

A monsoon in the Indian Ocean

The way a body of water moves is called the current. Most ocean currents move in one direction¹⁷ all the time. But, in the north part of the Indian Ocean, currents change direction twice a year. They change direction because of the **monsoon** winds.

From November to March, the cool, dry, northeast monsoon winds push the currents to Africa. In May, the winds come in the opposite direction, moving the water to India again. This change brings a lot of rain to India and other countries in Asia in a very short time.

Like floods, monsoons can be good or bad for people. The rain helps crops grow, but it can also destroy homes and businesses.

Most of the Earth's water is salt water. How salty is the ocean? Put one teaspoon of salt into a glass of water. Then drink a little. This is about the same as ocean water.

¹⁷direction: the way that someone or something is going

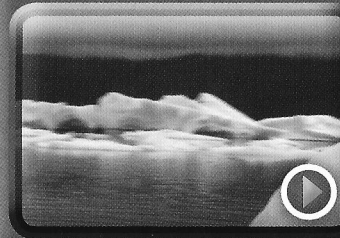
Most of the fresh water on Earth is not liquid. It's ice. A **glacier** is like a river made of ice. Glaciers hold about 69 percent of the Earth's fresh water. We have to hope that the glaciers don't melt. If that happens, the oceans will rise¹⁸ about 70 meters!

When a glacier meets the ocean, parts of it break off. The pieces float away into open water. These big pieces of ice are called icebergs.

Only 10 percent of an iceberg is above water. The other 90 percent is below the water. This makes icebergs very dangerous for ships, like the Titanic!

¹⁸rise: go up

Video Quest



Glaciers

Watch this video to learn about the life of a glacier. How does a glacier begin and end?



A glacier meets the ocean.