

**OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION**

A223/02/RB

**TWENTY FIRST CENTURY SCIENCE
BIOLOGY A**

Unit 3: Ideas in Context plus B7 (Higher Tier)

RESOURCE BOOKLET

JUNE 2010

To be opened on receipt

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READ INSTRUCTIONS OVERLEAF

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- **This booklet contains the article required to answer question 1.**
- **Take this article away and read it through carefully.**
- **Spend some time looking up any technical terms or phrases you do not understand.**
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WORLD'S COMMON BIRDS ARE DECLINING

Scientists are concerned that the world's common birds are declining in numbers. They believe this is caused by destruction of their habitats.

In Europe, a survey carried out by BirdLife International discovered that 45% of common bird species had shown a drop in numbers. In a 26-year period, 56 out of 124 species had declined. Birds such as the turtle dove had seen numbers drop by as much as 79%.

Another report published in 2008 stated that common bird species were declining all over the world.

A spokesperson from BirdLife International said that data from various surveys on bird species had been used. The surveys from around the world had shown a trend of a reduction in biodiversity. There was also a reduction in the numbers of birds migrating between Europe and Africa. More information was therefore needed about migratory birds as they moved between their winter feeding grounds and their summer nesting sites.

190 species of birds are now at high risk of extinction. In India, the number of white-rumped vultures has been reduced by 99.9%. It is thought that this has been caused by the vultures feeding on the bodies of dead cattle that had been treated with a drug called diclofenac. The concentration of diclofenac built up in the vultures' bodies and poisoned them. Diclofenac is still being used by some farmers in India.

Albatrosses are also at risk. Their population is being reduced by 100 000 a year. The birds drown when they get hooked and tangled up in very long fishing lines. Albatrosses are slow to mature and lay only a small number of eggs.

BirdLife International decided that a coordinated effort by many organisations was required and that action was needed sooner rather than later. BirdLife’s Chief Executive said that biodiversity was easily affordable. He estimated that 90% of Africa’s biodiversity could be saved for £500 million per year. He said, “The world is failing in its 2010 pledge to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biodiversity”.



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