

Old Age/Lower Stage of a River

- The Old Age/Lower stage of a river carries a large load of material called alluvium.
- The river flows over land that is almost level.
- The river flows very slowly and with little energy.
- The river deposits its load in the Old Age/Lower stage.

Features of the Old Age/Lower Stage of a River

- The Old Age Stage of a river can contain the following features/ landforms:
 - 1.Ox-bow lakes
 - 2.Levees
 - 3.Delta

Oxbow lake

An **oxbow lake** is a horseshoe-shaped lake that was once part of a river meander, but is now cut off from the river.

Erosion continues to take place on the outer bank of the river and the neck of land between the two meanders, as it gets narrower. During a flood, when the river has more energy, the neck of land is finally cut through. When this happens, a new straighter river channel is created.

The river has little energy at this stage and deposits some of its load of alluvium. Both ends of the meander are cut off from the river channel to form an **oxbow lake**.

Oxbow lakes can be seen at the old stage of the rivers Mississippi, Liffey and Moy.



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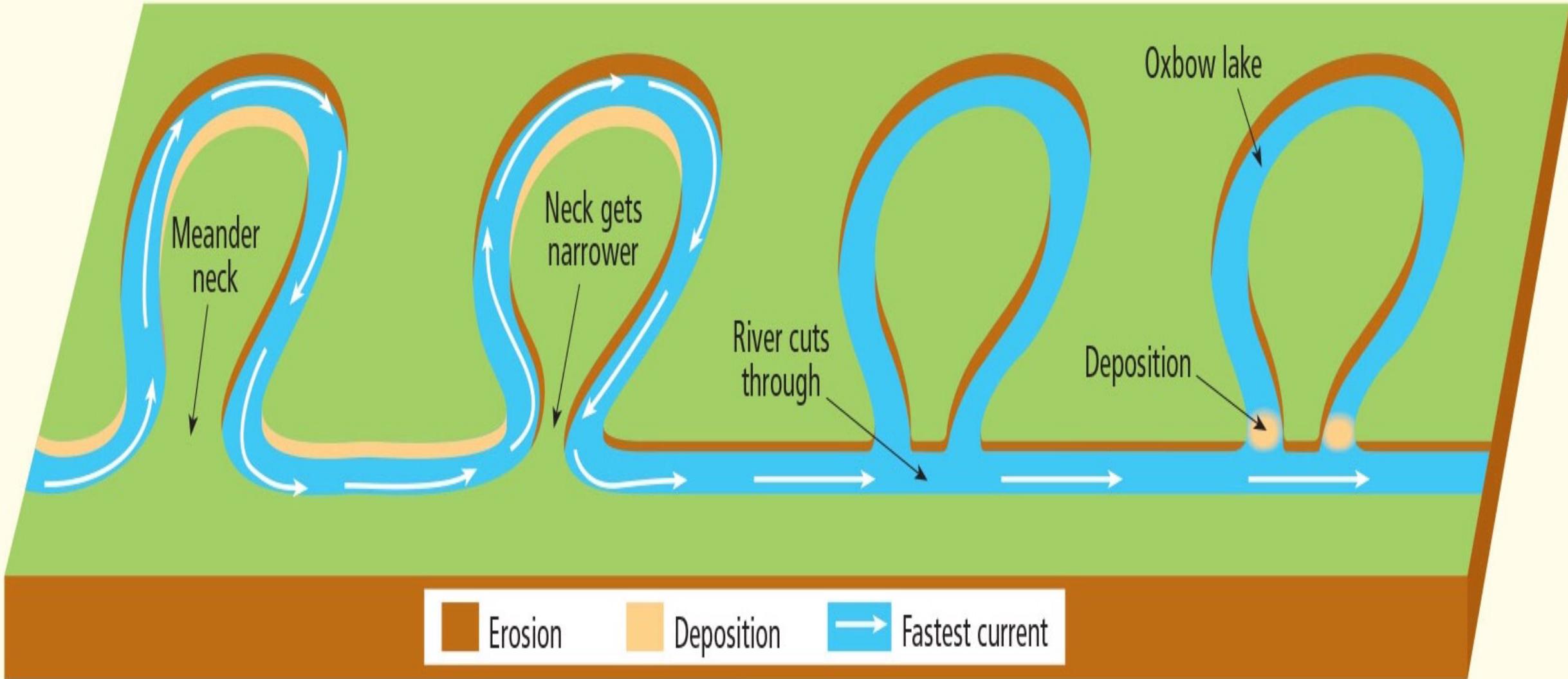


Fig 3.18 Stages in the formation of an oxbow lake





Levees

Levees are raised banks of alluvium that are found along the banks of some rivers in their old stage.

When a river floods and begins to spread out over the floodplain, it quickly loses its energy and begins to deposit its load. Most of the load, especially its heavier particles, is deposited close to the riverbanks. The lighter particles are carried further. After many periods of flooding, these deposits build up to form levees.

Levees are found along the old stage of the rivers Mississippi, Moy and Liffey.

