

EXAMEN COMMUN D'ENTREE EN PREMIERE ANNEE

EPREUVE D'ANGLAIS

vendredi 02 juillet 2010

**13h30 à 18h00
(durée conseillée 1h30)**

Coeff. 2

Ce sujet est composé de 3 pages.

Il est demandé aux candidats de répondre directement sur leur copie en indiquant clairement les numéros des exercices.

[Aucun document autorisé]

Being Green Pays Off

Who says what's good for the environment is bad for the economy? From electric cars to solar cells, products that protect the planet will earn hefty profits in the future.

BMW has recently unveiled its vision of the future of driving. It is a four seat car with a top speed of 120 km/h (75 m.p.h.) and a range of up to 250 km (155 miles). This car is a clean machine: it gives off no pollution that could foul the air in any way. It runs on an electric motor powered by high-energy sodium-sulfur batteries. Although it takes electricity to charge the batteries, the power plants can be far from smoggy cities. Just about all the world's major automakers are revving up to produce electric cars. They realize that in the 21st century, consumers do increasingly favour (and governments do mandate) technology that preserves and protects the environment. The fortunes of companies and nations will rise and fall on how well they heed the call to save the planet.

Every potential innovation, whether a new kind of windmill or biodegradable plastic made from plants, is attracting attention from companies in host of industrial nations. The U.S.'s Du Pont is in a race with Germany's Hoechst and Britain's ICI, among others, to develop replacement chemical for ozone-destroying chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Germany's Siemens is vying with such firms as Amoco in the U.S. and Sanyo in Japan to produce cheap and efficient solar electric cells.

Who wins the race to perfect and sell green technologies will depend to a great extent on who has the edge in engineering and marketing skills. But equally important may be the encouragement companies get from their countries' political leaders. Governments can exert enormous influence over how aggressively businesses take the environment into account, using sticks and carrots (sticks in the form of tough standards for products and manufacturing processes, carrots consisting of tax breaks and other incentives that reward innovation).

The U.S. government has, for the most part, done a poor job of spurring business to come up with breakthroughs. In the past, federal agencies issued environmental compliance goals, like standards for the amount of pollutants coming out of smokestacks, and then mandated the acceptable methods for achieving the targets. There was no incentive to do better than the standards or to develop innovative tools for meeting the goals.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is stepping up support for research into energy conservation and renewable power sources.

Funding in these areas has risen. But the White House and Congress have not shown much interest in politically tough measures such as sharply higher gasoline taxes or more stringent auto-fuel-economy standards, both of which would force Detroit to design more efficient cars. There is action as well at the level of the European Community as a whole. The E.C. has helped finance development of clean technologies, such as 100% recyclable cars and low-polluting power generators.

Many companies have recognized, without any nudge from governments, that respect for the environment can boost profits. In the U.S., 3M has drastically reduced pollution and waste at its manufacturing plants and despite the conventional wisdom that says environmentalism is a luxury has steadily increased its profits.

Once industrialists think about it at all seriously, they almost inevitably see the financial advantages of investments in environmental technology. Sustainable development meant guiding industry's views on environmental issues. After some time, executives from such firms as Chevron, Mitsubishi, Royal Dutch/Shell and Volkswagen have agreed on a set of business principles, including the need for sustainable management of resources, the charging of environmental costs against corporate profits and the rule that polluters, not the public, must pay for cleanup.

Yet even with greater industrial environmental consciousness, there could clearly be no prospect for sustainable development in either the developed or the developing world without government incentives.

1. Find out synonyms from the article for the following words or expressions. (5 points)

(Give indication of the line number)

1. accelerate : =
2. pay attention to ... : =
3. to be in competition with : =
4. using warnings and incentives : =
5. encouraging business : =

2. Answer the following questions in your own words. Do not quote from the article. Pay particular attention to grammatical and lexical accuracy. (6 points)

(40 words approximately per question)

1. How do you understand the following quotation taken from the document. Comment on it.
“The fortunes of companies and nations will rise and fall on how well they heed the call to save the planet.” (l. 11-12)
2. What does the following quotation imply for countries and international companies?
“Who wins the race to perfect and sell green technologies will depend to a great extent on who has the edge in engineering and marketing skills.” (l. 18-19)
3. What do you think of the electric car depicted in the first paragraph? What is your vision of the future of driving?

3. Essay (9 points)

(300 words suggested)

Is going green a wise solution to saving the planet? Can the planet be ‘saved’ after all? Isn’t it subversive to denounce the pessimistic description of our polluted planet as vastly exaggerated?

Give your opinion in a coherent, clear and logical way.