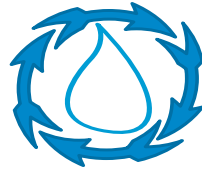


HYDROLOGIC CYCLE OVERVIEW



The Hydrologic Cycle, or water cycle, is one of the most important cycles in our world. There is a finite supply of water on the planet. It supplies us with drinking water and is home to a vast number of species. The oceans help to circulate temperature, and provide water for rain and snow clouds. Understanding the hydrologic cycle helps to connect weather, climate, biodiversity and the loss of species, and environmental awareness.

Rain and snow clouds, with water in the form of a gas, precipitate into regions and rejuvenate their water supplies. It is important to know that, when water is in the form of a gas, warmer air can hold more water molecules than cooler air. If temperature changes suddenly, the air cools and can hold less water molecules in the form of gas. Water molecules combine with dust particles in the air and eventually become heavy enough, depending on a number of variables including temperature, to fall as precipitation. Because winter air is much cooler than summer air, the air is much drier in the winter.

Water can be trapped in an ocean, a glacier, groundwater, or rapidly cycle through clouds, rivers, lakes, animals, and plants. The same water here today was on the planet when dinosaurs were swimming in it and drinking it. Because water is a finite resource, polluting it can be detrimental to us and to other organisms.