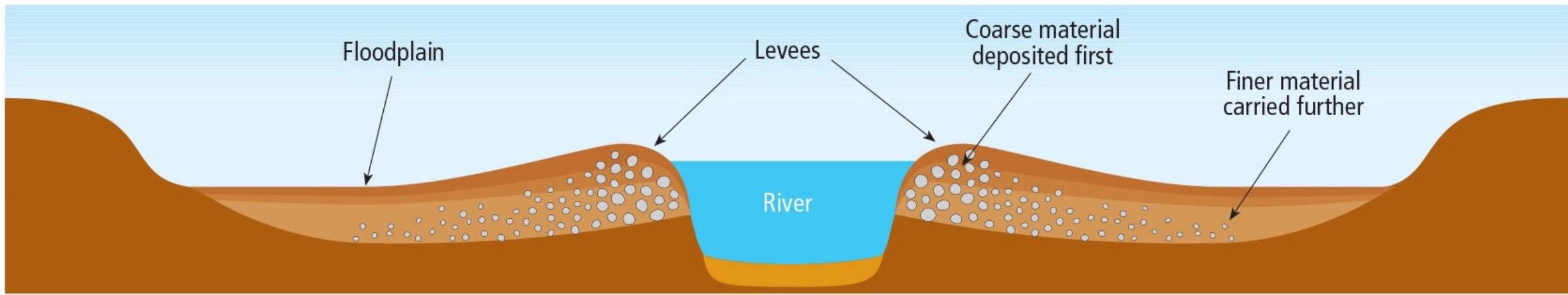


Fig 3.19 Levees are found on the banks of some rivers in their old stage

Delta

A **delta** is a triangular or fan-shaped area of land found where a river flows into the sea (or a lake).

When a river flows into the sea, it loses its speed and deposits its load. If a river has a big load, the tides and currents may not be strong enough to carry it all out to sea. The mouth of the river becomes clogged and the river breaks up into smaller channels called distributaries. The deposits build up gradually and eventually rise above sea level to form a delta.

Deltas are found at the mouths of the rivers Nile, Po, Mississippi and Amazon.

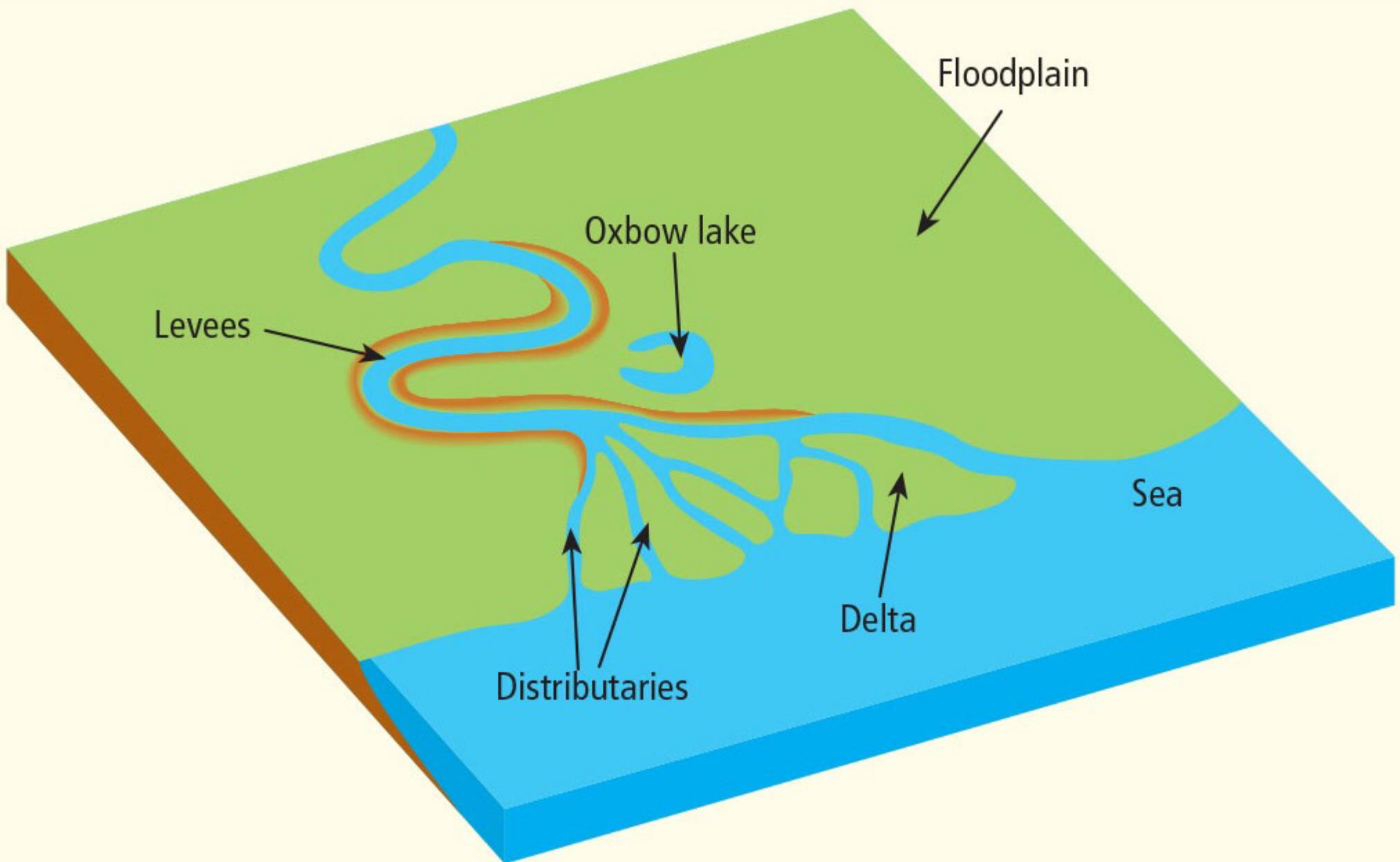


Fig 3.20 A delta forms at the mouth of a river



A river depositing its load to form a delta