

Dal Carbonio al Petrolio e ritorno

Il ciclo del Carbonio

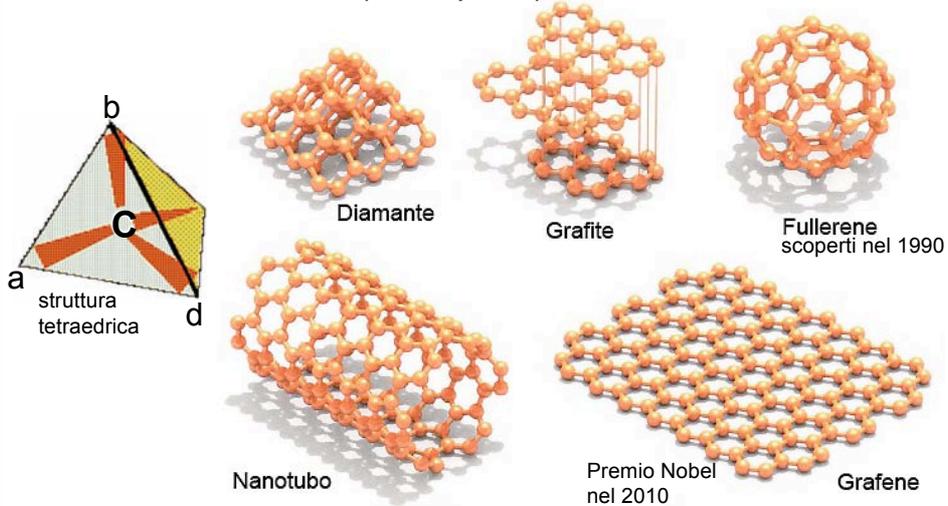


Milena Bertacchini
Museo Universitario Gemma 1786
Dipartimento di Scienze Chimiche e Geologiche
Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia

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FLUSSI DI ENERGIA E CICLI DELLA MATERIA

