least a brief mention of "all the things", then this may not be your best option. But if you want a book that explains how "most of the things" really work, and does so with great clarity, then this textbook should go near the top of your list. It’s an extraordinarily well planned and well executed textbook that probably deserves much wider circulation.