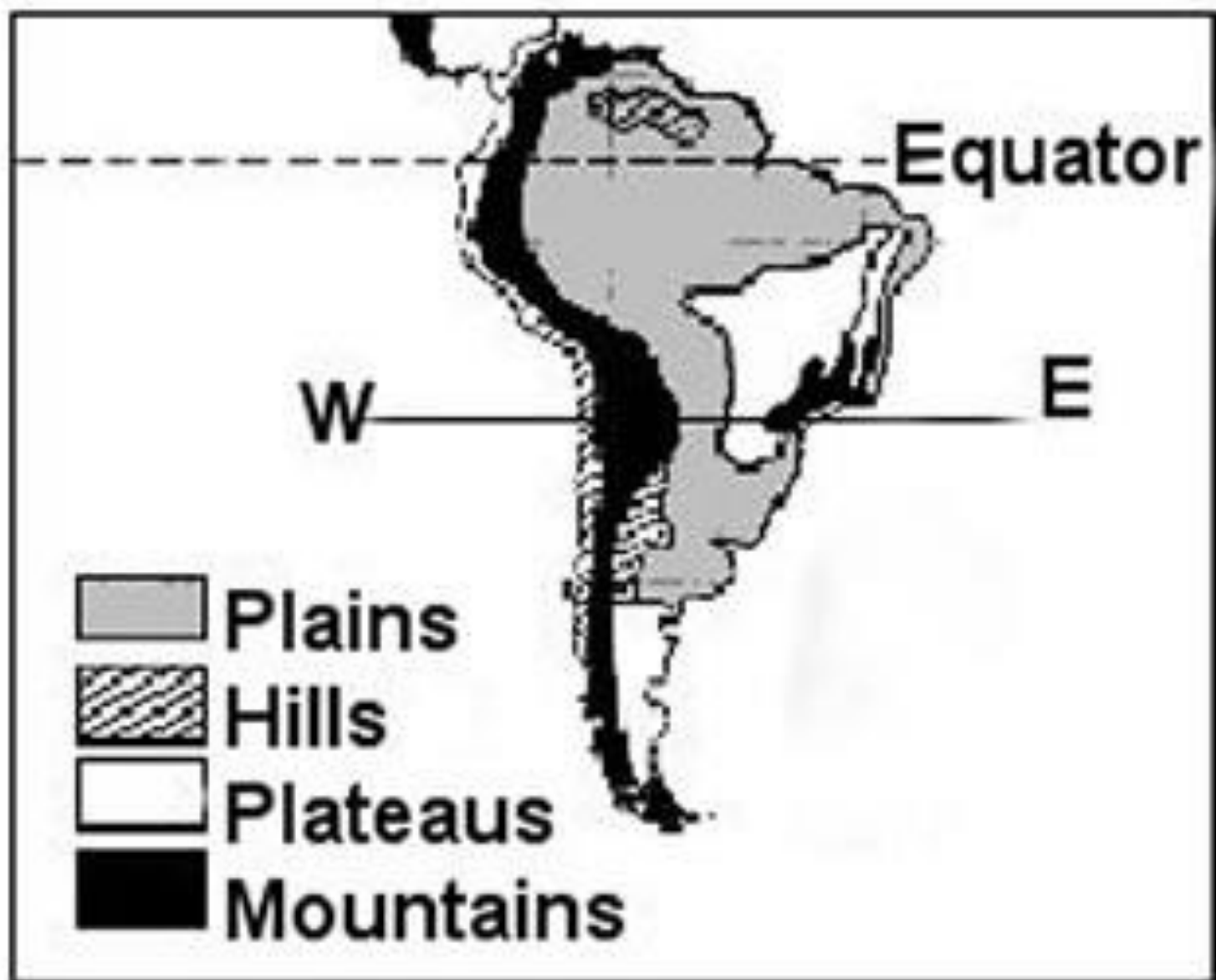


Unit 1: Introduction to Topography

- In this lesson you will:
- define the term topography
- differentiate among the terms hill and mountain as well as plateau, and plain

