



EXAM PAPERS PRACTICE

# Biodiversity + effect humans on ecosystems

Level: GSCE AQA 8461

Subject: Biology

Exam Board: Suitable for all boards

Topic: Biodiversity + effect humans on ecosystems

Level: Hard

This is to be used by all students preparing for AQA Biology 8461 foundation or higher tier but it is also suitable for students of other boards

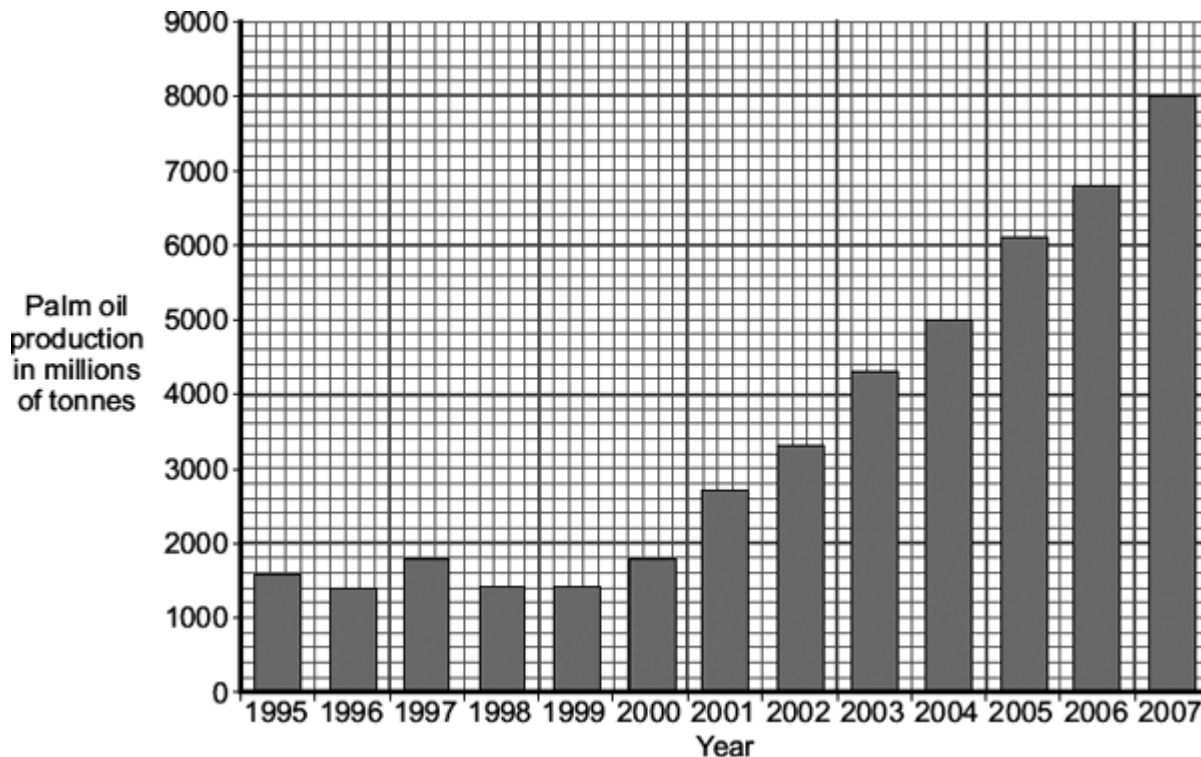


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**Q1.** In South Asia, forests are being cleared to grow palm oil trees. The palm oil is mainly used to produce fuel for motor vehicles.

The graph shows the production of palm oil in one South Asian country.



(a) Calculate the mean increase in palm oil production per year for the five year period 2000 to 2005.

Show clearly how you work out your answer.

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Mean increase = ..... millions of tonnes per year

(2)

(b) Clearing forests and replacing the forests with palm oil trees to produce fuel for motor vehicles will affect the composition of the atmosphere.

Explain how.

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**(5)**  
**(Total 7 marks)**



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**Q2.** Scientists have discovered that curry spices affect sheep and cattle. Curry spices can reduce the amount of methane that grazing animals give off.

'Bad' bacteria in the animal's stomach produce methane. About 12% of the animal's food is changed into methane.

The curry spice coriander works like an antibiotic. Adding coriander to animal food reduces methane production by about 40%.

(a) (i) Why does adding coriander to an animal's food reduce methane production?

