

Neogene Period

- Spans from 23.03 million to 2.58 million years ago.
- It features 2 epochs: the Miocene, and the Pliocene.

Miocene

- Spans from 23.03 to 5.333 million years ago.
- **Grass spread** further across **diminishing forests** in the process.
- Many new plants evolved, and 95% of modern seed plants evolved in the mid-Miocene

Pliocene

- Spans from 5.333 to 2.58 million years ago.
- **Australopithecus** evolved in Africa, beginning the human branch.
- The **isthmus of Panama** formed, and animals migrated between North and South America.
- Climatic changes brought **savannas** that are continuing to spread across the world, **Indian monsoons**, **deserts in East Asia**, and the **beginnings of the Sahara Desert**.

Quaternary Period

- Spans from 2.58 million years ago to the present day.
- It features modern animals and dramatic changes in the climate.
- It is divided into two epochs: the Pleistocene and the Holocene.

Pleistocene

- Spans from 2.58 million to 11,700 years ago.
- **Ice ages** marked this epoch as a result of the cooling trend that started in the Mid-Eocene.



- Many animals evolved including mammoths, dire wolves, and most famously **Homo sapiens**.
- 1,00,000 years ago, marked the end of one of the worst droughts of Africa, and led to the expansion of primitive man.
- As the Pleistocene drew to a close, a major extinction wiped out much of the world's megafauna, including some of the hominid species, such as **Neanderthals**.