

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Paper 2

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INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This insert contains the passage for comprehension.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.



- 1 A thriving coral reef is one of the most glorious sights on our planet. Anyone swimming underwater near a coral reef for the first time is likely to find it a beautiful place teeming with life of every description set among a rich and random pattern of colours. Coral reefs are second only to rain forests in the huge number of plants and animals they support. Coral animals, the remarkable little creatures that build reefs, are responsible for creating the largest structures made by life on earth, big enough, in some cases, to dwarf even the most ambitious buildings constructed by humankind. 5
- 2 There have been people living near coral reefs since prehistoric times, making use of the rich source of food they provide as well as depending on them for other basic needs, such as tools made from coral shells and building materials made from the rock of coral reefs. Coral shells have long been used in decoration, whether as jewellery or simply to adorn the walls of houses. Even today, coral reefs are still essential to the way of life of coastal people in the tropics. 10
- 3 Just as forest plants have been used for hundreds of years for medicinal purposes by people living in the rain forests, so some reef plants and animals have been used by people in coastal communities to help cure diseases like malaria, tuberculosis and bronchitis. Therefore we should not be surprised at the use of these substances in human medicine. Plants and animals living in crowded conditions, such as those on reefs and in rain forests, often produce poisonous substances to defend themselves against predators. Some of these substances can have medicinal qualities and in recent years drug companies have shown a growing interest in creatures living around coral reefs. 15 20
- 4 However, this interest shown by the drug companies is not bringing many advantages to the people living near coral reefs. The major drug companies are starting to harvest the creatures and plants of the coral reefs on a massive scale, depriving the local people of their traditional resource. Unfortunately, this could lead to a rich natural treasure being stolen away from the people who have acted for centuries as its custodian and whose traditional knowledge has led to these so-called discoveries in science. Moreover, the financial benefit of drugs developed from coral animals will go, not to locals, but to the huge drug companies. 25 30
- 5 Coral reefs and people living near them are also under threat from tourism. Hotel developers compete for land, thus pushing up its price, and this in turn forces local people out of their homes. In some places, hotels have been built on ancient burial sites on the coast, offending religious feelings. It is easy to understand why the swaying palms, sandy beaches and small islands of tropical coral coastlines are great attractions for modern travellers. But the way of life of a country is frequently exploited for tourist entertainment. For example, traditional dances are often demanded on an inappropriate day or in the wrong season just to provide an after-dinner show for tourists. 35 40
- 6 The construction of golf courses for tourists robs local people of shorelines where they traditionally came to cast their nets, depriving them of coastal areas that are so fundamental to their way of life. These golf courses need vast amounts of water, fertilisers and pesticides. Apart from any destruction caused to the living conditions of wild life, there is an even greater threat to the coral reefs themselves. The water used by golf courses drains out on to the coral reefs, carrying its deadly load of waste materials and chemicals. With tourism, too, comes the inevitable building of airports along the coast. Sometimes these are built on coral reefs if there is nowhere else to put them. Apart from the sacrifice of beautiful coastal sites on which airport runways are built, their construction also produces large quantities of waste materials that are likely to kill coral nearby. 45 50

- 7 In addition, the rock from coral reefs has traditionally been used on a small scale for building houses on inhabited islands, but it is now being taken in huge, often uncontrolled quantities, to build tourist hotels, thus depriving local people of building materials for their own homes. Coral islands, sandy beaches and beautiful lagoons - the areas of water surrounding coral reefs - are beloved by tourists in the tropics and are important attractions in their own right. And yet the lagoons around coral reefs are deepened to make way for pleasure boats, destroying the areas where fish breed, depriving the local people of food. Some fish have become so popular with tourists that they have become very expensive and local people can no longer afford them. 55 60
- 8 For developing countries, in particular small island communities and those with striking natural attractions such as coral reefs, tourism represents one of the ways in which people living there can hope to achieve an improvement in their standard of living. But this improvement is rarely achieved. Villages are destroyed by the pollution, noise, roads and the concrete monstrosities of tourism. Huge jetties and docks are built over coral reefs, often affecting currents and the circulation of water around the reefs themselves. This can both disturb the shape of the coast itself and destroy life on the reef. Hotels often lack proper sewage treatment facilities, a problem that is made worse by the yachts and cruise ships which in many cases also dump sewage directly on to the reefs. 65 70
- 9 The boom in coastal tourism has been accompanied by a similar growth in marine activities such as underwater exploration and sailing, which can damage coral reefs. In addition, cruise ships inflict severe damage on coral reefs, with their heavy anchor chains crushing coral. Every day of the year thousands of vessels of all kinds, from yachts to glass-bottomed boats, send their anchors crashing down on reefs. Anchors also stir up clouds of sediment which settle on the reef and destroy reef life. Boats carrying people wanting to dive down to the reefs anchor directly on to coral rock and the fact that these boats anchor repeatedly on to the same reefs increases their destruction. Some experienced divers are demanding the chance to dive down to unexplored reefs, and so boat owners take them further and further into remote seas, and end up destroying yet more coral reefs. 75 80
- 10 There is now no doubt that the world needs to take positive action to secure a healthy future for coral reefs. In the past, governments have sometimes taken strong action to preserve an environment which has been threatened. Unfortunately, these governments have often disregarded the views of the people living there. It has now become abundantly clear that, if schemes for the protection of the environment are not initiated and controlled by local people, they stand little chance of success. It is vitally important to ensure that the wealth of expertise that still remains in living memory is not lost. 85

(Adapted from 'The Greenpeace Book Of Coral Reefs')

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