Condensation Nuclei Encyclopedia Article

Condensation Nuclei

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Condensation Nuclei

When air is cooled below its **dew point**, the water vapor it contains tends to condense as droplets of water or tiny ice crystals. Condensation may not occur, however, in the absence of tiny particles on which the water or ice can form. These particles are known as condensation nuclei. The most common types of condensation nuclei are crystals of salt, **particulate** matter formed by the **combustion** of **fossil fuels**, and dust blown up from the earth's surface. In the process of cloud-seeding, scientists add tiny crystals of dry ice or silver iodide as condensation nuclei to the **atmosphere** to promote cloud formation and precipitation.