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Introduction

The scenario chosen for this year's paper was the reasonably well-known 'case-study' of Ecuador and the debate about its oil, both within the country and beyond in the international community. In 2013, the left-leaning President Correa embarked on a complex plan to preserve the extraordinary biodiversity of the rainforest interior where the vast majority of oil is located but also to appease the increasingly vociferous complaints from the native American population about the destruction wrought by oil companies. It became well-known because Correa asked for contributions from other sovereign states to pay Ecuador to leave the oil in the ground. One European government, Norway, responded positively but there was limited support elsewhere. Centres who had used previous iterations of this paper to prepare their candidates will have noted similarities with the debate in Ghana (2022) and indeed other scenarios covered in textbooks and revision guides.

In terms of level of demand, the 2024 paper had very much the same mix of questions as in previous years. There were five multiple choice questions (MCQs) of which the most demanding proved to be Question 1(a)(ii) which was essentially a maths question testing candidates' ability to measure area. Question 2(b)(ii) also proved to be challenging with only half of the candidature knowing what CITES actually did. At the other end of the performance spectrum, Question 1(b)(ii) and Question 3(a)(ii) both had >80% correct answers, which is usually the way that candidates at the lower end of the ability range garner their marks. In addition to the MCQs, there were a further six questions which used 'identify' or 'calculate' as the command word. Most of these questions produced very much the expected profile of performance with at least 70% of candidates finding the right answer and, in some cases, nearer 90% as with Question 3(a)(i) and Question 3(e)(ii) (a 2-mark question).

However, two of the 2-mark questions proved to be far more challenging, for very different reasons. Question 1(a)(iii) required candidates to '....explain one **physical** reason why rainforest cannot grow in some parts of Ecuador'. The modal mark was zero and the mean a disappointing 0.92. The most obvious choice of location was the presence of the Andean cordillera which is where some gathered their only mark. The impact of mountains on climate and therefore the distribution of the tropical rainforest biome was competently explained by a disappointingly small minority. Suffice it to say that climatology is something of a dark corner for many candidates which centres are no doubt, only too well aware. The second 'problem' 2-mark question was the apparently innocuous Question 3(f)(i) which asked for 'two unconventional fossil fuel sources' to be named. This is straight off the specification, but the modal mark was zero and nearly 80% of the candidates were on that mark. Most had a go, but the responses offered strongly suggest that they didn't know what 'unconventional' meant with unsurprising results.

These short answer questions carried 16 marks in total with another 16 marks coming from the 4-mark 'Explain' questions. Each of these were 2x2 questions with either two reasons sought or, as in the case of Question 1(c), 'one strength and one weakness' to be explained. Generally speaking, these questions did what they are supposed to do and were answered with increasing security across the cohort's ability range. The mean marks were in around 2 out the 4 available and the modal mark was either 2 or 4. More details are provided in the appropriate question section along with exemplars of candidate responses.

Of course, centres are only too well aware that this paper has three questions that, between them carry exactly half of the paper's total. Two 8-mark questions that use either 'assess' or 'evaluate' as the command word and the grand finale in the 16-mark (with 4 SPaG marks included) 'justify your choice.' These questions discriminate and sadly are often not attempted at all by those at the lower end of the cohort. That is an enduring shame given that all three questions have marks available for using material in the resource booklet which should allow all candidates the opportunity for gleaning at least a few marks which may make all the difference to their final grade. The mean and model masks for the two 8-mark questions were 4.4 and 5 for Question 3(d) and 4.2 and 5 for Question 3(f)(ii). The modal mark for Question 4 was10 (including the SPaG) mark whilst the mean was 8.0. Please see the question specific comments for further guidance.

