



Geography Unit-2

Weather and Climate

Dear Students

Warm Greetings, now we are going to learn about **Humidity & Wind**

Humidity

Humidity refers to the degree of water vapour present in the atmosphere in gaseous form in particular time and place. It ranges from 0-5 percent by volume in atmosphere. Climatically it is an important constituent of the atmosphere and its quantity depends on the level of temperature. So, the level of humidity decreases towards poles from equator. Humidity is expressed in different ways.

Specific humidity is a ratio of the water vapor content of the mixture to the total air content on a mass basis. It is expressed in grams of vapour per kilogram of air

Absolute Humidity is the mass or weight of water vapour present per unit volume of air. It is expressed usually in grams per cubic meter of air.

Relative humidity is a ratio between the actual amount of water vapour present in the air and the maximum amount of water vapour it can hold at a given temperature. It is expressed as a percentage.

Generally, warm air holds more water vapour than the cold air. When relative humidity reaches 100%, the air gets saturated. In this condition the temperature is said to be at dew-point. Further cooling will condense the water vapour into the clouds and rain. Relative humidity affects human health and comfortness. Very high and very low humidity are injurious to health. It also affects the stability of different objects, buildings and electrical applications.

Measurement of Humidity

Hygrometer is used to measure the humidity. (which comprises wet and dry bulb-plate side by side in the Stevenson screen)

With decreasing air pressure, the availability of oxygen to breath also decreases. At very high altitudes, atmospheric pressure and available oxygen get so low that people can become sick and even die. Mountain climbers use bottled oxygen when they ascend very high peaks. They also take time to get used to the altitude as the quick move from high pressure to low pressure can cause decompression sickness. Aircraft create artificial pressure in the cabin which makes the passengers remain comfortable while flying.



Wind

The horizontal movement of air is called wind. Vertical movement of air is said as air current. The winds move from high pressure to low pressure. Unlike other elements a wind is made up of a series of gusts and eddies which can only be felt and not seen. Winds get their name from the direction from which they blow i.e, wind blows from south west is called southwest wind.

The wind systems are broadly categorized into three as follows.

- Planetary winds
- Seasonal winds
- Local winds

Planetary Winds are the ones which blow almost in the same direction throughout the year. So, they are called as Permanent or planetary winds. Trade winds, Westerlies and polar easterlies are the types of prevailing winds. **Seasonal winds are those** which change their direction according to season in a year. They are called as monsoon winds. These winds blow from sea to land during summer and land to sea during winter. **Local winds** are the winds blow over a small area only during a particular time of a day or a short period of a year. Land and sea breezes are example of these winds.

The Beaufort scale is a scale for measuring wind speed. It is based on observation rather than accurate measurement. It is the most widely used system to measure wind speed today. The scale was developed in 1805 by Francis Beaufort, an officer of the Royal Navy and first officially used by HMS Beagle.

Al-Balakhi, an Arab Geographer collected climatic data from the Arab travellers and prepared the First climatic Atlas of the world

Measuring wind direction and speed

Meteorologist measures wind direction using **wind vane or weather cock**. Wind speed is measured by **anemometer**. Wind rose is a diagram used to depict the direction and periods (No. of days) of prevailing winds on map. **Meteorograph or triple register is an instrument** which records wind speed and direction, sunshine and precipitation. It also provides graphic representation.

Brazil has a large area where the average wind speed is low. Gabon, Congo and DR Congo in Africa, Sumatra, Indonesia and Malaysia are the least windy places on earth.