Il Carbonio

Alcune forme cristalline (allotropiche) del Carbonio

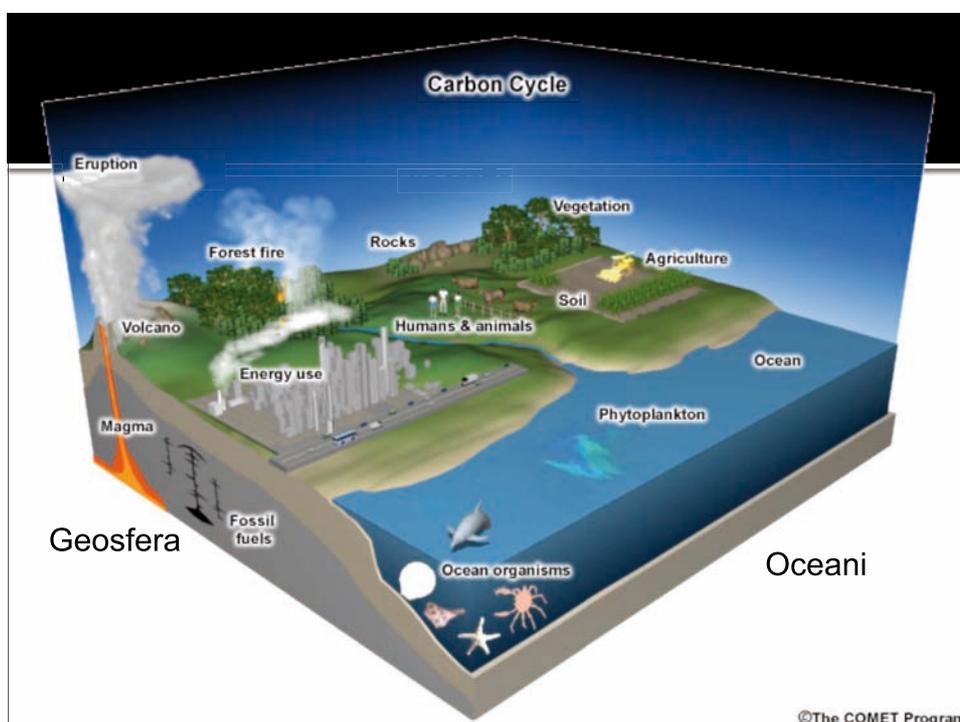


Il Carbonio

Il Carbonio è uno degli elementi essenziali della vita sulla Terra,

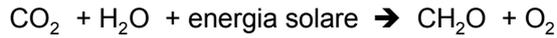


ed è anche la principale sorgente di energia utilizzata dall'uomo

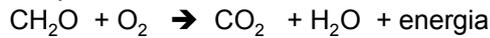


Biosfera - Atmosfera

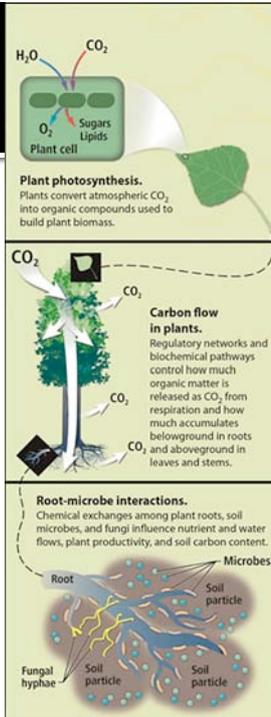
Fotosintesi



Respirazione



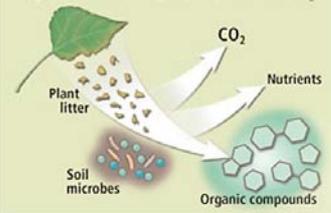
Quantifying photosynthesis, respiration, and other biological processes that are components of carbon cycling is difficult because the metabolic flux of material and energy through cells, organisms, and ecosystems is tightly linked to a particular regions abiotic environmental factors (e.g., temperature, precipitation amounts and timing, geographical features, nutrient availability, length of days and seasons, and sunlight exposure).



Litosfera - Atmosfera

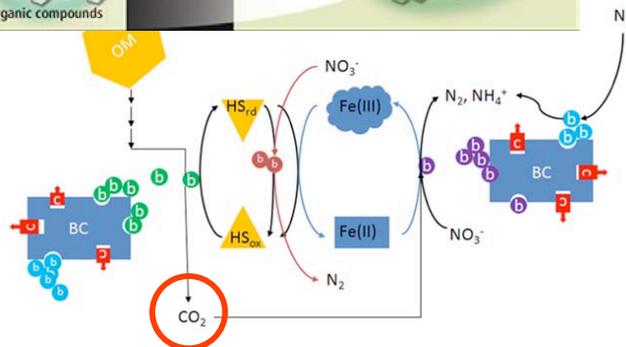
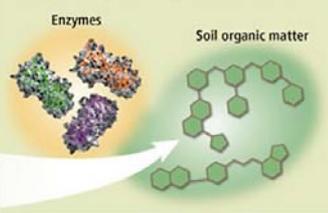
Microbial respiration and decomposition.

Bacteria and fungi decompose plant litter (remnants of roots, leaves, and stems) into organic compounds, inorganic nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus), and CO₂.



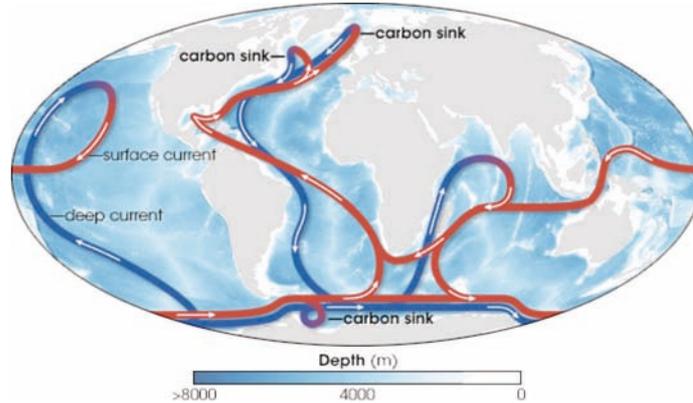
Soil organic matter formation.

Enzymes released from microbes transform plant litter into diverse soil organic compounds that have different structures and residence times in soils.



Oceani - Atmosfera

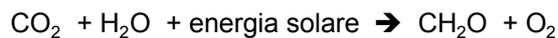
The physical processes controlling the sinking of CO₂ into colder, deeper waters (where CO₂ is more soluble) and the mixing of ocean water at intermediate depths are known as the “**solubility pump**”.



The global oceans are connected by deep currents (blue lines) and surface currents (red). Carbon from the atmosphere enters the ocean depths in areas of deep water formation in the North Atlantic and offshore of the Antarctic Peninsula. Where deep currents rise towards the surface, they can release “fossil” carbon dioxide stored centuries ago. (earthobservatory.nasa.gov)

Oceani - Atmosfera

Fotosintesi



Respirazione

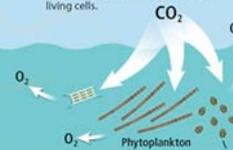


Phytoplankton photosynthesis converts CO₂ into organic carbon that is largely returned to ocean water as CO₂ via microbial respiration and decomposition. The “**biological pump**” refers to the small fraction of organic carbon that forms into degradation-resistant clumps and sinks to the ocean floor.

Together the **solubility and biological pumps control** the amount of carbon transported to ocean depths and the **exchange of CO₂ between ocean and atmosphere**.

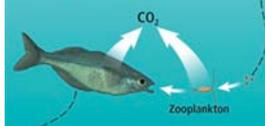
Phytoplankton photosynthesis.

Algae and photosynthetic bacteria form the base of the marine food chain by converting dissolved CO₂ into energy-rich organic compounds that make up living cells.



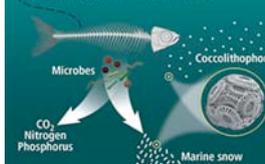
Consumption and respiration of sea life.

Carbon in phytoplankton is consumed by higher life forms that respire CO₂.