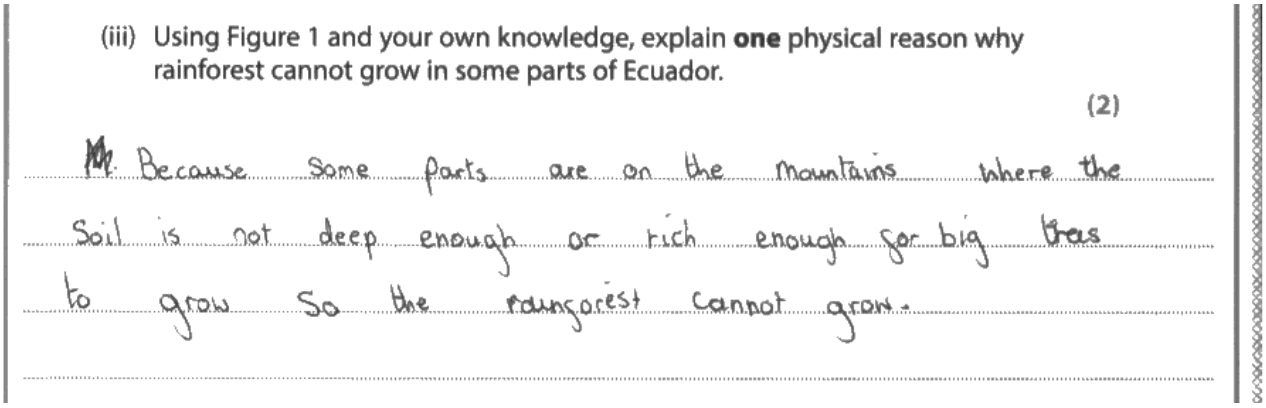
Question 1 (a)(i)

A simple opening question and most candidates got it right. The commonest error was a result of not reading the question correctly translating it into something akin to 'Where is Quito' so, 'near the equator' works for that version but not the question actually asked.

The modal mark was 1 with 71% getting this right.

Question 1 (a)(iii)

Most candidates offered the idea that mountains might be an issue, but many of them couldn't really identify why that might be the case. A particular weakness/absence being a lack of understanding about why it gets colder with altitude. This was a poorly answered question with over 40% scoring 0. As noted elsewhere and in other examiners' reports, many candidates, even at the Grade 7 boundary, have a weak grasp of climatological and meteorological processes.



(iii) Using Figure 1 and your own knowledge, explain **one** physical reason why rainforest cannot grow in some parts of Ecuador.

(2)

Because some parts are on the mountains where the soil is not deep enough or rich enough for big trees to grow so the raingorest cannot grow.

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Examiner Comments

This response recognises that the mountains are an issue (1) and then develops this with two, albeit related ways with because the soils are 'not deep enough or rich enough for big trees'. They would get the second mark for either of these. (1)

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Examiner Tip

Don't rewrite questions. Many candidates started their answers to this question with 'One physical reason why rainforest cannot grow in some parts of Ecuador is...'. It's a waste of time because it can never gain any marks. Note that this candidate has started with 'because...'.

Question 1 (b)(ii)

The first mark was not difficult to access because Figure 2 (text) offered the candidates both deforestation and climate change so correctly pulling these from the resource would get them halfway on both parts. The second mark proved much more elusive with distribution being a stumbling block, so the question discriminated quite effectively as 'explain...' questions often do. The modal mark was 2 with a mean of 2.49.

(ii) Using Figure 2 and your own knowledge, suggest **two** reasons why the distribution of Earth's biomes is changing over time.

(4)

1 The wild life overtime has been exploited overtime for materials and resources for human society leading to certain parts of earth biomes to change.

2 But also states that climate change may ~~also~~ impact the forest because of the oil being used which causes change to happen in the area.

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Nothing for the first part because there is no relevant link to the resource booklet (RB). For the second part, there is 1 mark for the climate change reference but this is not developed.

TOTAL = 1.

ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A keyword in this question was 'distribution'. Remember to focus on these keyword in answers.

(ii) Using Figure 2 and your own knowledge, suggest **two** reasons why the distribution of Earth's biomes is changing over time.

(4)

1 one reason is the use of natural resources. People exploit the forests such as the Taiga for medicine and other needs.

2 Another reason is due to climate change. This is because if the plant becomes too cold or hot it will die causing a loss in trees.

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Examiner Comments

1 mark for use of natural resources (1) and a second mark for its development – taiga for medicine (plausible if not the most obvious resource in the taiga) gets the 2nd mark. (1)

In the second part, climate change is enough for first mark (1) but the development is too weak to credit.

Question 2 (a)(i)

Not a complicated or, indeed, mathematically challenging task but the text did need reading carefully which was sadly not the case for some. The commonest wrong answer was 3.5 (billion) suggesting that these candidates may have stopped reading Figure 5 before they got to 'half the estimated value of the oil'. About a quarter of candidates got this wrong.

