

Knowledge Organiser: European Biomes

What is a Biome?

A biome is a large natural area of the world with a similar climate, plants and animals. The climate of a biome, especially its temperature and rainfall, affects the types of living things that can survive there.

Major European Biomes	
Biome	Description
Arctic Tundra	The arctic tundra is a very cold biome found in the far north of Europe. It is mainly found in parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. This biome has long freezing winters and short, cool summers. The ground is permanently frozen (permafrost) so only small plants such as mosses and lichens can grow.
Alpine Tundra	The alpine tundra is found in high mountain areas in central Europe, where the land is very high above sea level. These are mainly found in France, Switzerland, Italy and Austria. It is cold because of the height of the land not because it is far north. Trees cannot grow here, so only short grasses and small plants survive.
Taiga (Boreal Forest)	The taiga, also called the boreal forest, is a cold biome found in Northern Europe, just south of the arctic tundra. It covers large areas of Norway, Sweden and Finland. This biome has long, cold winters and short, mild summers. It is covered mainly in coniferous trees such as pine and spruce.
Temperate Forest	The temperate forest biome is found across western and central Europe, in the middle of the continent. It includes countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Poland. It has four seasons and moderate rainfall. The forests are mainly deciduous, meaning trees lose their leaves in autumn.
Mediterranean	The Mediterranean biome is found in Southern Europe around the Mediterranean Sea. It includes countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece. This biome has hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Plants are adapted to these dry conditions.



Key topic vocabulary

Europe – A continent made up of many different countries, with a variety of climates, landscapes, and biomes.

Climate – The average weather conditions of a place over a long period of time.

Weather – The day-to-day conditions of the atmosphere, such as rain, sunshine, wind, or temperature.

Fauna – The animals that live in a particular place or habitat.

Flora – The plants that grow in a particular place or habitat.

Landforms – Natural features of the Earth's surface, such as mountains, rivers, plains, and valleys.

Evergreen – A plant or tree that keeps its leaves all year round.

Pine – A type of evergreen conifer tree with needles instead of leaves.

Spruce – A tall evergreen conifer tree often found in cold climates.

Fir – An evergreen conifer tree with needle-shaped leaves, commonly found in forests.

Permafrost – Ground that stays frozen for most or all of the year.

Deciduous – Trees or plants that lose their leaves in autumn and grow new ones in spring.

Coniferous – Trees that produce cones and usually have needles instead of leaves.

Precipitation – Water that falls from the sky, such as rain, snow, sleet, or hail.

Latitude – How far north or south a place is from the Equator.

Altitude – The height of land above sea level.

Equator – An imaginary line around the middle of the Earth where it is hottest.

Maritime – A climate influenced by the sea, usually with mild temperatures and more rainfall.

Ecosystem – A community of plants and animals living together and interacting with their environment.

Deforestation – The cutting down of large areas of forest.

Global warming – The gradual increase in the Earth's temperature caused by human activity.

Conservation – Protecting plants, animals, and environments so they are not damaged or lost.