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Examiners' Report
January 2011

GCSE Geography 5GB1H 01

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Introduction

This report covers responses from the Higher tier paper of GCSE Geography Specification B. The unit one paper is one hour long. The paper comprises of four compulsory sections and two optional units. Each section starts with a resource based activity, followed by one or two extending questions. The question paper has been designed to be progressively more difficult.

The aim of the unit / paper is to provide candidates with a broad and varied understanding of the natural environment. Question paper completion will require candidates to apply a range of skills. Candidates will need to be able to interpret and read maps, diagrams and charts.

The general level of response was considerably higher on this paper than in the previous summer. This probably reflects a better understanding of the new specification as well as a older and therefore more knowledgeable cohort.

Candidates have the choice of answering either sections 5 or 6, 7 or 8. Similar to the June paper, the most popular topics were 'Coastal Change and Conflict' and 'Extreme Climates'. The breakdown in both cases was approximately one third, two thirds.

Students completing the 'Extreme Climate' topic are given the choice of focusing on either a hot arid or arctic region. Hot arid locations, in particular Australia, proved most popular but didn't necessarily provide the best answers. The actions taken in the Sahel seemed better suited to January's exam questions.

Question 1(a)(i)

Question was incorrectly answered by a significant minority of candidates. Every alternative layer was selected.

Question 1(a)(ii)

Considerable confusion on this question. Wrong answers were many and varied!

Question 1(b)

This question was answered well by most candidates. Many students highlighted the different levels of development and gave an extending statement about the additional 'services' that MEDCs can provide. Some candidates threw away points by either going off focus (e.g. giving knowledge on the richter scale) or listing several reasons instead of providing more in-depth information on one. Students who suggested differences in magnitude or population density generally failed to provide adequate extending statements.

Figure 1b – Number of deaths in recent earthquakes

Suggest **one** reason why the number of deaths varies between earthquakes.

(2)

Its usually if the country it hits is an LEDC or an MEDC usually more people die in the poorer ~~country~~ countries because they don't have enough money to spend on earthquake safe buildings and other safety things

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Examiner Comments

A solid answer, scoring both points. Candidate highlights 'development' as the reason and then explains that this results in 'earthquake safe buildings'.

Question 1(c)

Although the focus of this question was 'immediate' responses, a considerable number of candidates either suggested long term actions (such as improving construction standards) or highlighted activities that would have been carried out prior to the quake (e.g. practising drills in schools so everyone knows what to do). As the command word is 'describe' at least one of the responses identified needed to be extended for maximum marks. Some students lost focus, including good case study knowledge about impacts without mentioning the responses.

(c) For **either** an earthquake **or** a volcanic eruption you have studied, describe the **immediate responses** in managing its impact.

(4)

Named earthquake or volcanic eruption ..... Haiti .....

Responses to this earthquake was get emergency medical teams in fast to treat the injured. Also they tried to get food and drink to all the people affected. temporary housing would have been arranged (tents). & Also people tried to save as many as they can from under hours, buildings cars etc.

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)

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Examiner Comments

A full mark response. Candidate identifies several immediate response (medical teams, aid, shelter and rescue work). The importance of emergency teams clearly described - 'can get in fast and treat the injured'.

(c) For **either** an earthquake **or** a volcanic eruption you have studied, describe the **immediate responses** in managing its impact.

(4)

Named earthquake or volcanic eruption Sakrajema

was an earthquake that destroyed lots of building etc there response so that this wouldn't happen again was that they built earthquake proof buildings these meant that less damage was done also they would have quake drills so that people knew how to evacuate an area safley and quickly

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)

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Examiner Comments

Student refers to long term planning / preparation rather than immediate responses.

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Examiner Tip

Read questions carefully and look out for bolded terms. In this case, students were asked to describe the immediate responses, i.e. the actions taken within hours of the quake / eruption. In the example shown, the candidate has confused the terms and described two long term actions and therefore fails to score.