Question 2 (b)(i)

This too was not mathematically demanding but, once again, candidates needed to understand the data rather more clearly than some did. These candidates didn't 'see' that the final row was the TOTAL for all three global regions. Perhaps they simply didn't see that all they needed to do was to subtract 70.7 from 100. Perhaps they imagined that this was too simple a mathematical task?

Question 2 (c)

This also seems to have been quite fertile ground for gathering marks. Figure 3 and Figure 4 have a good deal of text which is 'liftable' material and that is fine because candidates need to 'lift' the right material, which is a skill in itself (AO4). The modal mark was 4 with 30% of candidates getting full marks and only 13% falling to score anything at all.

(c) Using Figure 3 and Figure 4, explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of global actions to protect rainforests.

(4)

Strength

REDDs help prevent deforestation This is a strength because many countries have joined which increase the amount ~~of~~ forests being protected

Weakness

They are voluntary pured this is weakness because some developed countries may not want to donate and causes limited funding for REDDs

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Examiner Comments

This is a full mark answer despite it appearing on first reading to be something of a mirror as in 'some countries can' which increases forest protection whilst the second is 'some countries can't or won't' which reduces donations.

However, assuming that all are agreed that the first part is worth 2 marks we are afforded some detail in the about 'developed' countries being reluctant and the fact that it is 'voluntary'. These extra refinements make the 'weakness' section also worthy of 2 marks – thus 4 marks overall.

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Examiner Tip

In these 4-mark 'Explain' questions, make sure that you have a balance with both sections having one basic point and a second point which should be a development of the first.

(c) Using Figure 3 and Figure 4, explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of global actions to protect rainforests.

(4)

Strength

One countries help by donating money to help to protect rainforests which is much needed.

Weakness

One countries want to know ~~[illegible]~~ exactly what the money will be used on.

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Examiner Comments

This is an example of how, having gathered two marks in the first part the candidate is unable to reverse the idea effectively when the RB did suggest a couple of potential routes taken in the first exemplar.

Question 3 (a)(i)

This question was answered successfully by the vast majority of candidates – the few who opted for 'oil' were presumably working on the assumption that since oil was the centre of the scenario they had been presented with, it must be the largest export. Perhaps they failed to look at the resource. Over 90% got this right.

Question 3 (b)(i)

All this question required was for candidates to know what constitutes a 'physical' cause and then find one on Figure 6.

Most did this successfully. The 30% who got this wrong mostly opted for falling oil-prices as their answer were perhaps guilty of either missing the word 'physical' in the question or not understanding it.

Question 3 (b)(ii)

This question is based on two resources so both answers have to have a resource based starting point. The resources are not unusually challenging but, as before, candidates do need a decent specialist vocabulary to unlock all of the available information.

This question is harder to unlock than some of the other 4-mark 'Explain...' questions. Candidates know from Topic 7 (people and the biosphere) there is a relationship between wealth and consumption and both figures (but especially Figure 6) provided a good deal of material for them if they could dig it out. Many could do this for the first reason, mostly using Figure 5 but were often less efficient with the second which has less obvious resource foundations. Unsurprisingly, the modal mark was 2 (31% of candidates) with 20% getting full marks but a disappointing 24% failing to score anything at all.

(ii) Using Figures 5 and 6, suggest **two** reasons why Ecuador's consumption of energy has grown at a faster rate than its population.

(4)

1 Most of their exports thrive from oil products which consumes lots of energy. To keep a good trade with other countries to supply Ecuador with more money, the oil products must keep being exported.

2 Population growth is quite slow compared to other countries.

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Examiner Comments

At first reading, this seems a little confused but there is a logic here – getting oil out of the ground and exporting it in itself uses more oil and that is why oil consumption has gone up. Convoluted but plausible for 2 marks.

There is nothing in the second part.

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Examiner Tip

Take care to read through the resource booklet right at the start of the exam. It needn't take long, but it'll be invaluable.

(ii) Using Figures 5 and 6, suggest **two** reasons why Ecuador's consumption of energy has grown at a faster rate than its population.

(4)

1 This is due to pandemics such as covid 19. People were at home more, which causes the high use of energy as its needed. As the population increased - more people were using it, causing it to grow faster.