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(1)

(ii) Explain **one** advantage to a farmer of adding coriander to the animal's food.

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(2)

(b) Farm animals give off large amounts of methane.

Explain the effects of adding large amounts of methane to the atmosphere.

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(3)

(Total 6 marks)





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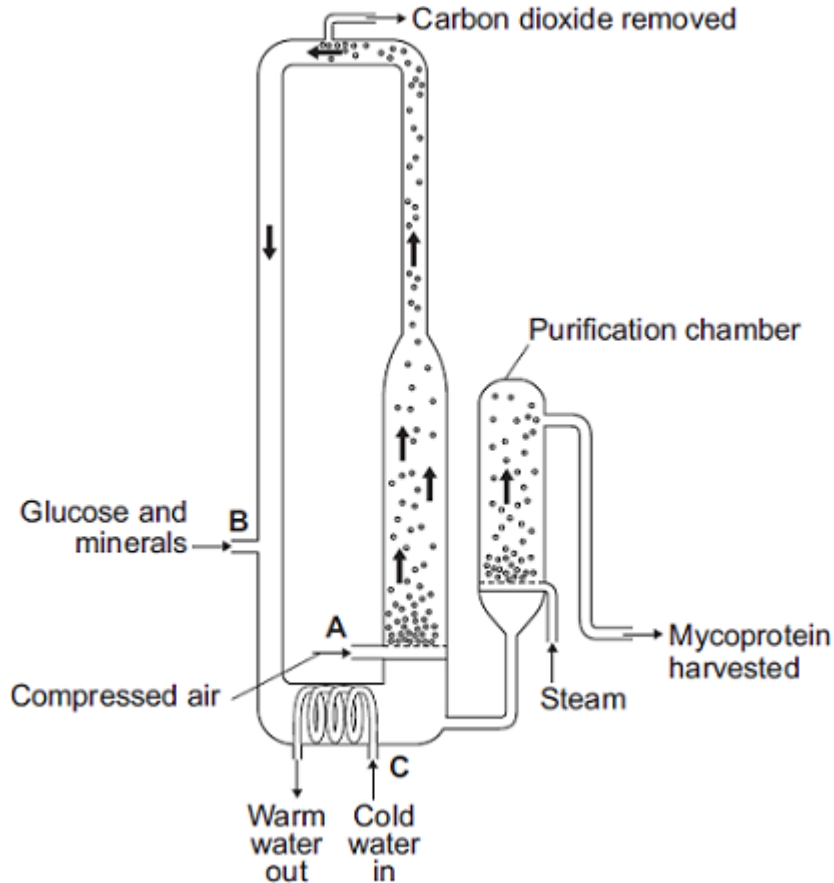


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**Q4.** The diagram shows a fermenter. This fermenter is used for growing the fungus *Fusarium*.

*Fusarium* is used to make mycoprotein.



(a) Bubbles of air enter the fermenter at **A**.

Give **two** functions of the air bubbles.

1.....

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2.....

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(2)

(b) Why is glucose added to the fermenter?

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..... (1)

- (c) The fermenter is prevented from overheating by the cold water flowing in through the heat exchanger coils at **C**.

Name the process that causes the fermenter to heat up.

..... (1)

- (d) It is important to prevent microorganisms other than *Fusarium* growing in the fermenter.

- (i) Why is this important?

.....  
..... (1)

- (ii) Suggest **one** way in which contamination of the fermenter by microorganisms could be prevented.

.....  
..... (1)

- (e) Human cells cannot make some of the amino acids which we need. We must obtain these amino acids from our diet.

The table shows the amounts of four of these amino acids present in mycoprotein, in beef and in wheat.

Name of amino acid	Amount of amino acid per 100 g in mg			Daily amount needed by a 70 kg human in mg
	Mycoprotein	Beef	Wheat	





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Lysine	910	1600	300	840
Methionine	230	500	220	910
Phenylalanine	540	760	680	980
Threonine	610	840	370	490

A diet book states that mycoprotein is the best source of amino acids for the human diet.

Evaluate this statement.

Remember to include a conclusion in your evaluation.

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(4)  
(Total 10 marks)



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**Q5.** In tropical areas of the world, forests are being cut down at the rate of 150 hectares every minute of every day.

(a) Give **two** reasons why forests in tropical areas are being cut down at a high rate.

1 .....

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2 .....

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**(2)**

(b) Explain how this deforestation is affecting the composition of the atmosphere.