Question 2(a)

Again, the command word is 'describe' so examiners were looking for an extended statement rather than a list of impacts. A significant number of candidate went off-focus; the question specifically asked for effects on 'farming'. Some students just stated the obvious, i.e. it was very cold. Clearly such comments weren't credited, what we wanted to know is how did the lower temperatures impact on farming e.g. frosts killed crops, little food for livestock, snow cover made transporting produce to market difficult.

Figure 2 – Painting of the Little Ice Age (18th century)

(a) Describe how colder periods, such as the Little Ice Age, affected farming.

(2)

- crops were destroyed due to cold climate.
- because crops were destroyed, the livestock (pigs, cows) had no food which means that they died causing a loss of money for farmers.

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Examiner Comments

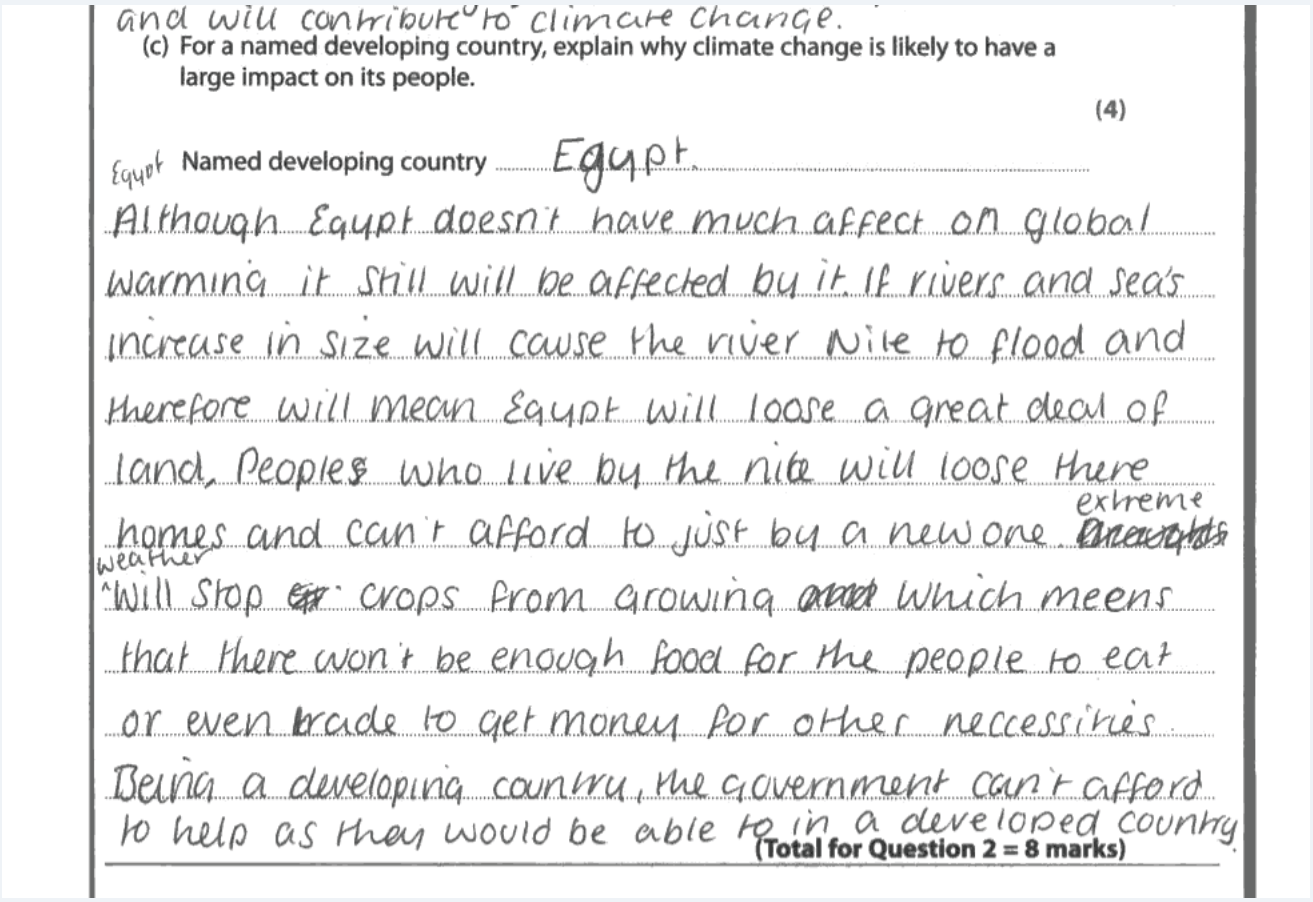
An clear and accurate response. Candidate describes how a lack of crop growth affected pastoral farming.

