



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES & RESEARCH

9239/12

Paper 1 Written Examination

February/March 2021

INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

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## INFORMATION

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



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This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

The following documents consider issues related to **climate change**. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the paper.

**Document 1:** adapted from *I don't want to lose my home to climate change*, written by Thilmeeza Hussain in 2018. The article was published on the Media Network Aljazeera, Qatar. The author is the former deputy ambassador of the Maldives to the UN.

The 2016 Paris agreement on climate change set a goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C by 2040. However, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report warns that if the global community doesn't transition to clean energy sources by 2030, temperatures will rise over 2°C. The report also says that, as a result, globally, more than 48 island nations are at risk: in the Indian Ocean, Pacific, Mediterranean, Caribbean and the South China Sea. And one of these is my home country, the Maldives, made up of 12,000 coral islands stretching across the equator in the Indian Ocean.

Two months ago, I took my six-year-old son to Thulhaadhoo, a Maldivian island. I was happy to see the turquoise blue lagoon, white sandy beaches, and lush green trees that I remembered from childhood. We spent a few days visiting old friends, fishing, snorkelling, island-hopping. This was a reminder of the island life we treasure, but I often thought about what threatens our home.

Like many others, this island – an entire culture – is threatened by climate change. Next to Thulhaadhoo is my grandfather's island, Hithaadhoo, which is experiencing severe beach erosion due to climate change. Some of the reefs around another island, Muthaafushi, are already dead.

If urgent action is not taken our islands will disappear. Global warming could raise sea levels by several metres over the coming century, according to a paper published in 2016 by James Hansen, former NASA scientist and the 'father of modern climate change awareness'.

Many low-lying island nations and coastal communities are already experiencing the impacts of climate change: land loss due to beach erosion and saltwater contamination of freshwater supplies. The impacts on agriculture, commercial fisheries and infrastructure are forcing people to move. Some may move to higher elevations within the same country. But others, including the Maldives, will lose everything – homes, identity, culture, islands, and country.

The peoples of the Maldives are entitled to a dignified life. This is a right guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to all peoples of the world – big and small, rich and poor including those of island nations. Climate change is a fundamental threat to that right.

There is a glimmer of hope. We have an opportunity to avoid climate disaster if we transition to renewable and clean energy technology now. We could save the lives and homes of millions of people. But at the same time, it's heart-breaking to see that chances of success are slim and time is limited.

Millions of people across the world are passionate about climate change awareness and prevention; but their leaders and governments have failed to reflect that passion. So, we need to make climate change an election issue to put pressure on politicians. I want to be able to keep taking my son, and one day my grandchildren, to where I grew up and to where my grandparents' graves are. I want my son and his future children to have the chance to enjoy our beautiful country.

It is not too late. But we need to take action now.

**Document 2:** adapted from *Climate change and compassion fatigue*, written by Dr Kaitlin Naughten in 2018. The article was published on the author's professional blog 'Climate Sight'. The author is an ocean modeller at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge, UK.

I'm a climate scientist, and I don't worry about climate change very much. I think about it every day, but I don't let it enter my personal life. To me climate change is a fascinating math problem, unfolding before our very eyes. The consequences of this math problem, for myself and my family and our future, I keep locked in a tiny box in my brain. The box rarely gets opened.

The latest United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report tells the world what I and all my colleagues have known for years: we're seriously running out of time. To keep climate change in the category of "expensive inconvenience" rather than "civilisation destroyer", we're going to have to decarbonise the global economy. But given the priorities of most of the world's governments, it seems uncomfortably plausible that we'll be facing the sort of wasteland I've only ever seen in movies. Will the rich and privileged countries be able to buy their way out of this crisis? Maybe. But maybe not.

I know all this. I've known it for years and that's why I chose the career that I did. It's in the background of my every working day. But I can't seem to imagine my future linked with this future. I can't picture myself or my family as part of the movie, only as part of the audience. It seems unreal.

Instead I surround myself with comforting details of life. I worry about things like what I'm going to do when my contract runs out and whether I will ever get a permanent job. But mostly I just really enjoy studying the disaster. An ice sheet which is falling apart is far more interesting than a stable ice sheet. I feel privileged to have access to such a good math problem. So I work until my brain is exhausted, then I cycle home and eat snacks on the couch with my husband while watching TV. In so many ways, I love this life. And I don't worry about climate change, I don't open that box, for months at a time.

"Compassion fatigue" is a term used to describe healthcare professionals who become desensitised to tragedy and suffering. It all starts with a coping strategy to protect themselves from the emotional impact of such work by keeping it out of their personal lives. Eventually, they lose the ability to empathise with their patients. I think I have compassion fatigue with climate change. The more I study it, the less I actually think about it. The scarier it gets, the less I seem to care.

So, maybe this is the healthiest response for scientific professionals close to the issue. Accept the problem, fully understand it, and decide what you're going to do to help. Then lock up that box in your brain and get on with your piece of the fight. Find joy in this wherever you can, even if this, in itself, is a form of denial. Open up the box once in a while, to remind yourself of your motivation. But for the most part ignore the big picture and keep yourself healthy and happy so that you can keep going.

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