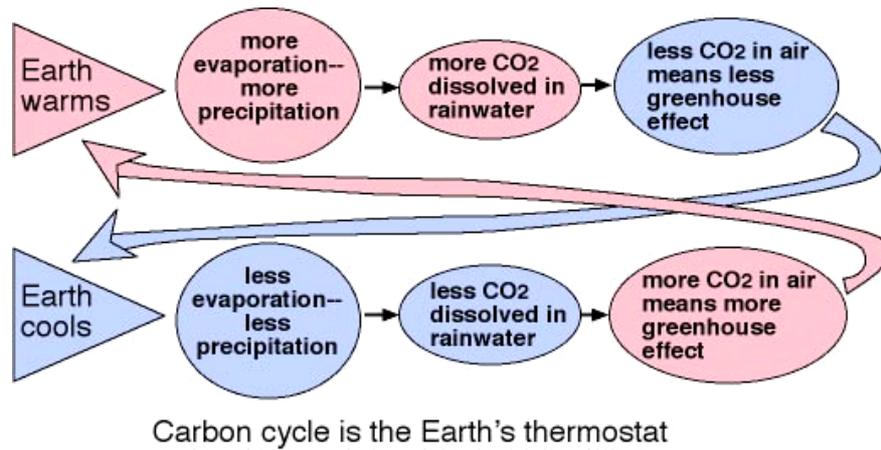


Decomposition and deposition in ocean depths.

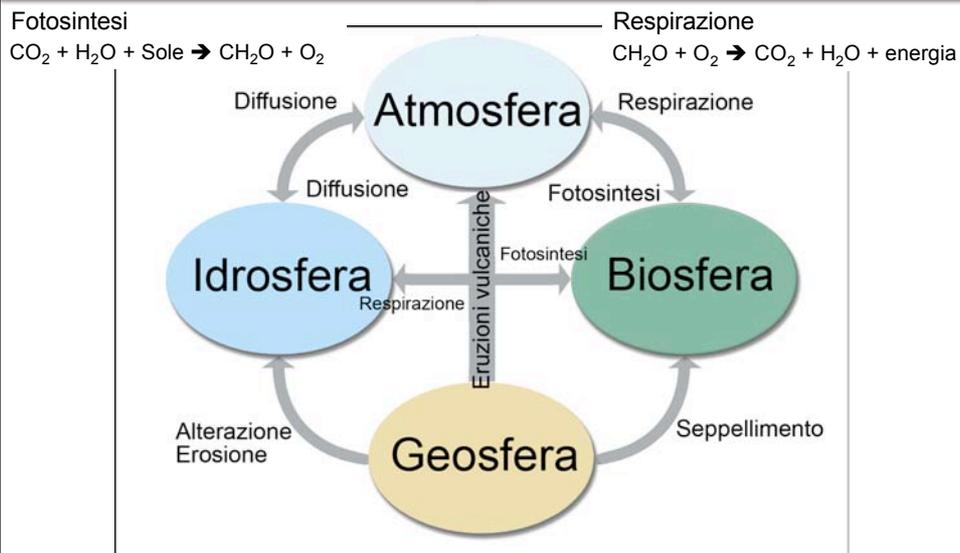
Microbes decompose dead organisms to form CO₂ and dissolved nutrients used by other marine life forms. A small fraction of organic matter (remnants of dead organisms, coccolithophore shells, fecal pellets) forms small, degradation-resistant clumps (marine snow) that sink to the sea floor.



Per periodi lunghi centinaia di migliaia di anni, il ciclo del carbonio agisce come un termostato contribuendo a stabilizzare la temperatura sulla Terra