Question 2(b)

A well answered question. The most common route to success highlighted travel / car use and then linked this to increased carbon dioxide concentrations.

Question 2(c)

This question created some excellent responses. However, frustratingly a number of students who clearly understand the question and had strong climate change knowledge threw away marks by failing to identify a developing country, or in some cases... any country at all! The focus of the question was 'people'. Some students lost marks by concentrating on environmental impacts and not linking these to the local population. As the command word was 'explain', at least one of the impacts identified needed to be explained for maximum marks.



and will contribute to climate change.

(c) For a named developing country, explain why climate change is likely to have a large impact on its people.

(4)

Egypt Named developing country Egypt.

Although Egypt doesn't have much affect on global warming it still will be affected by it. If rivers and sea's increase in size will cause the river Nile to flood and therefore will mean Egypt will loose a great deal of land. Peoples who live by the nile will loose there homes and can't afford to just by a new one. extreme weather will stop crops from growing which meens that there won't be enough food for the people to eat or even trade to get money for other neccessities. Being a developing country, the government can't afford to help as they would be able to in a developed country

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)

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Examiner Comments

A well developed answer. Includes a number of explained impacts and shows good location specific knowledge.

(c) For a named developing country, explain why climate change is likely to have a large impact on its people.

(4)

Named developing country ..the UK..

- Some plants will not be able to survive here and die out which will affect farmers.
- the energy bills will reduce in winter for householders
- less of the elderly people will die in winter.
- more tourism for the UK which will ~~increase~~ benefit the economy ~~out~~ which will benefit the people

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Examiner Comments

Lost marks as the UK is not a developing country.

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Examiner Tip

Take your time when choosing case study locations. This answer includes a number of developed points and would have scored full marks if the UK had been an appropriate location.

Be careful, as most questions on higher paper require a degree of description / explanation, bullet points are not a recommended technique. This candidate provides detailed bullets so gets away with it, most who take the bullet point option do not.

Question 3(a)

Candidates performed well on this question. A minority of candidates fell for the classic climate graph mistake and described the temperature rather than the rainfall.

Question 3(b)

Although most candidates were able to identify a suitable conservation method, a significant number failed to describe how their chosen technique actually protected the biosphere. A significant minority of students failed to score on this question as they described actions designed to stop climate change rather than those aiming to protect the biosphere. Students had to clearly link climate change to the biosphere for such statements to gain marks.

(b) Describe **one** way in which people are trying to conserve the biosphere.

(2)

There are new national parks in many rainforests which protect the species inside of it from hunters and people cutting down trees to be used as farm land. This conserves the wide variety of plants and animals in rainforests.

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Examiner Comments

An excellent answer. Candidate identifies national parks as means of conserving the biosphere and then describes how they protect wildlife by stopping hunting and deforestation.

Question 3(c)

Compared to a similiar question on the June 2010 paper, responses were significantly improved. The difference between goods and services now appears to be clearly understood by most. To achieve full marks a candidate must have (a) identified both goods and services, and (b) described at least one of the goods/services highlighted. Although the most common named biome was the tropical rainforest, a minority of students referred to other biomes, with coral reefs in particular creating some strong responses.

(c) Describe the value of a named biome in providing goods and services.

(4)

Named biome Tropical Rainforest

Tropical Rainforests provide goods such as timber ~~which~~ which can be used ~~for~~ building work. It also provides ~~which~~ medicines which can be found in some of the plants of the tropical rainforest. A service it provides is that it regulates the atmosphere by its trees taking in CO_2 and giving out O_2 ~~for~~ us to breath in. Another service it provides is that it purifies the soil by holding it in place with its roots and preventing to much water from soaking it by ~~interception~~ intercepting rainfall.