2 Having a larger GDP means that Ecuador is more likely to consume larger amounts of energy. Having to export more goods to recieve the money increases this consumption as they are using it more often.

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Examiner Comments

COVID 19 meant people were at home (1) causing more energy to be used (1) Second point isn't particularly clear but gets 2-marks. Larger GDP likely to consume more energy (1) having to export more goods (1).

The second part of this was also in the previous exemplar and indeed many other candidates. It isn't the first explanation to come to mind but as remarked it is plausible.

Question 3 (c)

This question is based on Topic 9.i b, so it is recalled knowledge. The question does not insist on two renewable energy sources but on **two** impacts which may very well come from one energy source. That is most likely to be HEP which crops up more often in the whole specification than other renewable energy sources. There is no help from the RB. Close to 30% of candidates managed to gather all four marks, which was the modal mark. However, very nearly a quarter failed to score anything at all. The main issue appeared to be a lack of an understanding as to what constitutes a 'renewable' energy source.

(c) Figure 7 shows how oil production can have a negative impact on the environment.

Using your own knowledge, explain **two** ways in which **renewable** energy production can also have a negative impact on the environment.

(4)

1 Hydroelectric power stations require dams, in order to build the dams lots of land needs to be cleared and it may cause flooding which can also damage the environment

2 Wind power is generated using wind turbines they can may the land look unnatural and again land may needed to be cleared to make space for the turbines

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Examiner Comments

HEP requires large areas of land to be cleared (1) and may cause flooding (1). The points here are linked. One mark for point 2 for wind turbines looking unnatural. Land cleared is repeated from the first answer and because the question focused on impacts, these have to be different.

3 marks in total.

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Examiner Tip

Remember that all the question asked will require you to use the RB – this is an example.

(c) Figure 7 shows how oil production can have a negative impact on the environment.

Using your own knowledge, explain **two** ways in which **renewable** energy production can also have a negative impact on the environment.

(4)

1 Biofuel is a ~~source~~ type of renewable energy but it requires large areas of land in order for crops to be grown, so large areas of ~~farm~~ land, often rainforests have to be cleared as shown in figure 7 which ~~destr~~ results in habitat loss, reducing the areas biodiversity

2 HEP is another type of renewable energy ~~it~~ but it requires a dam to be built. Building dams cause large areas of land behind it to be flooded. This can destroy habitats and ~~meaning~~ ~~that~~ will plants as they cannot grow in the water logged soil, resulting ~~in~~ in a decrease in biodiversity.

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Examiner Comments

This answer avoids the 'double' impact issue of the first exemplar. The two impacts here are the clearance of rainforest and the 'destruction of habitats'.

Biofuels require large areas of land (1) so large areas of rain forests have to be cleared (1). HEP floods large areas of land (1) destroying habitats (1).

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Examiner Tip

Remember that if you are asked for two impacts it isn't quite good enough to offer just one impact albeit for two different causes.

Question 3 (d)

Figure 7 is a photograph showing visible deforestation, the laying of pipelines and heavy machinery. There is no text.

Figure 8 is rich in text with an accompanying map and is likely to have been used much more than Figure 7.

There is much to be lifted which can crowd out the all-important AO3 'deconstruction' of information and the candidates who 'synthesises relevant information' so candidates need to make good connections between different strands of information. A feature of Level 3 answers is their ability to do this.

A characteristic of Level 1 answers is that candidates are inclined to be extreme in their judgments. The threats are often millenarian with all lifeforms being wiped out, or all surviving. This tendency is also apparent in Question 4.

A route for some was to contrast the issues facing 'fully protected' environments with 'partly protected' areas. Some worked hard here to explore what might happen at the boundaries of these different spaces. These 8-mark questions will discriminate, as they are designed to. Pleasingly most candidates had a go with fewer empty responses; less than 8% scored 0 marks. About 20% were Level 1 and 16% Level 3 answers . The majority were placed in Level 2 with 5 being the modal mark and 4.4 the mean. Getting middle-ability candidates to glean one or two more marks on the 8 – mark questions and the 16-mark final question would obviously have a significant impact on overall centre performance. Probably the best route for most would be to use the resource booklet more critically .

(d) Using evidence from Figures 7 and 8, assess the threats to Yasuní National Park (YNP) and its communities.

