

Dangers of Climate Change: Lack of Water Can Lead to War

Climate change leads to higher temperatures. Higher temperatures lead to melting glaciers, so snow-melt-based water supplies decrease. Climate change also leads to more irregular rainfalls rather than the more sustained and regularized patterns that make it easy to store and irrigate crops. In the Middle East and North Africa, the world's most water-stressed region, per capita water supplies were expected to halve by 2050 even in the absence of global climate change, having effects on an increasing population. The effects on agriculture will be unpredictable but unpleasant.

Water is basic. When there's not enough of it, people die. When there's not enough to keep crops properly irrigated, there's famine. So it's not a big shock that when water decreases, conflict over it increases. Or to put it more simply, a lack of water leads to war. Societies unable to adjust to the new challenges are left with two main options: fight or flee. The former strategy implies securing an increasing share of the diminishing resources — by force if necessary. Obviously, countries would prefer to talk in order to equitably share water access than to fight over such access. It's when talking fails that fighting begins.

As an example, Egypt depends on the Nile for almost its entire water supply. It's not surprising that Egypt has literally threatened to go to war to secure its access to water from the Nile. Egypt is not the only potential ignition point for conflict in the arid Middle East, where over 90 percent of fresh-water crosses international borders.

Countries should place policies that account for the fact that although water is renewable, it is not infinite. Policies can make existing water supplies sufficient, or they can destroy them. Aid donors can do a great deal to help resolve water conflicts. Political leaders must be involved. Water-conflicts are solvable technically, but technical resolutions can only be put into place by political compacts.

1. Comprehension exercises (2 points)

1.a. According to the text (0.5 points)

- a. Irregular rainfalls make it easy to have crop irrigation.
- b. North Africa is expected to reduce its amount of water in the next years
- c. The less water the less conflicts.

1.b. According to the text (0.5 points)

- a. Societies only have two options: fight or flee.
- b. Egypt's 90 percent of fresh-water supply crosses international borders.
- c. When water decreases war is a possible consequence.

1.c. People die of hunger when they cannot water their crops sufficiently.

(Answer 'True' or 'False' AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

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1.d. Technique can help if countries develop policies.

(Answer 'True' or 'False' AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

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2. Do the following grammar exercises according to the instructions given (2 points)

2.a. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one, using an expression with 'rather' (0.5 points)

- I would prefer to stay another two days here.

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2.b. Turn the two sentences into a conditional clause using 'on condition that' (0.5 points)

- If you help me next Sunday I'll give you extra money.

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2.c. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one (0.5 points)

- It is not necessary to take a taxi. Paul will take us there.

- We

2.d. Write the appropriate prepositions after the adjectives. (0.5 points)

- I am bad playing the guitar but good playing the piano.

3. Identify ONLY FOUR words from their definitions (1 point)

- amounts of something that is available for use.

- something not available or when there is not enough of it.

- to reduce something by 50% or divide something into two equal pieces.

- (the total amount collected of) a plant such as a grain, fruit or vegetable grown in large amounts.

- escape by running away, especially because of danger or fear.

- think of someone or something in the stated way; judge (2 words).

4. Write a summary of the text of about 30 – 45 words using your own words (2 points)

5. Write a composition of about 100 – 150 words on ONLY ONE of the following topics (3 points)

5.a. Things one can do to reduce water consumption.

5.b. Children live what they learn. Do you agree with that?