(Total for Question 3 = 8 marks)

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Examiner Comments

A good answer. Response includes services and goods. Most of the statements are extended.

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Examiner Tip

Whenever a question includes two elements, in this case 'goods' and 'services', both must be referred to in order to achieve full marks.

(c) Describe the value of a named biome in providing goods and services.

(4)

Named biome Amazon Rainforest, Brazil

The Amazon Rainforest provides many goods and services to the world. Its services include Atmosphere gas balance, tourism and recreation, biodiversity and jobs. These services are all useful things which humans should look after it for. The Amazon also provides goods, fruits, nuts, meat, fuel from biomass and a gene pool. These goods are all of value to us and need to be conserved for future generations.

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Examiner Comments

Candidate clearly has good knowledge of the goods and services provided by the tropical rainforest but fails to gain full marks due to a lack of description. The candidate simply lists the various factors rather than providing extending statements.

Question 4(a)

Compound line graph proved more challenging to interpret than the climate graph used in question 3a. A common error was for candidates to give figures for overall water use, rather than agriculture specific data. A considerable minority of candidates explained the pattern rather than describing it. A significant number of candidates lost marks by including incorrect data.

Question 4(b)

As the command word is describe, we were looking for an extended statement not a list of several activities. For both marks candidates needed to identify a human activity (e.g. factories) and describe how their chosen activity reduces water quality (e.g. chemical released from factories may be toxic making the river poisonous water). A surprisingly small number of candidates scored full marks on this response. Most students could identify a source of pollution, but few could describe its impact.

Question 4(c)

To achieve full marks a candidate must had to (a) choose a suitable example, (b) identify both costs and benefits, and (c) described at least one of the costs/benefits. The most common example was the Three Gorges Dam, closely followed by the Colorado River. Both examples provided candidates with the depth and variety of knowledge needed to score maximum marks. A small number of candidates lost marks by focusing their response on a small scale strategy.

(c) Describe the costs and benefits of a named large-scale water management project.

(4)

Named project Pakistan Dam

The Pakistan dam is used to stop large amounts of water affecting Pakistan which is a risk factor to causing a flood the dam is also used to collect water which can be transported to many cities in need of clean fresh water e.g. Islamabad, however the ~~cost~~ costs of building dam's like these are very expensive it it can take up to 20 years depending on the size just to built but it is worth it at the end.

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Examiner Comments

This was a good answer, including a lot of relevant points. An inappropriate case study ('Pakistan Dam' - far too generalised) prevented the awarding of full marks.

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Examiner Tip

Take care when choosing case studies. The more specific you can be, the better.

Question 5(a)

Response could have been a diagram, written explanation or both. Extra marks are now awarded for written statements which repeat information already given/illustrated in the diagram. 'Mixed-up' arrows (swash at 90 degrees) was a common mistake amongst the strong answers. Overall the quality of responses to this question was pleasing. However, some candidates threw away marks by failing to adequately label their diagrams.

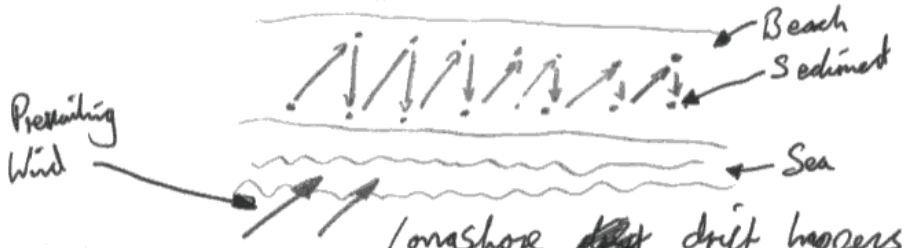
Figure 5 – Spurn Head

(a) Spurn Head is a spit formed by longshore drift.

Describe the process of longshore drift.

You may use a diagram to help your answer.

