



# PLIOCENE EPOCH 5.3 MILLION YEARS AGO

The Pliocene Epoch was generally warmer than today, but by the end of this Epoch, the Northern Hemisphere began to experience glacial and interglacial cycles. The tropics were dominated by grasslands and open savannahs. Deciduous and coniferous forests also became prevalent at higher latitudes. Sea levels were generally higher, but went up and down as ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland waxed and waned during glacial and interglacial cycles. North and South America became connected through the Panamanian Isthmus towards the end of the Pliocene. This land bridge allowed plants and animals to migrate. This event is called the Great American Interchange.