(8)

One threat to YNP is ~~to its specialised ecosystem~~ its large oil reserves (40% below the YNP). YNP is a ~~fully protected park so~~ habitat for 750 mammal and bird species including Jaguars and tiny monkeys (marmosets) and pink dolphins. These animal species are specific to this region, and as a result could face extinction if the ~~resort~~ park is exploited for commercial oil as oil rigs will need to be built, deforesting the area which removes habitats and forest corridors. Additionally, ~~YNP is to have a is home to Jaguar and Tamarind forest communities~~ YNP's biodiversity may be lost as a result of these species being threatened as plants and animals are interdependent on each other for survival, but as trees are cut down, the soil is likely to become infertile and the animal species lack a source of food.

~~At~~ Another threat to YNP and its communities are the role of TNCs such as Sinopec and Petroamazonas that exploit the landscape for commercial oil. Whilst the YNP is meant to be a fully protected park, it is surrounded by areas that are partially explored and areas where drilling is allowed, making it difficult to prohibit access to these companies. These companies have built roads and pipes which have required the land to be clear cut and damage the structure of the soil as the pipes cut through where trees were initially planted. Additionally,

TNCs have allowed loggers and hunters to access this region and confront YNP communities like Tageiri and Taromenane that have sustained the forest before these TNCs arrived.

In conclusion, the largest threat to YNP is the role of TNCs as not only do they exploit the forest unsustainably but also give access to hunters and loggers who threaten the biodiversity in YNP who need

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This is a strong response. It is notable for excellent AO3 in which material that is clearly, although not always explicitly, taken from the (AO4) RB provides a platform for further development. Biodiversity is addressed as are food web-chains and food webs to illustrate the inherent interdependence of fauna and flora. There is a thoughtful discussion about the difficulty of protecting the YNB given its proximity to unprotected areas. There is assessment here too identifying TNCs are the most culpable.

It scored 8 marks.

(d) Using evidence from Figures 7 and 8, assess the threats to Yasuní National Park (YNP) and its communities.

(8)

The ~~most~~ greatest ~~im~~ threats to Yasuní National Park is ~~that~~ it would demage ~~the~~ ~~TOO~~ many animal's home. Oil exploration is so near to the YNP which means, dusts and ash would easily ~~p~~ travel to ~~the~~ YNP and that TOO mammal and bird species will have a very wrost living condition. This lead to the species become endanger because they have wrost ~~or~~ living environment and food may also ~~pollued~~ polluted. 2,000 tree species damaged force birds to migrat to another place. Pink dolphins are already rare species, ~~if~~ if the ~~w~~ oil waste polluted the river, ~~p~~ dolphins would also have wrost living condition that may become endanger. The least threats is that if YNP ~~s~~ started ~~to~~ the exploration, ~~water~~ YNP'S biodiversity's resource of ~~pro~~ cures for diseases may be polluted or damaged ~~the~~ because of the exploration of oil. The more least threats is that the ~~of~~ relationship between other country will become wroster because of the YNP can't be exploration there Ecuador don't have ~~much~~ another ~~m~~

reasen to keep the companies.

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Examiner Comments

This answer has decent AO4 and it does attempt to assess as in 'the least threats...' and 'the more least (sic) threats' but the supportive evidence is sketchy and sometimes hard to follow as with the last few lines focussing on international relations.

This is obviously better than Level 1 on both AO3 and AO4 descriptors but is not challenging for Level 3 either.

5 marks.

(d) Using evidence from Figures 7 and 8, assess the threats to Yasuní National Park (YNP) and its communities.

(8)

~~Theee~~ Threats to yasuni National Park is that if it is cut down is can cause a loss of ~~habi~~habitat which can cause the population of near by animals to decrease it can also lead to near ~~by~~ rivers and sea becoming polluted if they ~~bai~~build pipes a lot of damage can come from roads

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Examiner Comments

A very brief response of seven lines of text. What is here is not without some merit as it traces the impact of habitat loss through two more stages which include some obvious errors as in pollution of 'nearby rivers and seas'. The fact that there is a chain of reassigning is enough to get 2 marks.

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Examiner Tip

It is always worth adding more to an answer if you can – just think about what the RB has to offer.

Question 3 (e)

Figure 9 provided a very respectable range of possible answers for candidates, so the question produced a large number of 2 mark answers with nearly 90% getting this right.