(3)



Longshore drift happens when the prevailing wind comes in at an angle to the beach. The Swash carries sediment up the beach at an angle and the backwash drags it straight back down. This repeated movement results in sediment being moved along the beach.

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Examiner Comments

An excellent answer. Clear and easy to follow diagram. Written response includes additional information, e.g. refers to the impact of swash and backwash.

Question 5(b)

Question created a wide variety of answers. To achieve Level 3 both costs and benefits needed to be clearly explained for a specific location. A significant number of candidates went off focus, providing detailed describing how hard defenses work rather than explaining their costs/benefits. Another common mistake was for candidates work to 'evolve' into an answer contrasting hard and soft approaches.

*(b) For a named location, explain the costs and benefits of using hard engineering techniques to protect a coastline from erosion.

(6)

Named location Holderness Coastline

There are many hard engineering techniques used along the Holderness coastline. The sea wall at Hornsea provide protection from erosion. This is because a sea wall can withstand mass force of waves and are also a lot harder to erode compared to having no sea defence, meaning they can last for many years. However, on the other hand, the sea wall at Hornsea can costs large amounts of money to construct and maintain, it also make the beach ugly and unatural. This means that there could be better options other than hard engineering techniques to protect the coastline from erosion. Preferably something that costs less and doesn't lose the appearance.

(Total for Question 5 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

A good answer - achieving level 3. Costs and benefits have been included for an appropriate case study region. Some explanation and terminology included.

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Examiner Tip

A good answer, including both costs and benefits. Although some of the costs/benefits have been explained, others have simply been identified, preventing a top score. Carefully structure your longer answers. On a questions that asks for two elements (e.g. costs and benefits) try to make sure your response is balanced.

*(b) For a named location, explain the costs and benefits of using hard engineering techniques to protect a coastline from erosion.

(6)

Named location Seaford head

At Seaford head, the soft chalk face erodes quickly, and the beach was at risk of washing away. A sea wall has been in place, and then reinforced by a second, to retain material on the beach. Several groynes have been used as well to help maintain the beach. A large amount of rip-rap has been put in place at the base of the cliff to stop erosion and weathering on the cliff face, which is evident elsewhere

(Total for Question 5 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

This response has gone 'off focus'. The candidate describes the different sea defenses used rather than explaining their costs and benefits.

Question 6(a)

Although this question could have been answered using a diagram, few candidates took advantage of this opportunity. Diagrams often showed little information and were poorly labelled. Surprisingly, the question proved challenging for most candidates. There appeared to be little real understanding of the main river processes. A surprisingly high number of students tried to include helicordial flow in their answers. However, this term is clearly not well understood and often confused, rather than improved, responses.

Figure 6 – A photograph of a river in its lower course

(a) Rivers often meander in their lower courses.

Describe how meanders are formed.

You may use a diagram to help your answer.

(3)

Meanders are formed a fast flow of water on one side of the river therefore hydralic action erodes on side and the slower side deposits more load therefore creating a land (meander). This happens in the lower cause as the river's load and velocity inercases which both ard deposition and hydralic action (erosion)

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Examiner Comments

A well developed answer. The best responses to this question referred to both the inside and outside of the meander.

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Examiner Tip

The option of producing a diagram is only given on questions where the examiner feels drawings are an easier way of expressing a process than words. In most cases, a clearly labelled diagram should be the easiest way to gain full marks.

Question 6(b)

For Level 3 candidates needed to have clearly explained at least two actions and linked this activities to a specific location. Many candidates packed their answers full of flood facts (e.g. impacts, responses), as a lot of this detail was off focus it gained little if any credit. The most common actions were urbanisations and deforestation.

*(b) For a named location, explain how human actions have increased flood risk.

(6)

Named location sheffield

Some
~~Along~~ time ago, sheffield used to ~~be~~ have frequent flooding. so by humans creating buildings there, they increase the flood risk there. Also by trees being cut down ~~their~~ near there, the interception with water and trees are decreased, increasing the surface run off.

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Examiner Comments

A level two response. Two factors have been identified (building on the flood plain and deforestation) but explanation is basic.

