Resilience Encyclopedia Article

Resilience

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Resilience

In **ecology**, resilience refers to the rate at which a community returns to some state of development after it has been displaced from that state. Ecosystems comprised of communities with high inherent resilience are, over time, relatively stable in the face of **environmental stress**. These communities return to their original structure and functions, or similar ones, relatively quickly in response to a disturbance. Of course, there are thresholds for resilience. If a perturbation is too intense, then the inherent resilience of the community may be exceeded, and the previous state of ecological development may not be rapidly reattained, if at all. Populations of **species** that are smaller in size, poor competitors, short-lived, with short generation times and the ability to spread quickly are relatively resilient. Those that are larger in size, competitive, longer-lived, with longer generation times and high investment in offspring have a higher threshold, or **resistance**, to a stress factor, but have less resilience, and regenerate more slowly.

See Also

Biosphere; Biotic Community