Ciclo del Carbonio

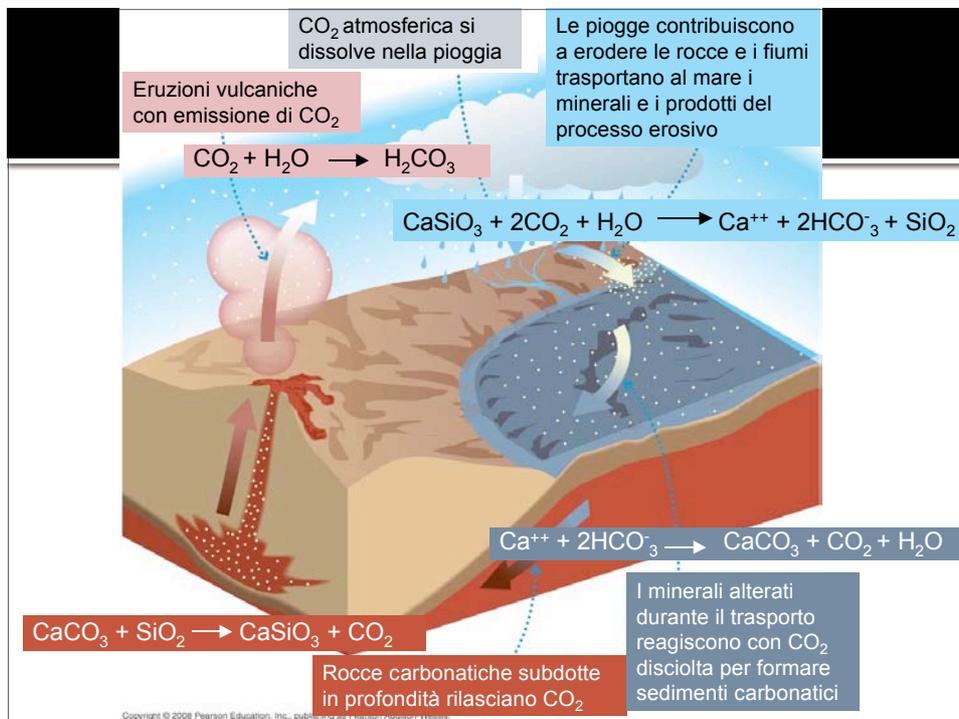
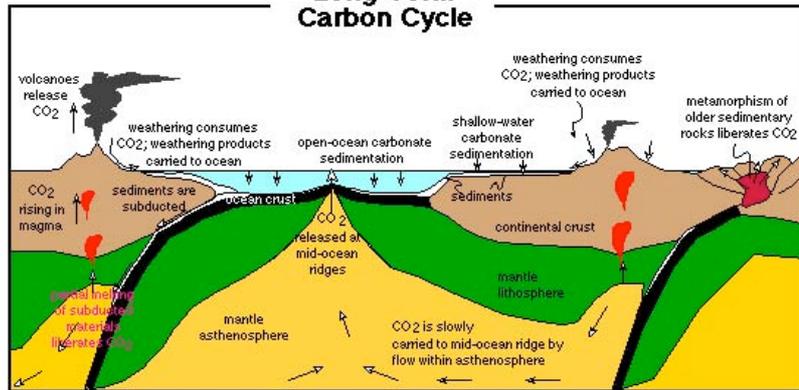


Ciclo del Carbonio a lungo termine

Il ciclo del carbonio a lungo termine controlla il contenuto di CO₂ e O₂ in atmosfera nei tempi geologici.

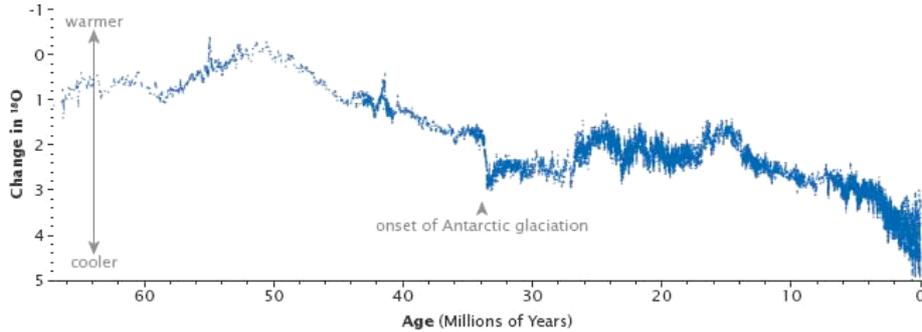
Il carbonio impiega **100-200 milioni di anni** per muoversi fra rocce, suoli, oceani e atmosfera. In media, il ciclo lento del carbonio mobilita ogni anno **10¹³ - 10¹⁴ grammi di C** (10-100 milioni di ton).

