

# Project glossary

## **altitude**

The height of an object or point above sea level.

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## **altitudinal zone**

One layer out of many that naturally occur in mountainous regions to form a particular habitat.

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## **base**

The bottom of a mountain where it meets flat or gently sloping land.

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## **bog**

A freshwater wetland that has soft, spongy ground and is often made of dead plant material called peat.

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## **collection**

The process of water gathering in oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams after falling as precipitation.

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## **condensation**

The process of a gas or vapour cooling down and changing state into a liquid.

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## **contour line**

A line on a map that joins areas of equal height above sea level.

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## **delta**

A triangular piece of land at the mouth of a river formed by a build-up of sediment.

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## **deposition**

The process of rock and soil in flowing water settling on the riverbed as the water slows down.

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## **dome mountain**

A type of mountain formed when magma pushes up against the Earth's crust to form a dome-shaped mountain with a flat top and gently sloping sides.



**downstream**

The direction in which a stream or river is flowing.

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**elevation**

A mountain’s height.

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**erosion**

To wear away and remove rock and soil by wind or water.

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**estuary**

A partly enclosed body of water, where fresh water from the river mixes with salt water from the sea.

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**evaporation**

The process of a liquid heating up and changing state into a gas or vapour.

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**fault-block mountain**

A type of mountain formed at tectonic plate boundaries where one side is forced up to form a mountain and the other side moves downwards to create a valley.

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**floodplain**

An area of flat land next to a river that floods when the river bursts its banks.

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**fold mountain**

A type of mountain that forms when tectonic plates move and collide with each other, forcing one plate down and the other up.

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**groundwater**

Underground water that is held in the soil and the rocks.

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**gulley**

A large channel in a river that forms from rills.

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**habitat**

A place where plants and animals live.



**interlocking spurs**

Ridges that are formed when a river meanders around areas of harder rock.

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**lake**

A large body of water that is surrounded by land.

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**lower course**

The part of a river furthest from the source that is usually flat and wide where the river flows into estuaries or creates deltas.

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**meander**

A bend in a river or stream.

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**middle course**

The middle part of a river that is usually deeper and slower and curves in meanders.

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**mountain**

A large, raised part of the Earth’s surface that is much higher than a hill.

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**mouth**

The place where a river flows into the sea.

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**oxbow lake**

A curved lake that was once a meander in a river.

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**peak**

The highest point of a mountain.

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**plateau**

An area of flat, high ground found on some mountains.

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**plateau mountain**

A type of mountain formed when the land is lifted by magma below the Earth’s crust to create a flat-topped plateau.

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**precipitation**

The process of water droplets joining and falling to Earth as rain, sleet, snow or hail.



**ridge**

A long, narrow section of high, rocky ground that connects one mountain to another.

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**rill**

A small channel formed by running water.

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**river**

A body of water that flows downhill, usually to the sea.

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**riverbed**

The ground at the bottom of a river.

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**sediment**

Very small pieces of sand, soil and stone that form through the process of erosion.

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**slope**

A side of a mountain that is usually steep and rocky.

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**source**

The place where a river starts.

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**spring**

A natural flow of water from the ground.

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**stream**

A small, narrow river.

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**topography**

The physical appearance of an area of land, especially relating to its shape and surface.

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**transportation**

The process where rock and soil, worn away by erosion, are transported down a river.

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**tributary**

A river or stream that flows into a larger river or lake.



**upper course**

The part of a river near the source that is usually steep, narrow and rocky with fast-flowing, turbulent water.

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**valley**

An area of low land between mountains, often with a river running through it.

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**volcanic mountain**

A type of mountain formed when lava, ash and gases erupt through the Earth’s crust and cool to form a symmetrical mountain with steep sides.

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**V-shaped valley**

A deep, straight channel that has been cut into the rock by erosion.

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**water cycle**

The continuous process by which water evaporates from the sea, rivers and land into the atmosphere where it condenses into clouds, and falls back to the Earth’s surface as rain, sleet or snow.

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**water vapour**

Water in the form of a gas produced by evaporation.

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**waterfall**

A cascade of water that falls from a higher level to a lower level.