Question 3 (f)(i)

This question is another that was targeted at AO1 knowledge and is unrelated to anything in the RB. As referenced in the introduction to the paper this proved to be, quite unexpectedly something of a graveyard with close to 80% failing to find one, let alone two examples of 'unconventional' fossil fuel sources. The relevant part of the specification (Topic 9.4b) reads as follows:

'Environmental costs (negative impacts on water quality and ecosystems) of developing new unconventional oil and gas sources (tar sands, shale gas) in ecologically-sensitive and isolated areas.'

This is the second part of the detailed content embedded in the key idea which is: 'The world's continuing reliance of fossil fuels increases pressure to exploit new areas.'

Two examples are literally 'specified' and 'fossil fuels' are referenced in the key idea. There are dark corners of any specification, but it was, nonetheless, a surprise that this is clearly one of them especially given how central the debate about fossil fuels is to the whole of this topic.

(f) Study Figure 10.

(i) Figure 10 mentions unconventional fossil fuels.

Using your own knowledge, name **two** unconventional fossil fuel sources.

1 Shale gass , fracking

2 .....

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We allowed both fracking and shale gas in the mark scheme although well aware that fracking is a process rather than a name for a fuel source.

However, we only allowed fracking or shale gas/oil so this scored 1 mark.

(f) Study Figure 10.

(i) Figure 10 mentions unconventional fossil fuels.

Using your own knowledge, name **two** unconventional fossil fuel sources.

1 Fracking

2 Tar Sands

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Examiner Comments

So, 1 mark for fracking (see previous) and 1 mark for tar sands.

Question 3 (f)(ii)

Assessment should involve an attempt to come to a judgement. It is a challenging command word and some just ignore it and answer a different question. Specifically, something along the lines of: 'Who emits most CO_2 and why?'

The reading of Figure 10 prompted most to offer a three-part division:

Developed = most

Emerging = second most but growing

Developing = least.

This was often supported by some data with a minority approaching the data by manipulating it in some way e.g. adding together USA, UK and other developed = 58.5 % but only 1.2 billion people so a per capita point can be made.

Others wrote out one or more of the bullet points but often left it without comment. A small number took the 1750 hint and suggested that the developed world have cleared up their act. Only a tiny number mentioned global shift of manufacturing as a factor despite the heavy 'China' hint here. An even smaller number made any comment about variations within a country despite the Yasuni being an obvious example.

The question performed much like Question 3(d), also an 8-mark question. The modal mark was, once again, 5 marks and the mean was 4.2. Candidates who did spot the temporal element reference here would, all other things being equal, generally get into Level 3 or failing that, because of limitations elsewhere, to the top of Level 2. As noted in the commentary provided for Question 3(b) getting, for the purposes of this example, Grade 5 candidates to improve their performance by better deconstruction of the question on this question, Question 3(d) and most critically Question 4 would have significant impact on their ultimate grade.

(ii) Using evidence from Figure 10, assess which countries are most and least responsible for carbon dioxide emissions over time.

(8)

overall, economically developed countries are most responsible for emitting carbon dioxide (UK, USA and others). This is because they have the most industry (like factories) that produce carbon dioxide because they can afford it. Also, due to a nigh population, they need more factories to manufacture more things for more people.

Emerging countries are still responsible but not as much as developed countries. This is because they can somewhat afford industry which emmits carbon dioxide. But they don't have as much industry as developed country. majority of emerging countries (except China) don't have a huge population which need lots of industry to run the country.

Lastly, developing countries have emmited the least amount of carbon dioxide.

this is because developing countries are poorer and use cheaper methods of industry which don't emmit as much carbon dioxide (hand made items). this means they are least responsible for climate change and therefore want to continue using fossil fuels.

(Total for Question 3 = 31 marks)

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As with many other examples, there is no account of the over time element in this answer. For many candidates, the temporal element was ignored despite the very heavy steer in the text that accompanies the resource. This answer shows a tenuous grasp of the relationship between high income countries and industry. There is some confused vocabulary and a limited grasp of economic geography.

Low level AO4, and not a lot of AO3 so 4 marks.

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Examiner Tip

Remember that there will be variations within and between countries, and over time.

(ii) Using evidence from Figure 10, assess which countries are most and least responsible for carbon dioxide emissions over time.

