

 **Bài đọc (reading passage)****The global importance of wetlands**

A. Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil, for all or part of the year. These are complex ecosystems, rich in unique plant and animal life. But according to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWFN), half of the world's wetlands have disappeared since 1990 - converted or destroyed for commercial development, drainage schemes and the extraction of minerals and peat". Many of those that remain have been damaged by agricultural pesticides and fertilisers, industrial pollutants, and construction works.

B. Throughout history, humans have gathered around wetlands, and their fertile ecosystems have played an important part in human development. Consequently, they are of considerable religious, historical and archaeological value to many communities around the world. 'Wetlands directly support the livelihoods and well-being of millions of people,' says Dr Matthew McCartney, principal researcher and hydrologist at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). 'In many developing countries, large numbers of people are dependent on wetland agriculture for their livelihoods.'

C. They also serve a crucial environmental purpose. 'Wetlands are one of the key tools in mitigating climate change across the planet,' says Pieter van Eijk, head of Climate Adaptation at Wetlands International (WI), pointing to their use as buffers that protect coastal areas from sea-level rise and extreme weather events such as hurricanes and flooding. Wetland coastal forests provide food and water, as well as shelter from storms, and WI and other agencies are working to restore those forests which have been lost. 'It can be as simple as planting a few trees per hectare to create shade and substantially change a microclimate,' he says. 'Implementing climate change projects isn't so much about money.'

D. The world's wetlands are, unfortunately, rich sources for in-demand commodities, such as palm oil and pulpwood. Peatlands - wetlands with a waterlogged organic soil layer - are particularly targeted. When peatlands are drained for cultivation, they become net carbon emitters instead of active carbon stores, and, according to Marcel Silvius, head of Climate-smart Land-use at WI, this practice causes six per cent of all global carbon emissions. The clearance of peatlands for

planting also increases the risk of forest fires, which release huge amounts of CO₂. 'We're seeing huge peatland forests with extremely high biodiversity value being lost for a few decades of oil palm revenues,' says Silvius.

E. The damage starts when logging companies arrive to clear the trees. They dig ditches to enter the peat swamps by boat and then float the logs out the same way. These are then used to drain water out of the peatlands to allow for the planting of corn, oil palms or pulpwood trees. Once the water has drained away, bacteria and fungi then break down the carbon in the peat and turn it into CO₂ and methane. Meanwhile, the remainder of the solid matter in the peat starts to move downwards, in a process known as subsidence. Peat comprises 90 per cent water, so this is one of the most alarming consequences of peatland clearances. 'In the tropics, peat subsides at about four centimetres a year, so within half a century, very large landscapes on Sumatra and Borneo will become flooded as the peat drops below water level,' says Silvius. 'It's a huge catastrophe that's in preparation. Some provinces will lose 40 per cent of their landmass.'

F. And while these industries affect wetlands in ways that can easily be documented, Dr Dave Tickner of the WWF believes that more subtle impacts can be even more devastating. 'Sediment run-off and fertilisers can be pretty invisible,' says Tickner. 'Over-extraction of water is equally invisible. You do get shock stories about rivers running red, or even catching fire, but there's seldom one big impact that really hurts a wetland.' Tickner does not blame anyone for deliberate damage, however. 'I've worked on wetland issues for 20 years and have never met anybody who wanted to damage a wetland,' he says. 'It isn't something that people generally set out to do. Quite often, the effects simply come from people trying to make a living.'

G. Silvius also acknowledges the importance of income generation. 'It's not that we just want to restore the biodiversity of wetlands - which we do - but we recognise there's a need to provide an income for local people.' This approach is supported by IWMI. 'The idea is that people in a developing country will only protect wetlands if they value and profit from them,' says McCartney. For sustainability, it's essential that local people are involved in wetland planning and decision making and have clear rights to use wetlands.'

H. The fortunes of wetlands would be improved, Silvius suggests, if more governments recognised their long-term value. 'Different governments have different attitudes,' he says, and goes on to explain that some countries place a high priority

on restoring wetlands, while others still deny the issue. McCartney is cautiously optimistic, however. 'Awareness of the importance of wetlands is growing,' he says. 'It's true that wetland degradation still continues at a rapid pace, but my impression is that things are slowly changing.'

? Câu hỏi (questions)

Question 1 - 4

Reading Passage 2 has eight paragraphs, A-H.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

- 1 _____ reference to the need to ensure that inhabitants of wetland regions continue to benefit from them
- 2 _____ the proportion of wetlands which have already been lost
- 3 _____ reference to the idea that people are beginning to appreciate the value of wetlands
- 4 _____ mention of the cultural significance of wetlands

Question 5 - 9

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

- 5 Peatlands which have been drained begin to release _____ instead of storing it.
- 6 Once peatland areas have been cleared, _____ are more likely to occur.
- 7 Clearing peatland forests to make way for oil palm plantations destroys the _____ of the local environment.
- 8 Water is drained out of peatlands through the _____ which are created by logging companies.

