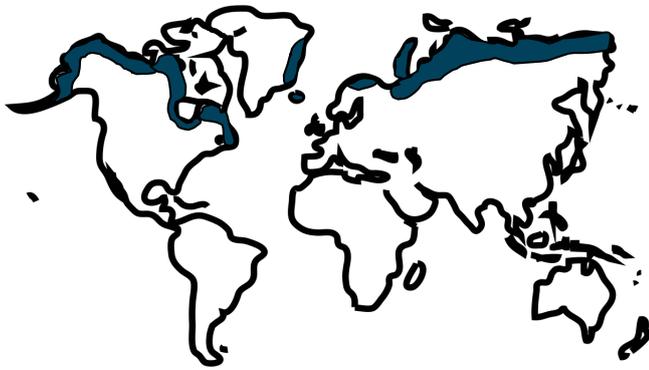


Definition:

A large polar region with very few shrubs and trees and permanently frozen subsoil known as permafrost.

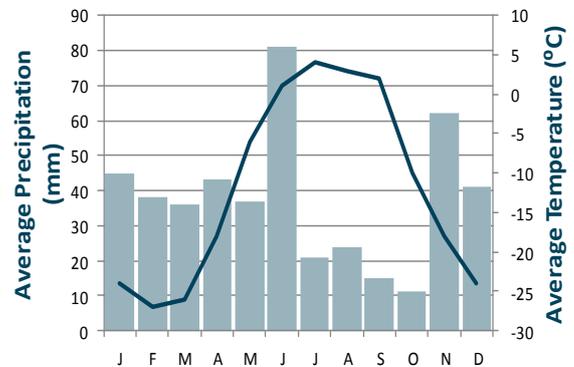
Location

- Tundra is found in the higher latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere and covers twenty percent of the surface of the Earth.
- Tundra is usually found above 71.2° North.
- It can be found in Eurasia, Greenland and North America.



Climate

- The Tundra climate is one of the coldest and harshest on the planet.
- It is cold and windy, and rainfall is low.
- The ground is covered by snow for much of the year.



(Flickr Source : jim)

A Caribou in the Tundra

Examples of Flora

- Sedges, grasses, lichens and mosses are the dominant vegetation.
- Limited growth of some trees and bushes like birch and arctic willow is also possible.

Examples of Fauna

- Large mammals such as polar bears and caribou are adapted to survive.
- Smaller mammals such as shrew and voles are also common.

Conservation

Tundra biomes support some of the most sensitive habitats in the world. Climate change is one of its largest threats, as warming is altering the structure of the permafrost, changing habitats and causing the release of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere as it melts.

Conservation strategies include:

- Use alternative energy sources to reduce human induced climate change.
- Limit human influence by creating protected areas in the tundra.
- Monitor and modify tourism to ensure that local cultures and environments are not being harmed.



(Flickr Source : Andrei Taranchenko)

Arctic Tundra in July.