(8)

USA and other economically developed countries are most responsible for carbon dioxide emission over time as over all they have contributed 58.5% of CO_2 emissions over time. This is a large amount of carbon dioxide emissions which will affect and increase the rate of global warming due to carbon dioxide ~~are~~ being trapped in the atmosphere - heating the earth. Economically developed countries burnt the most fossil fuels but also have the least amount of people (1.2 billion) suggesting that they are the least sustainable and ~~burn the most~~ release the most CO_2 per person. Developing countries are the least responsible for CO_2 emissions as they have only release 10.4% of all carbon dioxide emissions over time. The Developing countries also have the most amount of people ~~outside~~ so we expect the figure to be higher. However, developing countries might not be the least responsible as governments have said that they should be allowed to keep producing fossil fuels for longer. This means that they will keep contributing to CO_2 emissions and will increase climate change and global warming. Therefore they ~~are~~ not could hold a lot of responsibility of CO_2 emissions. Overall,

~~economically~~ I think economically developed countries are the most responsible for carbon dioxide emissions as they have released the most CO_2 which will have a large negative affect on the atmosphere. Developing countries are the least responsible as they have ~~can~~ released the least amount of carbon dioxide by far.

(Total for Question 3 = 31 marks)

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This is significantly stronger than the previous example and is on the cusp of Level 2 and Level 3. The AO4 is quite strong with an overview of the relative contribution to greenhouse emissions. There is some reflection on that data and it comes to a view, a simple assessment but largely coherent. It also recognises (at the top of the second page) that developed countries have a history of carbon dioxide emissions as 'they have released' the most CO^2.

So, this was given 6 marks.

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Examiner Tip

Underline or highlight the keywords in a question – in this case most and least responsible.

Question 4

Over the past few years, many centres have trained their candidates to answer this most challenging of the questions on the paper by covering the following sub-questions:

1. What is so good about your option?

2. What is not so good about the other two options?

3. What are the drawbacks of your own chosen option?

Suffice it to say that Level 1 answers sometimes do the first, rarely do the second and almost never do the third.

However, there are other elements to this question to look out for:

1. Have they spotted ‘long-term future’ in the question?

2. If so, is it clear what they mean when using the term?

3. Have they taken the hint about ‘for all of Ecuador’s people'?

4. If so, how have they approached it: ‘indigenous people’ and the ‘rest’ or something more complicated?

Even the best answers will have gaps in their coverage. Those 'best' answers often introduced the relatively accessible idea that none of these options come without some drawbacks. The candidates who write to a Yes/No/ Maybe formula would be better advised to adopt a 'Maybe the best/Maybe not perfect/ but better than the others because...' approach.

Select the option you think offers the best long-term future for all of Ecuador's people.

Justify your choice.

Use information from the Resource Booklet and knowledge and understanding from the rest of your geography course to support your answer.

(12)

Chosen option

Option 2

I chose option 2 because it helps the government to make money which helps develop ~~the country~~ Ecuador. By allowing all Ecuador's oil resources to be used carefully, the government can ~~set up~~ ~~propos~~ set up laws that restrict the amount of oil the company is drilling and increase amount of taxes so the government can ~~get~~ benefit from it and help develop the country. It ~~also~~ also matches the demand of energy consumption as ~~this~~ ~~it Ecuador's for~~

the rate grows faster than its population. Restricting the amount of oil helps to reduce the supply of oil so the oil price will not fall so do not have to compete with countries like USA, Russia, Saudi Arabia for more oil products export and can earn more money.

Moreover, earning more money can help supports the rainforest communities. As more oil companies begin to drill oil, rainforest communities may not have space to live and causes difficulties for them to live. Therefore, the government can share their profits to them and support their daily living and buy food as habitats are destroyed by the oil company forces monkeys and other animals to escape. This helps the rainforest community without affecting their daily activities.

However, oil drilling can cause sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide to release to the atmosphere. When they react with clouds, it turns the water into acidic and eventually causing acidic rain. which damage crops and erode the growing causing less food for rainforest communities. Furthermore, it release carbon dioxide into the air and contribute to global

warming. To solve the problem, the government can use money for planting ~~trees~~ trees in other areas and reforestation after there is no more oil left. so that it offers another place for the animals to live and increase ~~of~~ carbon storage of plants to reduce the ~~of~~ emission of green house gases. and after the oil drilling, the ~~forest can~~ Government can bring back the biodiversity in ~~the~~ Ecuador ~~but~~ and at the same time ~~to~~

~~Overall, I believe option~~ the government can earn money for developing the country.