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Examiner Tip

Try to include subject specific terms in your answers. A level 3 response will always require a good use of terminology.

*(b) For a named location, explain how human actions have increased flood risk.

(6)

Named location .....

Urbanisation - Urbanisation uses impermeable rocks like granite. For this reason water cannot infiltrate into the ground so runs quickly (surface run-off) into river when it rains increasing the chance of rivers overflowing. Deforestation - vegetation/trees absorb rainfall therefore decreasing the amount of water reaching rivers. Cutting down trees/vegetation means less water is absorbed and more enters the river increasing the likelihood of rivers overflowing leading to floods. Also, people building on floodplains increases the chances of flooding. Due to the river overflows it can no longer infiltrate into rocks/vegetation → but floods instead.

(Total for Question 6 = 9 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 9 MARKS

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Examiner Comments

In many ways an excellent answer. Both urbanisation and deforestation have been explained in detail. Response fails to achieve a level 3 score as no case study region has been identified. Learning location specific knowledge is essential for exam success.

Question 7(a)

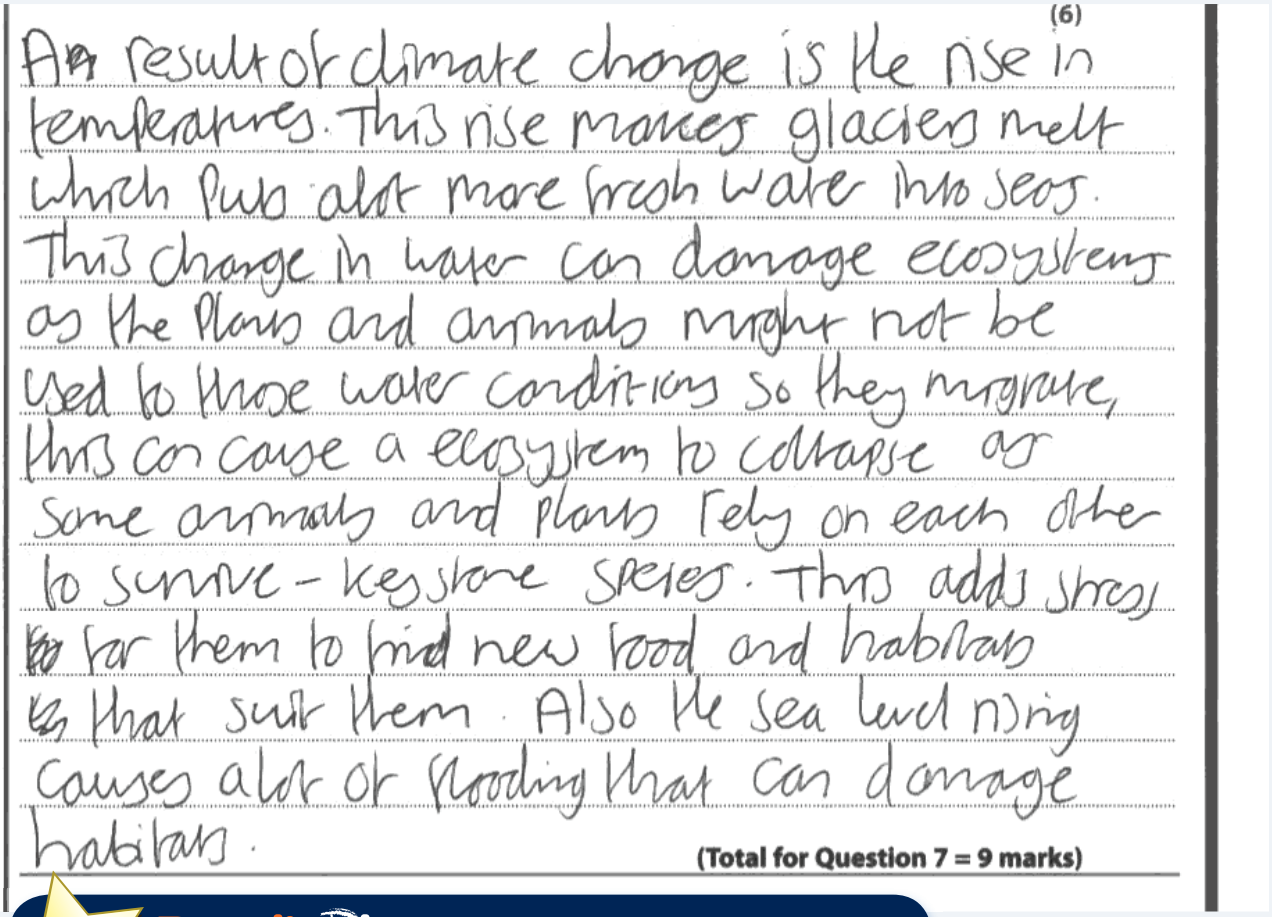
Very high success rate on this question. Answer could be from personal knowledge or lifted from the resource.

