

## PART 7

You are going to read a magazine article. Six paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from the paragraphs **A – G** the one which fits each gap (41 – 46). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

## The future of the world's wetlands

*Wetlands – lakes, swamps, marshes, rice fields, floodplains, river deltas, peat bogs and flooded forests – exist all round the world, but they are shrinking fast.*

The Llanos de Moxos wetlands in Bolivia form an area covering some 6.9 million hectares – the area of the Netherlands and Belgium combined – and contain thousands of entrancing animal and plant species, like the giant otter, Bolivian pink river dolphin, giant armadillo, jaguar, tapir and black caiman.

**41**  But this positive development sits awkwardly with the wider, worrying picture of the state of the world's wetlands. The rate of loss and deterioration is accelerating in every region of the planet, under pressure from rising populations and demand for agricultural land and water. And that's before climate change is factored in.

**42**  Wetlands are on the front line of global development, and as a consequence, 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 siltation (the build-up of sediments in water), agricultural pesticide and fertiliser run-off, industrial pollutants, and the construction of dams and dikes. Yet wetlands can be extremely beneficial.

**43**  Even so, wetlands tend to be undervalued, and the fact that numerous products are derived from freshwater habitats is often forgotten, among them food such as fish, rice and cranberries; medicinal plants; poles for building materials; and grasses and reeds for making mats and baskets and for thatching houses.

**44**  Wetlands are also rich sources of in-demand commodities such as palm oil, pulpwood and, above all, peat, but in the case of peat, the effects on the wetlands can be disastrous. When peatlands – wetlands with a waterlogged organic soil layer – are drained for cultivation, they become net carbon emitters instead of active carbon stores, and make a significant contribution to global carbon emissions. Peat consists of 90 percent water, ten percent soil, so one of the most alarming consequences of peat drainage is land subsidence. As the peat drops below water level, very large areas become flooded.

Conservationists generally recognise that the best protection for wetlands does not come from dogmatically trying to keep them in pristine isolation; rather, it results from local people valuing and profiting from them. A number of conservation organisations work with local communities to ensure they can derive an income from wetlands, are involved in planning and decision making, and have clear rights to use the areas.

**45**  Another promising approach draws on the hundreds of forest species that can be harvested sustainably to keep wetlands alive. For instance, in Kalimantan – the Indonesian portion of the island of Borneo – the hardwood meranti tree is now being cultivated for its nuts, which produce an oil used in chocolate and cosmetics processing.

**46**  Huge challenges remain in convincing enough people of the need for change, but many environmentalists are optimistic, taking encouragement from the growing number of farmers increasing their profits by using less water and fewer pesticides. Large parts of the world are waking up to the fact that we can't keep exploiting wetlands.

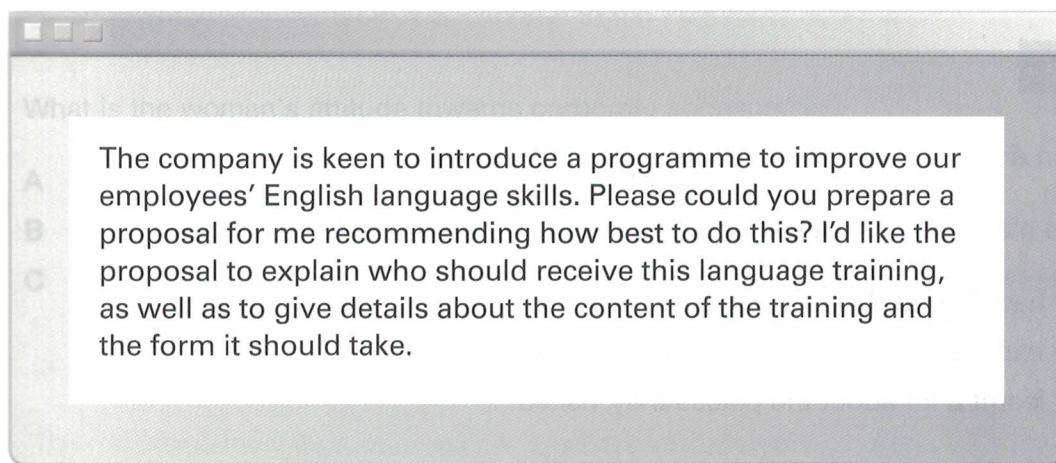
- A** Projects like these undoubtedly show the way forward. In the light of developments in many parts of the world, the key to protecting wetlands is the utilitarian argument: that they provide us with food and materials, and have the ability to reduce the risk of flooding. This is a much stronger argument than simply saying they are wonderful places with the power to entrance us.
- B** One way is by lessening the effects of climate change across the planet. They function as buffers that protect coastal areas from rising sea levels and extreme weather events, reducing the severity of impacts from hurricanes.
- C** Such findings lead to the conclusion that wetlands, while vulnerable to climate change, can also be harnessed to mitigate its impacts. The Sahel is typically thought of as a drought-prone region without any significant wetlands. In reality, it holds a series of large wetland systems and floodplains that are crucial for the survival of local communities.
- D** In 2013, this astonishing natural wonder was designated a wetland site of international importance – the world's largest. The move should reinforce efforts to safeguard a vast area from an increase in land use for agriculture and cattle ranching.
- E** One such programme, in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady Delta, is exploring integrated rice and fish production. The aim is to reduce the degradation of mangroves and mitigate food insecurity and poverty.
- F** The health of freshwater wetlands can be measured by calculating their populations of vertebrate species, and results over the years indicate that freshwater wetlands are declining faster than either the oceans or tropical forests. For example, the past 40 years have seen a 70 per cent decline in tropical wetland species.
- G** Many of these extremely useful items can only be found in wetlands, and as a result, throughout history, wetlands have played an important part in human development. In fact, they still directly support the livelihoods and well-being of millions of people.



## PART 2

Write an answer to **one** of the questions 2 – 4 in this part. Write your answer in **220 – 260** words in an appropriate style.

- 2 You work for the Human Resources department of a company and you have received this email from your manager:



Write your **proposal**.

- 3 An English-language magazine has published a series of articles entitled *Chance meetings that changed lives*. Write a letter to the Editor of the magazine, saying why the series impressed you. Your letter should also describe what happened after a chance meeting with someone changed your life, explaining how your life would have been different if that meeting had not taken place. Write your **letter**. You do not need to include postal addresses.

- 4 An international tourist organisation has asked readers of its website to send in reports of tourist attractions that they feel are in need of improvement.

Your report should briefly describe an attraction you have visited, explaining why it is of interest to tourists from around the world. You should also suggest at least two ways in which you feel the attraction could be improved, giving reasons for your suggestions.

Write your **report**.