Overall, I believe option 2 is the best because compare to other 2, option 1 may not work as the foreign government show no interest and option 2, it does not benefit ~~the~~ Ecuador. Therefore, I believe option 2 is the best ~~solution~~ solution.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a Level 3 response.

It is not at the top of Level 3 because it is quite narrowly argued and could offer more RB evidence to support its case. It could also be more attentive to 'carefully' and 'all of Ecuador's people'. Option 2 is selected. On the first page, it is suggested that the government will gain tax revenue to 'help develop the country'. This argument is continued on the next page when the candidate suggests that the government can restrict oil output and thus raise its price. This is a sophisticated idea and entirely of the candidate's making. It was important not to hold back in crediting this because that is not, of course, the way that global oil prices work and Ecuador's output is far too small to have that effect. We cannot expect a GCSE candidate to have that knowledge. The idea passes a plausibility test. The answer goes on to identify how the tax revenues could be used to offset losses to indigenous peoples caused by the oil industry. The candidate also offers a criticism of their chosen option (a common characteristic of Level 3 answers). The material on 'acid rain' also passes a plausibility test and builds on it by observing how tax revenues might help in offsetting the negative impacts of oil exploitation by replanting forest. The very brief criticism of the other two options includes a slip of the pen over 'option 2' in the penultimate line and these reflections could have been developed.

However, an impressive and thoughtful Level 3 response. The SPaG places it into Level 2 for 3 marks.

Remember that no option will be perfect – it'll be a choice between imperfect options.

Select the option you think offers the best long-term future for all of Ecuador's people.

Justify your choice.

Use information from the Resource Booklet and knowledge and understanding from the rest of your geography course to support your answer.

(12)

Chosen option

Option 1

Hello My names Beau,

Looking over ~~reserach~~ research i can see you declined the offer to stop oil production ~~in~~ and Save the rain forrest. I think you should re consider, im here to tell you why the rain forrest covers ~~more~~ around half of Ecuador. Meaning many Speies of animals and Plants live here

the loss of tropical Rain forest is around 1700km² this data was taken in 2017 barirs nor improved much, this defforesration could lead to extenction of the worlds favourite mamels or plants. yowe turned down money from Gomany I wantto know why? Why nor join REDD andhelp save yow rainforest you spend 4.9 billion on oil produc in 2009 the global financial crisis begins with oil if you stopped digging in rainforest you wouldnt have a problem or jus t accepted money from other countries, the Yasuni narinal park is a home to 750 mamal species and bird and has over 200 tree species Oil companies have found ourcarbon the 40% of conventional oil under the YPN So the habitats are being destroyed only you can stop this.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

An unusual response from this candidate who takes the statement in Option 1 literally and constructs an open letter to 'foreign governments'. There are occasional AO3 observations here based on AO4 material from the RB as in 'this data was taken in 2017 but it has not improved much'. The polemical nature of the answer is not an issue but the muddle over the 'you spend 4.9 billion of oil' is problematic undermining the coherence of the argument.

It was placed in Level 2 and awarded 5 marks with a further 2 marks for the SPaG.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Most decisions made by governments will benefit some people, but almost never will everyone benefit. Try to pick out winners and losers for each of the three options offered.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, centres and candidates are offered the following advice:

1. Pay attention to the key terms in Topic 7, 8 and 9 – make a list.

2. Use past papers and talk through the expectations of both resource based and non-resource based questions.

3. Pay particular attention to the different types of questions: MCQ and short answer 'Identify/Calculate, 4-mark 'Explain' questions and, lastly (but not least) the extended writing trio (8/8/16).

4. Introduce key concepts, many of which will always be useful whatever 'scenario' is presented; these include:

    a. rural/urban contrasts

    b. short-term/long term impacts

    c. different players e.g. governments, populations, TNCs

    d. opportunity cost of capital – money spent on one thing cannot be spent on another

    e. externalities – unlooked for effects on 'third' parties

    f. Sustainability – what does it mean?

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html

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