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**(5)**

**(Total 7 marks)**



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**Q6.** Professor John Lawton researches into the problem of controlling the spread of bracken. Bracken is a fern which threatens upland farms, partly because it poses a health risk to people and animals.

Professor Lawton is waiting for government permission to release the Conservular caterpillar which feeds on the bracken.

The Secretary of State has to decide whether the Conservular caterpillar can be released.

The article printed below describes some of the problems faced by the Secretary of State.

### **David the caterpillar to bracken's Goliath**

Yorkshire farmer Maurice Cottrill has just forked out £500 to have a helicopter hover over his land and spew out gallons of chemicals aimed at destroying one of the most pervasive and dangerous weeds known to man – bracken. In a little box in a laboratory near Ascot, Berkshire, lies a tiny caterpillar which could have done the job for nothing.

Whether or not that caterpillar and thousand of its chums will ever be let loose on the massive carpet of bracken that is sweeping over Britain at the rate of 53 square kilometres a year has to be decided by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

Weed control through the release of imported insects has never been tried in Britain before. If the Secretary of State permits the experiment, the caterpillar is in for the feast of its life, because five years of painstaking research have proved that bracken is its only food. However, is that the full story? Will the beast stop there, or will it go on, wreaking unforeseen devastation. Can scientists predict what will happen when imported insects are released into the wild?

Bracken is poisonous – more than 20 000 sheep and 1 000 cattle suffer poisoning each year. Its spores are carcinogenic, posing a threat to hill walkers. Bracken costs a depressing £4m a year to control while rendering useless grazing land valued at £5m annually. “Bracken is one factor which is leading to hill farming becoming uneconomic”, says the director of the Ramblers Association. “We are worried about that because, the more uneconomic hill farms become, the more prospect there is of the forestry industry taking over.”

The National Farmers Union are concerned about the consequences of the caterpillar getting out of control. What if it started consuming garden ferns? What if it loved potatoes? On the other hand, the caterpillar might help to preserve important uplands where wildlife flourishes when bracken is kept at bay. However, the experiment takes the scientists into unknown territory.

World-wide, 94 species of weeds have been controlled by biological releases



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involving 215 types of animal in 50 countries. Professor Lawson says that approximately one-third have achieved effective control and the remainder have failed.

Upland farms are artificial ecosystems, created and maintained mainly for the rearing of sheep and cattle. These farms are being threatened by the spread of bracken. Up to now the only treatment for bracken has been to use herbicides.

Use the article to explain, as fully as you can, what advice you would give the Secretary of State.

Explain the arguments for and against that lead to your decision.

You will **not** receive marks for simply copying extracts from the article.

**(Total 8 marks)**



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**Q7.** Large areas of rain forest are being cleared and burnt in many parts of the world. The cleared land will often produce crops for only a few years.

(a) Explain why rain forests are being burnt to provide land for crops in many parts of the world.

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**(2)**

(b) Explain why such cleared land will often produce crops for only a few years.

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**(2)**

(c) Explain the effects that large-scale burning of forests may have on the Earth's atmosphere in the short and in the long term.

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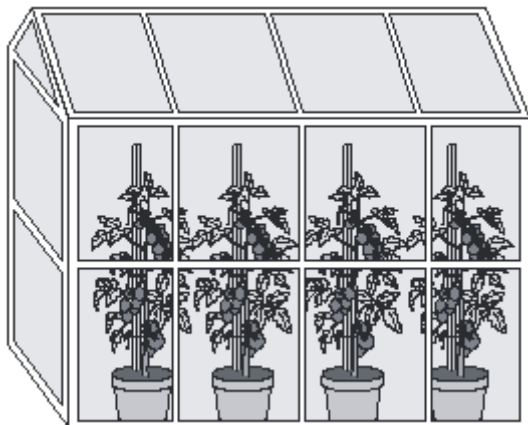
**(4)**  
**(Total 8 marks)**



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**Q8.** In this country most tomatoes are grown in greenhouses.



(a) Suggest **one** way in which a grower could increase the yield of tomatoes from plants growing in his greenhouse.

.....  
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(1)

(b) Large supermarkets often import tomatoes from overseas.

(i) Suggest **two** reasons why a supermarket might decide to import tomatoes rather than buy them from British growers.

1 .....

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2 .....

.....

(2)

(ii) Importing tomatoes may be more damaging to the environment than selling tomatoes grown in this country.

Explain why.



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(2)  
(Total 5 marks)