

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

SPECIMEN PAPER

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

PAPER NUMBER: I

DATE:

TIME:

Answer ALL questions set in this paper.

Section A carries 40 marks and Section B carries 50 marks.

Section A

Answer ALL questions. Answers should be brief and to the point.

1. About 70 % of the rain in the Maltese islands falls between October and March while 30% falls during the rest of the year.
 - (a) What **major** problem may this situation present to wild plants and animals? **(1 mark)**
 - (b) Mention **one** adaptation Maltese plants have to resist these conditions. **(1 mark)**
2. Briefly explain the difference between irrigated and non-irrigated land. **(2 marks)**
3. (a) “*The Mediterranean region is characterised by earthquake and volcanic activity*”. Briefly explain this statement. **(1 mark)**
 - (b) Mention **one** beneficial aspect and **one** negative aspect of volcanoes? **(1 mark)**
4. Based on 2003 records, Malta has a population density of 1,248 people per sq km. What implications does this have on the natural environment? **(2 marks)**
5. Copy and fill in the following table with **local** examples of flora or fauna.

	Example
Alien species	
Endangered species	
Endemic species	

(3 marks)

6. Briefly explain **two** positive effects of rubble walls on Maltese crop farming. (2 marks)
7. What impact did the constant increase in population in 19th and 20th century Malta have on the following?
- (a) urban development
 - (b) emigration
 - (c) public hygiene (1, 1, 1 marks)
8. Briefly explain the use in past ages of the following Maltese traditional buildings:
- (a) the corbelled hut
 - (b) the farmhouse
 - (c) street niches (1, 1, 1 marks)
9. Describe briefly the way the Maltese used to celebrate any *named* religious **or** family feast in the past. (2 marks)
10. Briefly explain how the Maltese way of life has changed between 1900 and 2000 with regards to:
- (a) languages spoken
 - (b) religious devotion
 - (c) village life (1, 1, 1 marks)
11. Which two of the following are or have Greek remains?
- (a) Parthenon
 - (b) Agrigento
 - (c) Sabratha
 - (d) Granada (2 marks)
12. Which **four** industrial sectors make up the economic environment? Give an example of **each**. (4 marks)
13. “*Migration is contributing to multicultural societies.*” Briefly explain the link between migration and multicultural societies. (2 marks)
14. “*The work environment has changed drastically owing to greater emphasis on occupational health and safety.*”
- (a) Briefly explain the phrase ‘*occupational health and safety*’. (1 mark)
 - (b) Mention **one** adaptation Maltese plants have to resist these conditions. (2 marks)
15. Give **three** *examples* of how a local council can promote the environment of its locality and comment on them. (3 marks)
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Section B

Answer ALL questions from this section.

1. Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions that follow it.

Will new vehicles be cheaper after all?

“Cars bought under the new tax regime will be subject to a lower registration tax upfront in most cases, but will face a higher annual road fee under the government’s plans to revise the system. A new annual ‘congestion circulation’ tax will replace the road licence fee, though a portion of the tax which is paid upfront will remain.

The revision of the system is clearly intended to incentivise the purchase of smaller, low-emission cars, while owners of bigger fuel guzzlers are likely to fork out more in tax. *The Sunday Times* has learnt that over the past days the government has met the representatives of car importers and second-hand car dealers to receive feedback on the new proposed system.

The European Commission has sent a formal request to Malta to amend the tax regime on the grounds that the minimum thresholds imposed on second-hand vehicles imported from the EU are discriminatory. It also objected to VAT being levied on the tax.

Finance Minister Tonio Fenech had made it clear that the government wanted to continue addressing the element of congestion, underlining that it was not in the national interest to double the number of cars purchased.

However, contrary to some reports it is understood that the government has no intention of introducing a parking charge.”

Source: The Sunday Times, 22 June 2008, p. 1 and 4

- (a) Why do you think it is beneficial for the government to introduce a new *congestion circulation tax*? What are the major differences between this new tax and the old road licence fee? **(3, 2 marks)**
- (b) Why did the European Commission intervene in this issue, considering that this issue affects only car owners in Malta? **(4 marks)**
- (c) What do you understand by the term “*traffic congestion*”? Mention **two** particular areas in Malta where traffic congestion is indeed a problem for the inhabitants living nearby. **(1, 2 marks)**
- (d) Besides this new proposed tax described in the passage above, mention **two** other practical ways how you would tackle this problem. In your answer state how the people are likely to react to such measures. **(4 marks)**
- (e) Reflect on your own town or village. Have you noticed any increase in traffic congestion in your area during these last few years? Give **two** valid reasons why do you think this happened. **(1, 2 marks)**
- (f) In the past, besides private cars, there were other methods of land transport. Mention and describe **two** such transport methods which today have disappeared completely. **(2 marks)**
- (g) Mention two ways how car traffic in Malta has affected the local natural environment negatively. **(4 marks)**

(Total: 25 marks)

2. Read the following situation about Climate Change carefully and then answer the questions that follow it.

Pamela shares the bedroom with her sister Caroline. In the evening they watch television till quite late. Their father has repeatedly told them to switch off their TV set before going to sleep. He keeps talking about the need for everybody to change their lifestyles because of climate change. However, the two sisters end up quarrelling about who should get out of bed to switch off the TV set. In the morning the television is still on stand by mode.

In the meantime in the rural areas of Nigeria the farmers are worried that the severe drought they are facing will mean that they cannot manage to make a living.

- (a) What is the connection between climate change and the use of electrical appliances?
(5 mark)
- (b) Why is Pamela's and Caroline's father encouraging them to change their lifestyles because of climate change?
(5 marks)
- (c) In your opinion do you think that young people in Malta are acting responsibly in regards to the issue of climate change? Give particular examples to support your answer.
(5 marks)
- (d) Discuss how people living in developed and developing nations are being affected differently by climate change.
(5 marks)
- (e) Comment on the ripple effects caused by the drought that is being experienced in African countries as Nigeria.
(5 marks)

(Total: 25 marks)