Question 7(b)

For both marks candidates needed to make it clear that overfishing results in unsustainable populations / possible extinction.

Question 7(c)

Level 3 response required a 'stress' to be clearly explained. Although most of the best responses will were case study focused, this was not a requirement. Full marks could be awarded for a very well explained single stress, however the most common route to level 3 involved a less complex explanation of several stresses.



(6)

A result of climate change is the rise in temperatures. This rise makes glaciers melt which puts alot more fresh water into seas. This change in water can damage ecosystems as the plants and animals might not be used to those water conditions so they migrate, this can cause a ecosystem to collapse as some animals and plants rely on each other to survive - keystone species. This adds stress for them to find new food and habitats that suit them. Also the sea level rising causes alot of flooding that can damage habitats.

(Total for Question 7 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

An excellent response. Detailed and informative. Includes a number of stress and clearly explains their impact.

*(c) Explain how climate change is adding stress to marine ecosystems.

(6)

Using the great barrier reef as an example, Species living in the area ~~are very so~~ haven't been touched or disturbed since it started to be made. This makes them very sensitive to any kind of change. If ~~the~~ the sea temperature were to rise due to global warming and climate change then the ~~great~~ species living in the reef would not be able to adapt and die and as the Great barrier reef is home to nearly 3/4 of all marine species, It would be good to loose all of them.

(Total for Question 7 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

A level two response. A cause of stress has been identified along with some basic explanation.

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Examiner Tip

Watch out for careless 'typos'. This response is heading towards 4 marks until the final sentence which drags down the quality of the entire response - it would be **GOOD** to loose them all! If you have five minutes left at the end of an examination, always proof read your work.

Question 8(a)

Response had to be culture focused to be awarded a mark. Many students failed to score by highlighting an environmental, rather than cultural, impact.

Question 8(b)

Command word was ‘describe’ so we were looking for extended statements, rather than a list of several different ways of adapting. Most students scored both points on this question. Common responses referred to white washed houses in hot arid locations to reflect sunlight and houses built with triple glazing to prevent heat loss in polar regions.

Question 8(c)

Candidates are asked to explain local actions taken to achieve sustainability. A common mistake was for candidates to go off focus explaining how people have adapted to their extreme environment, this is not what the question asked for. Comments such as 'houses are painted white to keep them cool' only gained credit if the candidate went on to say 'reducing the need for air conditioning which uses lots of energy and leads to CO2 production'.

*(c) For **either** a named hot arid **or** a named polar region, explain the **local** actions which have been taken to help achieve sustainability.

(6)

Name of region Burkina Faso in the Sahel region.

Extreme climate can make life very difficult for people because there is less rain for people in burkina faso, ~~extre~~ the main occupation is farming which requires a lot of rain water. To achieve sustainability, the people in Burkina Faso dig holes in the form of a semi-circle which collects rain water which can be called diguettes. used to water plants. Also the dig holes and place stones in them so that when it rains, the rainwater can travel slowly and soak the group which can be used for farming. Otheis have also chosen occupations like basket weaving which does not rely on rain and they use solar power to generate electricity.

(Total for Question 8 = 9 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 9 MARKS

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Examiner Comments

A well structured response focusing on sustainable actions. Good use of location specific knowledge.

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