Topography

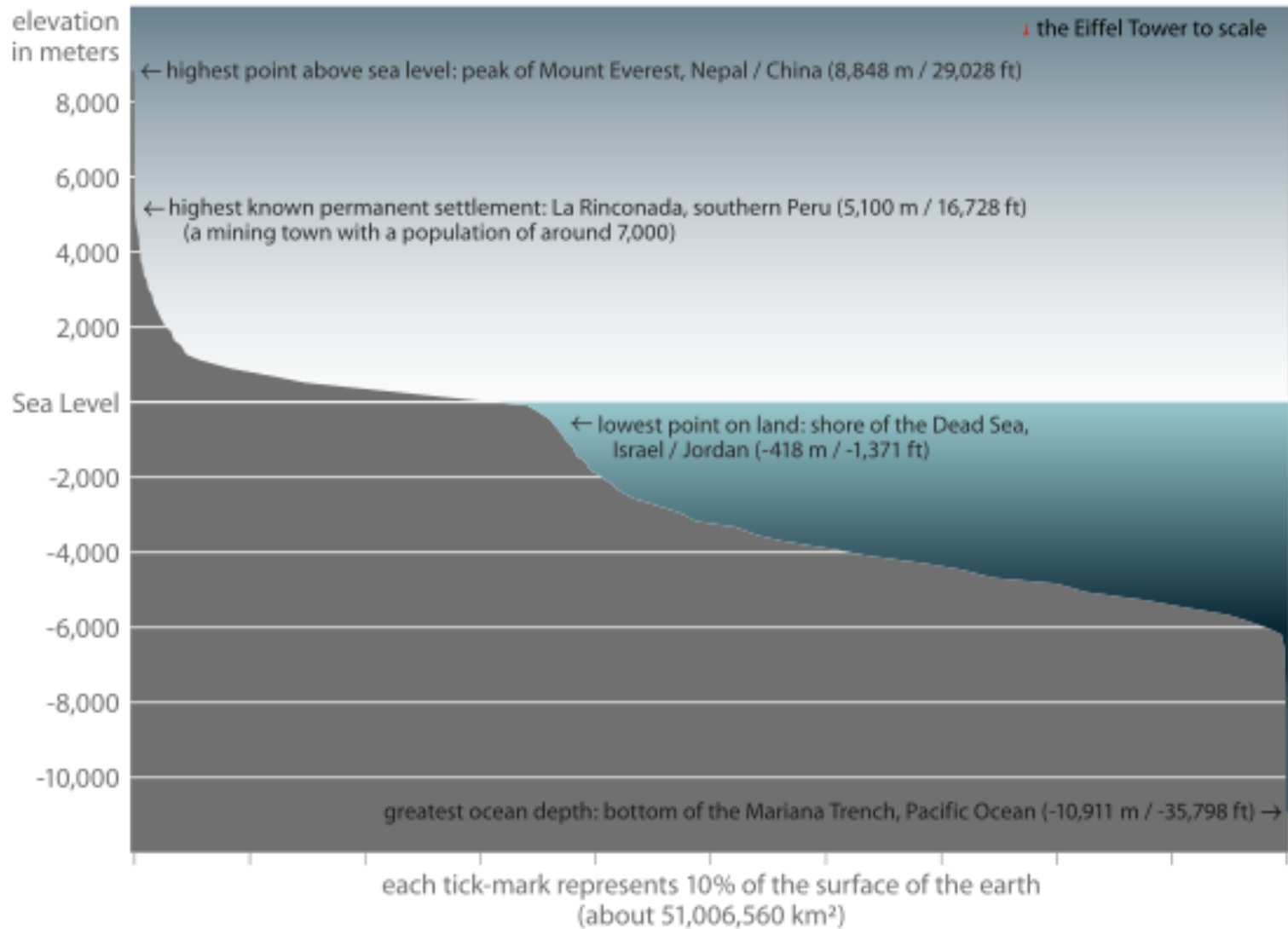
- **Topography** refers to the surface features of the earth like, hills, mountains, valleys, plains, plateaus and other relief features.
- The book defines it as " the natural and human features of the earth's surface".
 - **The map that follows shows the topographical features of South America.**



Elevation & Relief

- Elevation
 - The **elevation** of a **geographical location** is its height above a fixed reference point, often the **average sea level**.
- Relief
 - The difference between the highest and lowest elevations in an area. A **relief map** shows the topography of the area.

Elevation Histogram of the Earth's Crust



Hills and Mountains

- **Hills** are typically defined as areas of upward relief less than 300 m.
- **Mountains** are defined as areas of upward relief greater than 300 m.

Plains and Plateaus

- **Plains** are areas of flat land with very little relief. They are found at low elevations often along coasts and in the center of continents.
- **Plateaus** are areas of flat land with little relief. They occur at high elevations and are associated with mountains. Like hills and mountains plains and plateaus differ based on elevation.

Plateaus, Plains and Mountains

