

### SUPER STORMS: NO END IN SIGHT

Hurricane Katrina killed over a thousand people and left much of New Orleans and the neighbouring coast in ruins in 1995. The damage exceeded a hundred billion dollars—the costliest natural disaster in American history.

The outlook is anything but promising. Population is growing along vulnerable coasts in the U.S., Asia, and the Caribbean. In the southeastern U.S., for example, coastal populations grew more than 50 percent from 1980 to 2003. North Atlantic hurricanes, responding to a natural cycle, are expected to increase in number over the next decade. And in the background there lies the possibility that global warming is making these storms stronger.

Hurricanes, called typhoons in the Pacific and tropical cyclones in the Indian Ocean, have been studied for some time. Like all weather, hurricanes are fueled by heat, which powers the storms by sending warm, moist air toward the frigid upper atmosphere. As surrounding air is brought into the base of the storm, Earth's rotation makes the air spin. Starting these great weather engines requires surface waters of 30 °C or more and moist air. Because of a tropical climate shift that has brought warmer waters starting in 1995, the Atlantic has recently seen unusual numbers of hurricanes. Weather satellites make it easy for meteorologists to measure hurricanes, but the data still cannot capture storms in enough detail to forecast their paths.

Text adapted from an article by Thomas HAYDEN. *National Geographic* (August 2006) vol. 210: 2

**Després de llegir el text, contesteu les preguntes seguint les instruccions que es donen en cada cas. Cada pregunta val un punt. En les preguntes d'opció múltiple, es descomptaran 0,5 punts per error; en la resta, es descomptaran 0,05 punts per cada falta d'ortografia, de morfologia, de lèxic o de sintaxi.**

**Después de leer el texto, responda a las preguntas siguiendo las instrucciones que se dan en cada caso. Todas las preguntas valen un punto. En las preguntas de opción múltiple, se descontarán 0,5 puntos por error; en el resto, se descontarán 0,05 puntos por cada falta de ortografía, de morfología, de léxico o de sintaxis.**

---

**Choose the correct answer (1-7).**

1. Fill in the blank: The \_\_\_\_\_ expensive natural disaster in American history was Hurricane Katrina.
  - a) more
  - b) most
  - c) costliest
2. The difference between hurricanes and typhoons
  - a) is geographical location.
  - b) is the speed of their winds.
  - c) is their frequency.
3. The fact that the water temperature in the Atlantic Ocean has increased since 1995
  - a) is unrelated to the increase in strong storms.
  - b) is at least partly responsible for the increase in strong storms.
  - c) is definitely due to global warming caused by human activity.

4. Weather satellites capture data that
  - a) measure a hurricane's strength.
  - b) show that hurricanes are less frequent than before 1995.
  - c) can accurately predict a hurricane's path.
  
5. Hurricanes are caused by
  - a) strong winds and rainfall.
  - b) a combination of high water temperature, moist air, and Earth's rotation.
  - c) a combination of unknown factors.
  
6. In the past generation, coastal populations around the world
  - a) have increased.
  - b) have decreased.
  - c) have remained stable.
  
7. Fill in the blank: Much of New Orleans \_\_\_\_\_ by Hurricane Katrina.
  - a) destroyed
  - b) left in ruins
  - c) was left in ruins

**Change in sentence structure.**

8. Change the sentence "North Atlantic hurricanes, responding to a natural cycle, are expected to increase in number over the next decade" by inserting the word "Experts" at the beginning:

Experts \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions in English.**

9. Give two reasons why hurricanes cause more damage today than before 1995. (Please do not copy text but rather answer in your own words; maximum 60 words.)
  
10. According to the text, why is the outlook on strong storms not promising? (Please do not copy text but rather answer in your own words; maximum 60 words.)