Long-Term Carbon Cycle

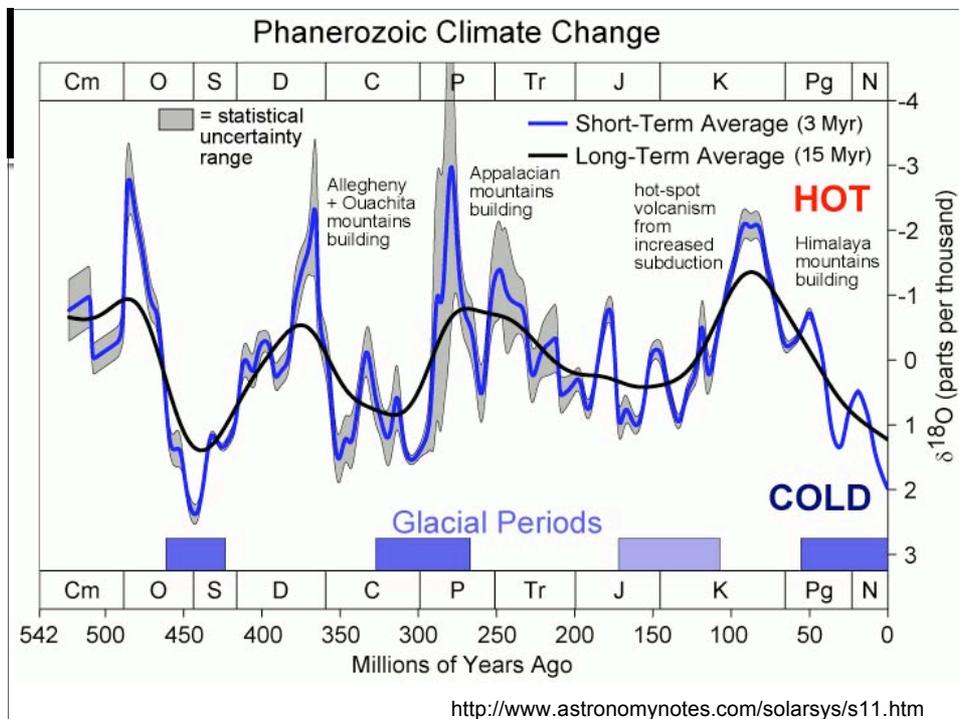


Ciclo del Carbonio nei tempi geologici

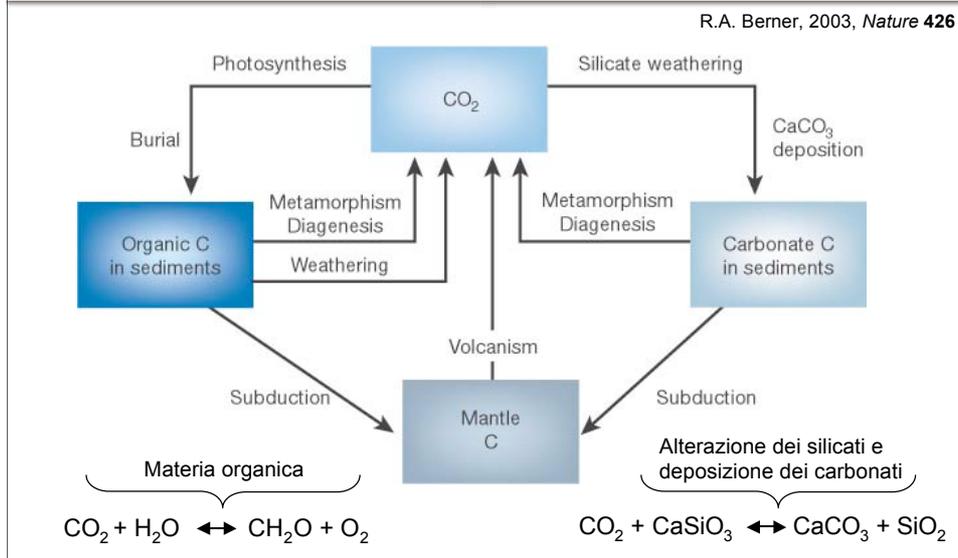
Per periodi alla scala dei tempi geologici, da milioni a decine di milioni di anni, i movimenti dati dalla tettonica a placche e i fenomeni ad essi collegati possono influenzare le temperature sulla Terra.



The uplift of the Himalaya, beginning 50 million years ago, reset Earth's thermostat by providing a large source of fresh rock to pull more carbon into the slow carbon cycle through chemical weathering. The resulting drop in temperatures and the formation of ice sheets changed the ratio between heavy and light oxygen in the deep ocean.



Ciclo del Carbonio a lungo termine

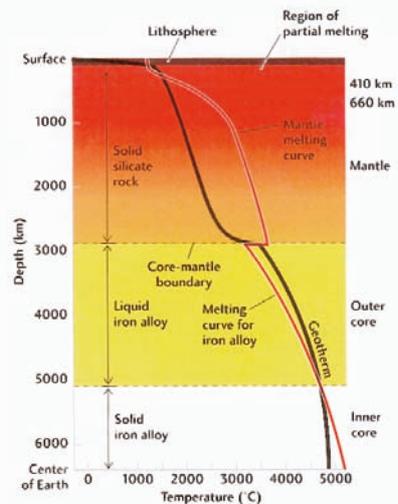


Combustibili fossili

Gli idrocarburi liquidi e gassosi sono generati dalla decomposizione termica del **kerogene**, che è la materia organica contenuta nei giacimenti di roccia madre.

La temperatura di queste rocce cresce con l'aumento della profondità e, oltre una certa soglia, la frazione chimicamente labile del kerogene inizia a trasformarsi in composti petroliferi.

La materia organica presente nella maggior parte dei sedimenti assimilabili alla roccia madre è composta da una miscela di residui di organismi marini e di vegetazione terrestre. A seconda della prevalenza di materiale organico dell'uno o dell'altro tipo, la roccia madre produrrà idrocarburi liquidi o gassosi.



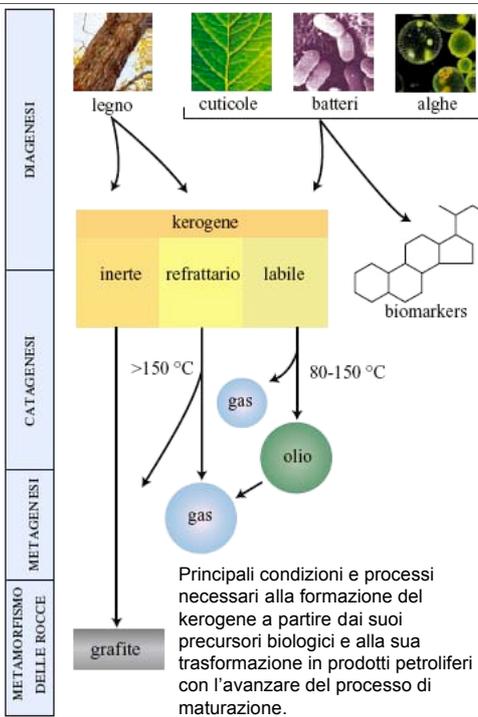
Combustibili fossili

Kerogene I: degradazione di **biomasse algali e batteriche** (alto rapporto H/C, basso O/C), rara, tipica degli scisti bituminosi.

