The Living World: Biodiversity

AP Environmental Science · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
biodiversity /ˌbaɪəʊdaɪˈvɜːsɪti/	A rainforest has high **biodiversity**.
environmental stressors /enˌvaɪrənˈmentl ˈstresəz/	Pollution and drought are **environmental stressors**.
species richness /ˈspiːsiːz ˈrɪtʃnəs/	A forest with ten kinds of tree has higher **species richness** than one with six.
population bottleneck /ˌpɒpjʊˈleɪʃn ˈbɒtəlnek/	A **population bottleneck** happens when most of a population dies.
resilient /rɪˈsɪlɪənt/	A **resilient** ecosystem recovers quickly after a fire.
specialist /ˈspeʃəlɪst/	A panda is a **specialist**: it eats almost only bamboo.
generalist /ˈdʒenərəlɪst/	A rat is a **generalist**: it can live almost anywhere.
ecosystem services /ˈiːkəʊsɪstəm ˈsɜːvɪsɪz/	Clean water and pollination are **ecosystem services**.
anthropogenic /ˌænθrəpəˈdʒenɪk/	**Anthropogenic** changes are caused by humans.
island biogeography /ˈaɪlənd ˌbaɪəʊdʒɪˈɒgrəfi/	**Island biogeography** says large islands near land have more species.
endemic /enˈdemɪk/	Lemurs are **endemic** to Madagascar: they live nowhere else. Madagascar
invasive species /ɪnˈveɪsɪv ˈspiːsiːz/	Rabbits became an **invasive species** in Australia.

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habitat fragmentation /ˈhæbɪtæt ˌfrægmənˈteɪʃn/	Roads cause **habitat fragmentation** by splitting forests.
wildlife corridors	**Wildlife corridors** let animals move between habitats.
range of tolerance /reɪndʒ ɒv ˈtɒlərəns/	Fish die outside their **range of tolerance** for temperature.
optimal range /ˈɒptɪml reɪndʒ/	A species does best in its **optimal range** of temperature.
zones of stress /zəʊnz ɒv stres/	In the **zones of stress**, few animals survive.
ecological tolerance /ˌekəˈlɒdʒɪkl ˈtɒlərəns/	**Ecological tolerance** is the range of conditions a species can live in.
periodic /ˌpɪəriˈɒdɪk/	A **periodic** event happens regularly, like seasons.
episodic /ˌepɪˈsɒdɪk/	An **episodic** event happens now and then, like a drought.
random /ˈrændəm/	Decay is **random**: we cannot say which nucleus decays next.
migration /maɪˈgreɪʃn/	Birds fly south in their winter **migration**.
adaptation /ˌædæpˈteɪʃn/	Thick fur is an **adaptation** to cold weather.
natural selection /ˈnætʃərəl sɪˈlekʃn/	**Natural selection** means the best-suited animals survive and have young.

Word	Example
ecological succession /ˌekəˈlɒdʒɪkl səkˈseʃn/	**Ecological succession** is the slow change of a community over time.
primary succession /ˈpraɪməri səkˈseʃn/	**Primary succession** starts on bare rock.
pioneer species /paɪəˈnɪə ˈspiːsiːz/	A **pioneer species**, such as moss, is the first to grow on bare ground.
lichens /ˈlaɪkənz/	**Lichens** are often the first living things on bare rock.
secondary succession /ˈsekəndəri səkˈseʃn/	**Secondary succession** happens after a fire, where soil remains.
climax community /ˈklaɪmæks kəˈmjuːnɪti/	A **climax community** is the stable final stage of succession.
keystone species /ˈkiːstəʊn ˈspiːsiːz/	A **keystone species** has a large effect on its ecosystem.
indicator species /ˈɪndɪkeɪtə ˈspiːsiːz/	An **indicator species** shows how clean or dirty the water is.

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