

Table 1. Number of prokaryotes in aquatic habitats

Habitat	Volume,* cm ³	Cells/ml, × 10 ⁵	Total no. of cells, × 10 ²⁶
Marine			
Continental shelf	2.03×10^{20}	5	1.0
Open ocean			
Water, upper 200 m	7.2×10^{22}	5	360
Water, below 200 m	1.3×10^{24}	0.5	650
Sediment, 0–10 cm	3.6×10^{19}	4600	170
Fresh			
Lakes	1.25×10^{20}	10	1.3
Rivers	1.2×10^{18}	10	0.012
Saline lakes	1.04×10^{20}	10	1.0
Total			1180

*Marine, freshwater, and saline lake volumes were calculated from refs. 7 and 8.