Kerogene II: degradazione di **biomasse algali** (alto rapporto H/C, basso O/C) origina: petroli ("finestra dei liquidi" o "finestra dell'olio" T= 80-150°C)

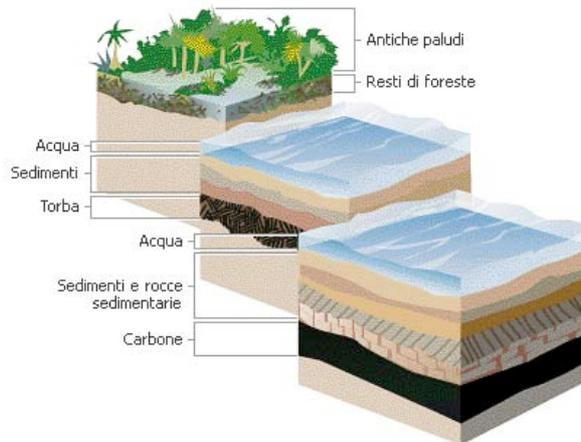
Kerogene III: degradazione di **residui di piante terrestri e decomposizione organismi marini** (alto O/C, basso H/C) origina: carbone e gas naturale (T= 150-200°C)

Kerogene "inerte", povero di idrogeno, origina grafite se sottoposto a metamorfismo di alte P e T.



Formazione del Carbone

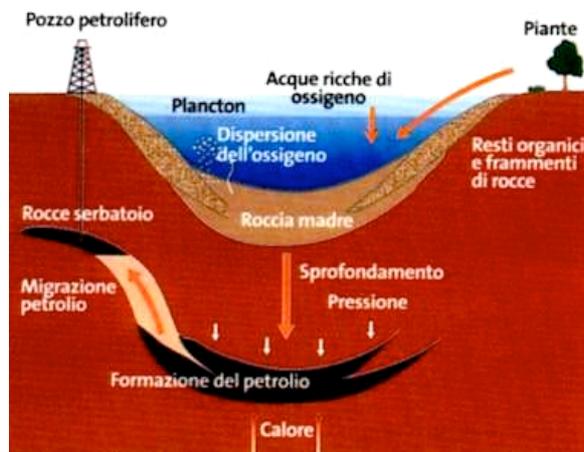
I sedimenti provenienti dall'accumulo di biomasse, con l'aumentare della profondità, della pressione e della temperatura cui sono soggetti con il seppellimento, subiscono una successione di reazioni chimiche.



Formazione del Petrolio

Ad alcuni chilometri di profondità, a temperature fra gli 80° e i 150°, la materia organica è sottoposta a reazioni chimiche che la trasformano in idrocarburi liquidi o gassosi. Il tempo necessario per questo processo varia tra i 5 e i 10 milioni di anni per valori termici alti e 100 milioni di anni per valori termici bassi.

<http://www.ovo.com/petrolio>



How Petroleum and Natural Gas Were Formed

Tiny sea plants and animals died and were buried on the ocean floor. Over time, they were covered by layers of sediment and rock.

