Encyclopedia of Geochemistry

A Comprehensive Reference Source on the Chemistry of the Earth

Series: Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences Series

- Up-to-date coverage of the field of Geochemistry
- Clear concise summaries of all topics in geochemistry
- Covers both theory and application of geochemistry in a wide range of earth science topics

The Encyclopedia is a complete and authoritative reference work for this rapidly evolving field. Over 300 international scientists, each experts in their specialties, have written over 330 separate topics on different aspects of geochemistry including geochemical thermodynamics and kinetics, isotope and organic geochemistry, meteorites and cosmochemistry, the carbon cycle and climate, trace elements, geochemistry of high and low temperature processes, and ore deposition, to name just a few. The geochemical behavior of the elements is described as is the state of the art in analytical geochemistry. Each topic incorporates cross-referencing to related articles, and also has its own reference list to lead the reader to the essential articles within the published literature. The entries are arranged alphabetically, for easy access, and the subject and author indices are comprehensive and extensive.

Geochemistry applies chemical techniques and approaches to understanding the Earth and how it works. It touches upon almost every aspect of earth science, ranging from applied topics such as the search for energy and mineral resources, environmental pollution, and climate change to more basic questions such as the Earth's origin and composition, the origin and evolution of life, rock weathering and metamorphism, and the pattern of ocean and mantle circulation. Geochemistry allows us to assign absolute ages to events in Earth's history, to trace the flow of ocean water both now and in the past, trace sediments into subduction zones and arc volcanoes, and trace petroleum to its source rock and ultimately the environment in which it formed. The earliest of evidence of life is provided by chemical and isotopic traces, not fossils, preserved in rocks. Geochemistry has allowed us to unravel the history of the ice ages and thereby deduce their cause. Geochemistry allows us to determine the swings in Earth's surface temperatures during the ice ages, determine the temperatures and pressures at which rocks have been metamorphosed, and the rates at which ancient magma chambers cooled and crystalized.