Athletes and stress

A. It isn't easy being a professional athlete. Not only are the physical demands greater than most people could handle, athletes also face intense psychological pressure during competition. This is something that British tennis player Emma Raducanu wrote about on social media following her withdrawal from the 2021 Wimbledon tournament. Though the young player had been doing well in the tournament, she began having difficulty regulating her breathing and heart rate during a match, which she later attributed to 'the accumulation of the excitement and the buzz'.

B. For athletes, some level of performance stress is almost unavoidable. But there are many different factors that dictate just how people's minds and bodies respond to stressful events. Typically, stress is the result of an exchange between two factors: demands and resources. An athlete may feel stressed about an event if they feel the demands on them are greater than they can handle. These demands include the high level of physical and mental effort required to succeed, and also the athlete's concerns about the difficulty of the event, their chance of succeeding, and any potential dangers such as injury. Resources, on the other hand, are a person's ability to cope with these demands. These include factors such as the competitor's degree of confidence, how much they believe they can control the situation's outcome, and whether they're looking forward to the event or not.

C. Each new demand or change in circumstances affects whether a person responds positively or negatively to stress. Typically, the more resources a person feels they have in handling the situation, the more positive their stress response. This positive stress response is called a challenge state. But should the person feel there are too many demands placed on them, the more likely they are to experience a negative stress response - known as a threat state. Research shows that the challenge states lead to good performance, while threat states lead to poorer performance. So, in Emma Raducanu's case, a much larger audience, higher expectations and facing a more skilful opponent, may all have led her to feel there were greater demands being placed on her at Wimbledon - but she didn't have the resources to tackle them. This led to her experiencing a threat response.

D. Our challenge and threat responses essentially influence how our body responds to stressful situations, as both affect the production of adrenaline and cortisol - also known as 'stress hormones'. During a challenge state, adrenaline increases the amount of blood pumped from the heart and expands the blood vessels, which allows more energy to be delivered to the muscles and brain. This increase of blood and decrease of pressure in the blood vessels has been consistently related to superior sport performance in everything from cricket batting, to golf putting and football penalty taking. But during a threat state, cortisol inhibits the positive effect of adrenaline, resulting in tighter blood vessels, higher blood pressure, slower psychological responses, and a faster heart rate. In short, a threat state makes people more anxious - they make worse decisions and perform more poorly. In tennis players, cortisol has been associated with more unsuccessful serves and greater anxiety.

E. That said, anxiety is also a common experience for athletes when they're under pressure. Anxiety can increase heart rate and perspiration, cause heart palpitations, muscle tremors and shortness of breath, as well as headaches, nausea, stomach pain, weakness and a desire to escape in more extreme cases. Anxiety can also reduce concentration and self-control and cause overthinking. The intensity with which a person experiences anxiety depends on the demands and resources they have. Anxiety may also manifest itself in the form of excitement or nervousness depending on the stress response. Negative stress responses can be damaging to both physical and mental health - and repeated episodes of anxiety coupled with negative responses can increase risk of heart disease and depression.

F. But there are many ways athletes can ensure they respond positively under pressure. Positive stress responses can be promoted through the language that they and others - such as coaches or parents - use. Psychologists can also help athletes change how they see their physiological responses - such as helping them see a higher heart rate as excitement, rather than nerves. Developing psychological skills, such as visualisation, can also help decrease physiological responses to threat. Visualisation may involve the athlete recreating a mental picture of a time when they performed well, or picturing themselves doing well in the future. This can help create a feeling of control over the stressful event. Recreating competitive pressure during training can also help athletes learn how to deal with stress. An example of this might be scoring athletes against their peers to create a sense of competition. This would increase the demands which players experience compared to a normal training session, while still allowing them to practise coping with stress.

? Câu hỏi (questions)

Question 1 - 5

The Reading Passage has six paragraphs, **A-F**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, **A-F**, in boxes on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- 1 _____ reference to two chemical compounds which impact on performance
- 2 _____ examples of strategies for minimising the effects of stress
- 3 _____ how a sportsperson accounted for their own experience of stress
- 4 _____ study results indicating links between stress responses and performance
- 5 _____ mention of people who can influence how athletes perceive their stress responses

Question 6 - 9

Complete the question below

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer

- 6 Performance stress involves many demands on the athlete, for example, coping with the possible risk of _____ .
- 7 Cortisol can cause tennis players to produce fewer good _____
- 8 Psychologists can help athletes to view their physiological responses as the effect of a positive feeling such as _____
- 9 _____

_____ is an example of a psychological technique which can reduce an athlete's stress responses.

Question 10 - 13

Choose **TWO** letters **A-E**

Which **TWO** facts about Emma Raducanu's withdrawal from the Wimbledon tournament are mentioned in the text?

- A the stage at which she dropped out of the tournament
- B symptoms of her performance stress at the tournament
- C measures which she had taken to manage her stress levels
- D aspects of the Wimbledon tournament which increased her stress levels
- E reactions to her social media posts about her experience at Wimbledon

Which **TWO** facts about anxiety are mentioned in Paragraph E of the text?

- A the factors which determine how severe it may be
- B how long it takes for its effects to become apparent
- C which of its symptoms is most frequently encountered
- D the types of athletes who are most likely to suffer from it
- E the harm that can result if athletes experience it too often

Làm bài ngay

 **Answer key (đáp án và giải thích)**

1 D