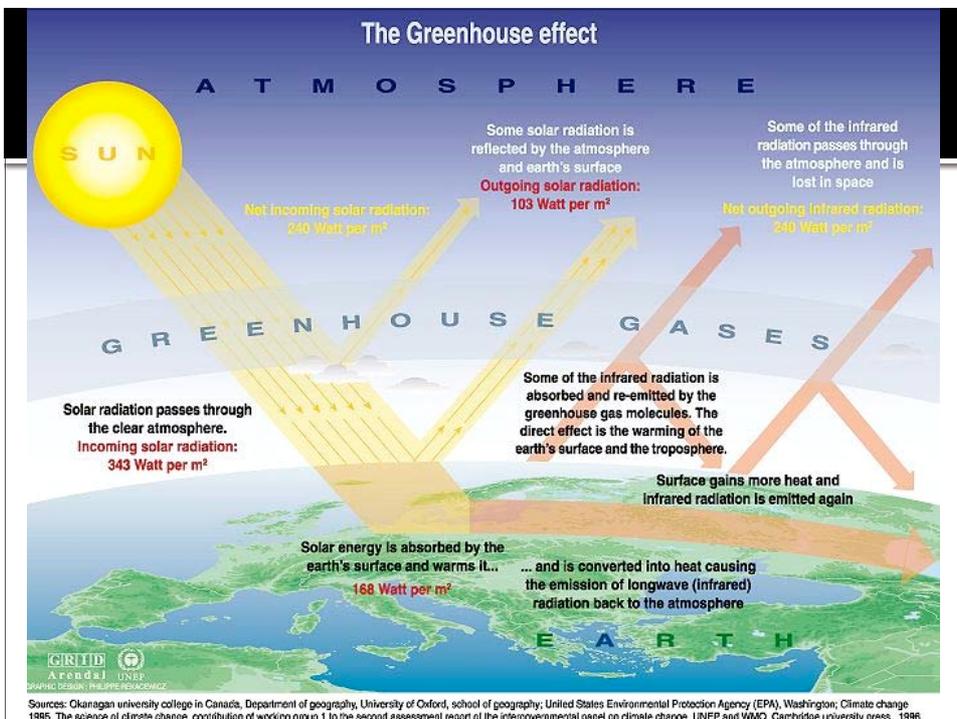
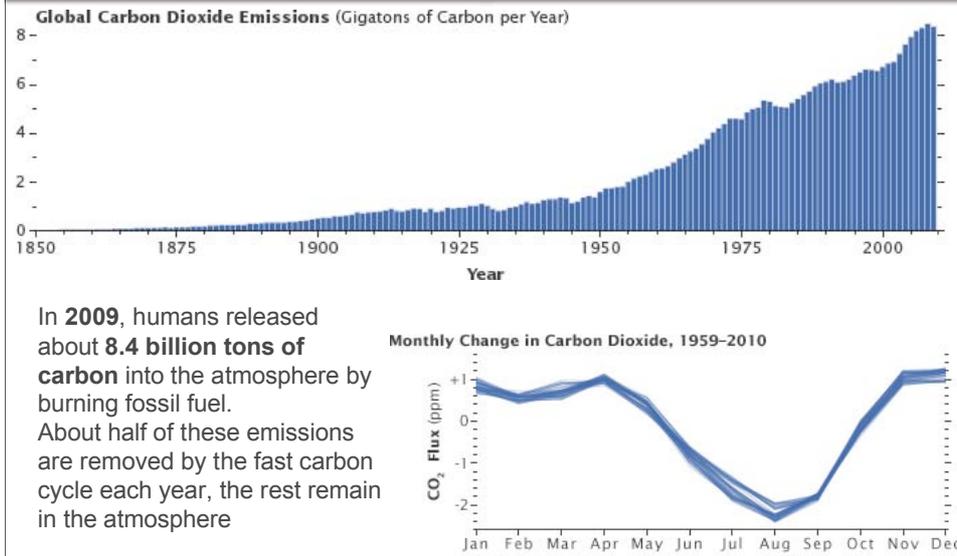
Over millions of years, the remains were buried deeper and deeper. The enormous heat and pressure turned them into oil and gas.

Today, we drill down through the layers of sedimentary rock to reach the rock formations that contain oil and gas deposits.

