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Chapter 1

184

1.1 184.guide

Texified version of data for Pacific Ocean.

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Pacific Ocean

1.2 184.guide/Pacific Ocean

Pacific Ocean

Geography (Pacific Ocean)
 Geography (Pacific Ocean 2. usage)
 Government (Pacific Ocean)
 Economy (Pacific Ocean)
 Communications (Pacific Ocean)

1.3 184.guide/Geography (Pacific Ocean)

Geography (Pacific Ocean)
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Location:

body of water between the Western Hemisphere and Asia/Australia

Map references:

Asia, North America, Oceania, South America, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

165.384 million km²

comparative area:

about 18 times the size of the US; the largest ocean (followed by the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, and the Arctic Ocean); covers about one-third of the global surface; larger than the total land area of the world

note:

includes Arafura Sea, Banda Sea, Bellingshausen Sea, Bering Sea, Bering Strait, Coral Sea, East China Sea, Gulf of Alaska, Makassar Strait, Philippine Sea, Ross Sea, Sea of Japan, Sea of Okhotsk, South China Sea, Tasman Sea, and other tributary water bodies

Coastline:

135,663 km

International disputes:

some maritime disputes (see littoral states)

Climate:

the western Pacific is monsoonal - a rainy season occurs during the summer months, when moisture-laden winds blow from the ocean over the land, and a dry season during the winter months, when dry winds blow from the Asian ↔ land

mass back to the ocean

Terrain:

surface currents in the northern Pacific are dominated by a clockwise, warm-water gyre (broad circular system of currents) and in the southern Pacific by a counterclockwise, cool-water gyre; in the northern Pacific sea ice forms in the Bering Sea and Sea of Okhotsk in winter; in the southern Pacific sea ice from Antarctica reaches its northernmost extent in October; the ocean floor in the eastern Pacific is dominated by the East Pacific Rise, while the western Pacific is dissected by deep trenches, including ↔ the

world's deepest, the 10,924 meter Marianas Trench

Natural resources:

oil and gas fields, polymetallic nodules, sand and gravel aggregates, ←
 placer
 deposits, fish

Environment:

endangered marine species include the dugong, sea lion, sea otter, seals, turtles, and whales; oil pollution in Philippine Sea and South China Sea; dotted with low coral islands and rugged volcanic islands in the southwestern Pacific Ocean; subject to tropical cyclones (typhoons) in southeast and east Asia from May to December (most frequent from July to October); tropical cyclones (hurricanes) may form south of Mexico and ←
 strike

Central America and Mexico from June to October (most common in August and September); southern shipping lanes subject to icebergs from Antarctica; occasional El Nino phenomenon occurs off the coast of Peru when the trade winds slacken and the warm Equatorial Countercurrent moves south, killing the plankton that is the primary food source for anchovies; consequently, the anchovies move to better feeding grounds, causing resident marine birds to starve by the thousands because of their lost food source

1.4 184.guide/Geography (Pacific Ocean 2. usage)

Geography (Pacific Ocean 2. usage)

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Note:

the major choke points are the Bering Strait, Panama Canal, Luzon Strait, and the Singapore Strait; the Equator divides the Pacific Ocean into the North Pacific Ocean and the South Pacific Ocean; ships subject to superstructure icing in extreme north from October to May and in extreme south from May to October; persistent fog in the northern Pacific from June to December is a hazard to shipping; surrounded by a zone of violent volcanic and earthquake activity sometimes referred to as the Pacific Ring of Fire

1.5 184.guide/Government (Pacific Ocean)

Government (Pacific Ocean)

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Digraph: ZN

1.6 184.guide/Economy (Pacific Ocean)

Economy (Pacific Ocean)

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Overview:

The Pacific Ocean is a major contributor to the world economy and particularly to those nations its waters directly touch. It provides low-cost sea transportation between East and West, extensive fishing grounds, offshore oil and gas fields, minerals, and sand and gravel for the construction industry. In 1985 over half (54%) of the world's total fish catch came from the Pacific Ocean, which is the only ocean where the fish catch has increased every year since 1978. Exploitation of offshore oil and gas reserves is playing an ever-increasing role in the energy supplies of Australia, New Zealand, China, US, and Peru. The high cost of recovering offshore oil and gas, combined with the wide swings in world prices for oil since 1985, has slowed but not stopped new drillings.

Industries:

fishing, oil and gas production

1.7 184.guide/Communications (Pacific Ocean)

Communications (Pacific Ocean)

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Ports:

Bangkok (Thailand), Hong Kong, Los Angeles (US), Manila (Philippines), ↵
 Pusan
 (South Korea), San Francisco (US), Seattle (US), Shanghai (China),
 Singapore, Sydney (Australia), Vladivostok (Russia), Wellington (NZ),
 Yokohama (Japan)

Telecommunications:

several submarine cables with network nodal points on Guam and Hawaii