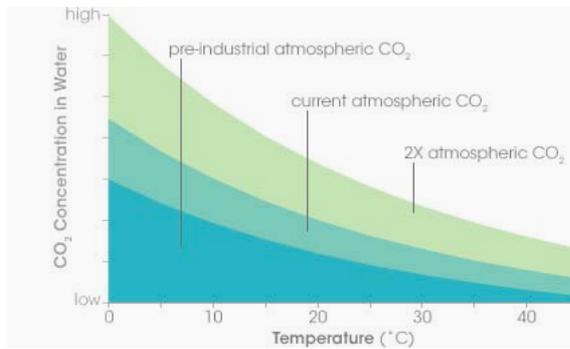
letslearngeology.com

Note: not to scale

Ciclo del Carbonio oggi

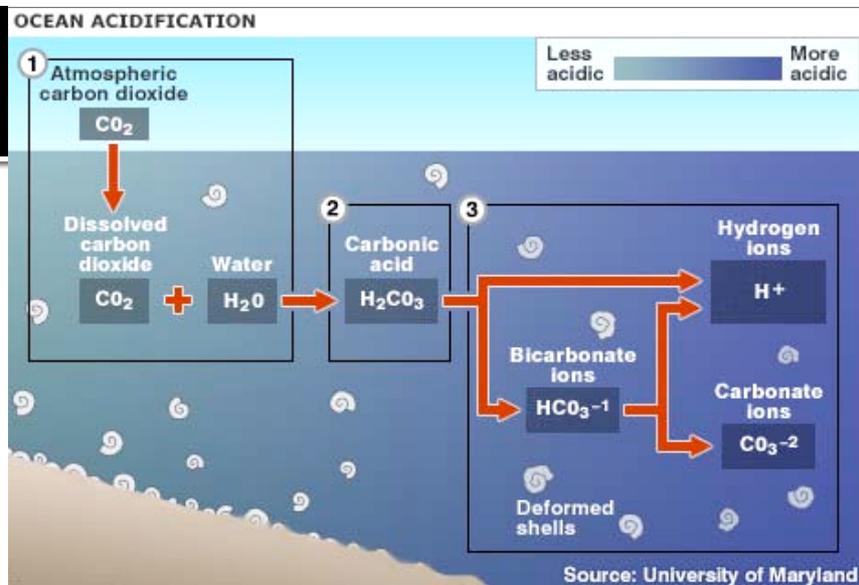


Ciclo del Carbonio negli oceani

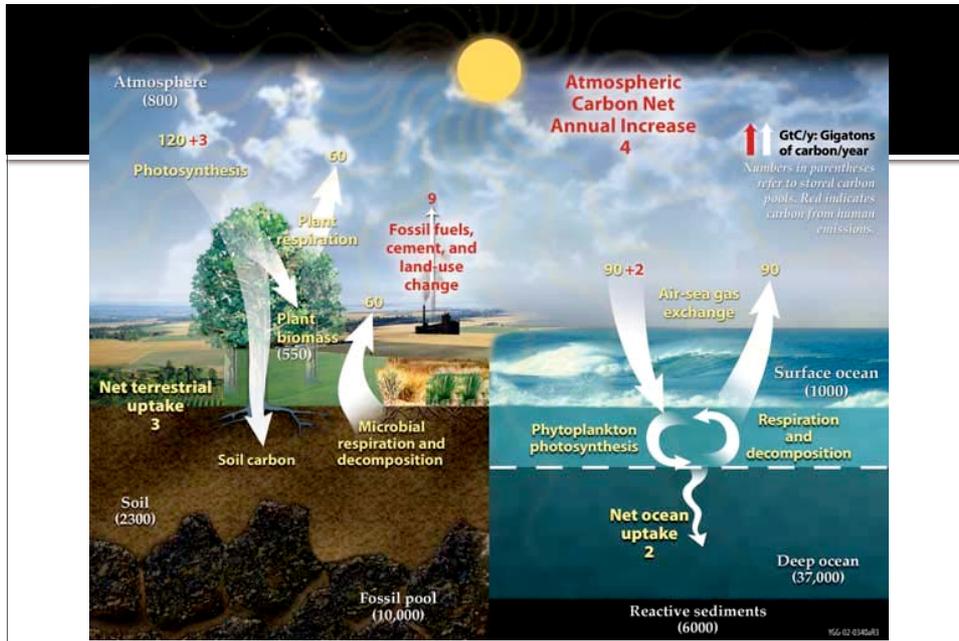


Quando Temp. oceani **aumenta**, **diminuisce** dissoluz. CO₂

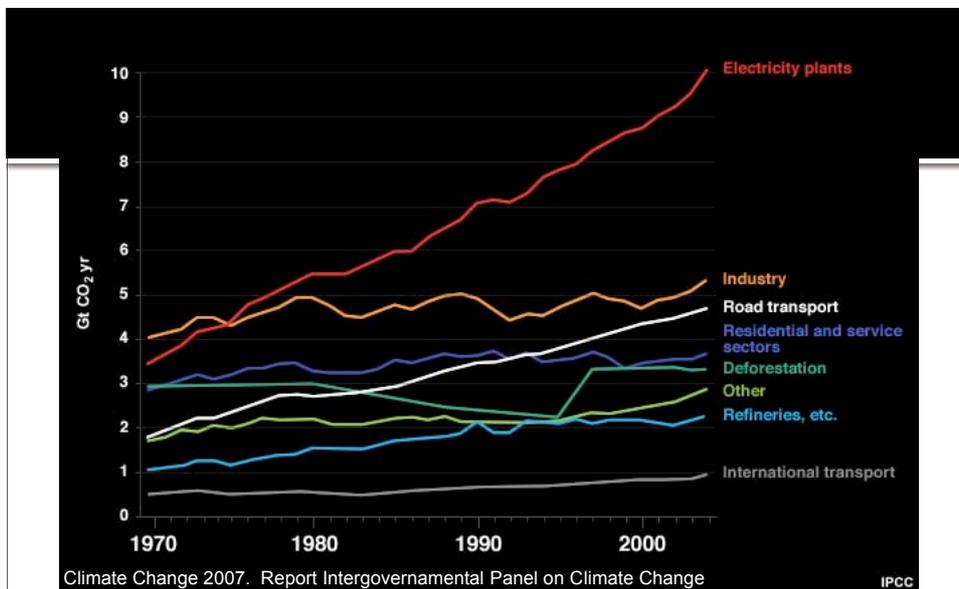
The concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in ocean water (y axis) depends on the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere (shaded curves) and the temperature of the water (x axis). This simplified graph shows that as atmospheric CO₂ increases from pre-industrial levels (blue) to double (2X) the pre-industrial amounts (light green), the ocean CO₂ concentration increases as well.



Ocean acidification is primarily as a result of burning fossil fuels.
<http://www.duikforum.nl/duik-nieuws-engels/29890-threats-ocean-acidification.html>



Valori: in giallo flussi naturali, in rosso flussi da attività antropica (flussi in Gt: mld ton)
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov>



Worldwide, burning fossil fuels is the major source of CO₂, but CO₂ can also come from cutting trees, burning forests or grasslands, agriculture, and making cement.