

**SECTION C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)****Instructions for Section C**

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the speech *Taking Stock* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis as a coherently structured piece of prose.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 14 of this book.

**TASK**

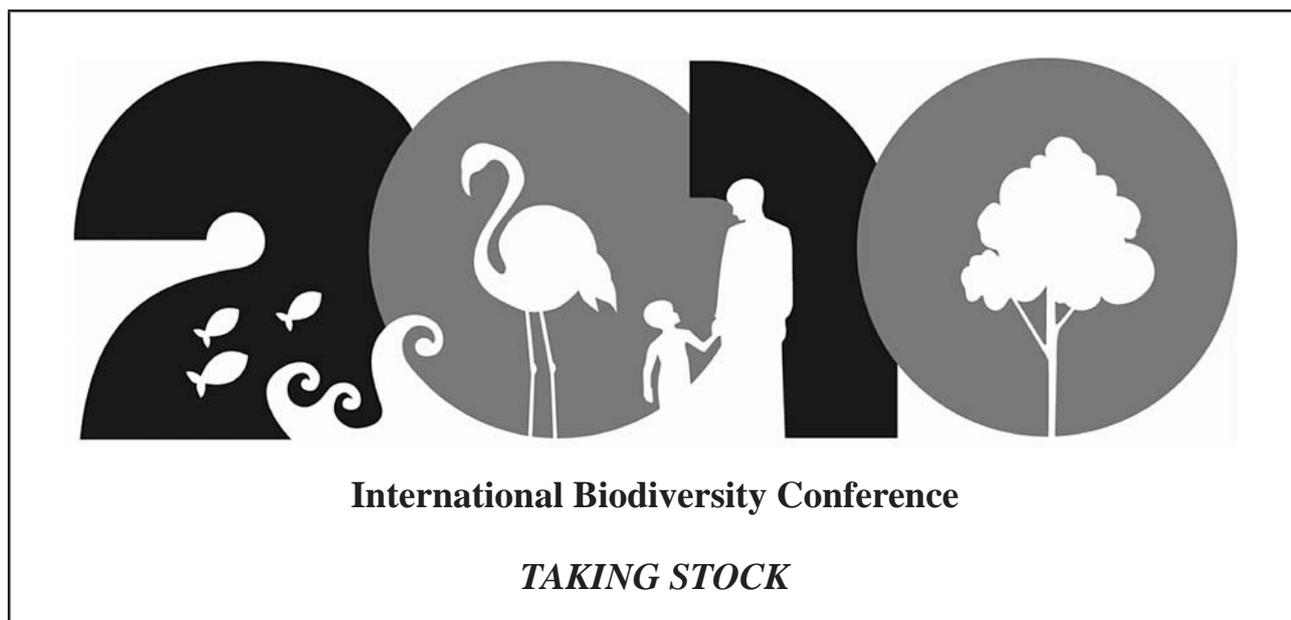
How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade the audience to share the point of view of the speaker in his speech *Taking Stock*?

**Background information**

Biodiversity is the term used to describe life on earth – the variety of living things, the places they inhabit and the interactions between them.

**The transcript of the keynote speech given by Professor Chris Lee at the International Biodiversity Conference 2010 held in Nagoya, Japan, from 25 to 27 October, is printed on pages 12 and 13.**

In 2002 a commitment was made to achieve ‘a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth’ by 2010. The purpose of this Nagoya conference was to review progress towards achieving the target and to look beyond 2010.



*Opening slide of speaker's presentation*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a year of vital significance to our world. In declaring 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, the United Nations stated: "It is a celebration of life on earth and of the value of biodiversity in our lives. The world is invited to take action in 2010 to safeguard the variety of life on earth: biodiversity".

Has this been a year of celebration of life on earth? Has this, in fact, been a year of action?

Eight years ago – in April 2002 – many of our countries made a commitment to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss. Over the next two days we will be reviewing our progress in this area. Honestly, how well have we done?

It is with great pleasure – though not without a tinge of sadness – that I address you on this occasion and work with you to re-establish, indeed to strengthen, our goals for the next decade.

One may justly ask: how far have we really come in our commitment to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to ensure the preservation of life on earth? For, perhaps idealistically, this is *exactly* what we set out to do.

Sadly, over the last one hundred years, we have lost 35% of mangroves, 40% of forests and 50% of wetlands. Due to our own thoughtless human actions, species are being lost at a rate that is estimated to be up to 100 times the natural rate of extinction. Of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List of 44 837 species assessed, 38% are today threatened and 804 already extinct. It is too late for them.

In truth, for the first time since the dinosaurs disappeared, animals and plants are being driven towards extinction faster than new species can evolve. We are in the grip of a species extinction being driven by the destruction of natural habitats, hunting, the spread of alien predators, disease and climate change. Reversing this negative trend is not only possible, but essential to human wellbeing.

We know this. We are, in truth, the most educated generation of any to date. We have no excuse for inaction. Clearly it is our lack of unity and lack of genuine commitment to action that have led us to this grim situation.

**SECTION C – continued**

For too long our approach has been haphazard. Wonderful words, glossy brochures, inspiring documentaries are no substitute for real action. It is one thing to mouth platitudes in the comfort of an air-conditioned and sumptuously catered conference hall and quite another to produce concrete results. A zoo here, a national park there, faint promises at conferences such as ours, a talk-fest of targets. What have WE – what have YOU and YOUR country – actually done since 2002 to contribute to the achievement of our goals?

There is no need to remind you why biological diversity is so important. As we all well know, our failure to conserve and use biological diversity in a sustainable manner is resulting in environmental degradation, new and more rampant illnesses, deepening poverty and a continuing pattern of inequitable and untenable growth on a global scale. Healthy ecosystems are vital to regulating the global climate. Poor rural communities depend on biodiversity for health and nutrition, for crop development, and as a safety net when faced with climate variability and natural disasters. Indeed, the poor are particularly vulnerable because they are directly dependent on biodiversity for their very survival, yet they are not in a position to do anything about it.

Species diversity affects the quantity and quality of human food supply. Biodiversity loss undermines the food security, nutrition and health of the rural poor and even increases their vulnerability. More than 1.1 billion people remain in extreme poverty and, while the wellbeing of all people is dependent on ecosystem services, it is the dependence of the poor on these services which is most crucial. Poverty eradication is crucial to a global action plan, yet the needs of the poor are often subordinated to the interests of us, the powerful economic giants. It is time we stopped kidding ourselves that the epidemic of affluenza is having little effect upon fragile ecosystems across our planet. We affluent hunters and gatherers must hunt less, gather less, conserve more and preserve more before it is too late!

Is any of this new information? Of course not! As leaders in the area of biodiversity, we know what damage our lifestyle is doing to our world. The time for talk is over: now, truly, is the time for serious action. We must reinforce this message to those in power: to the politicians, to the corporate leaders, even to the everyday householder.

I leave you with the words of the ecologist Thomas Eisner: “Biodiversity is the greatest treasure we have . . . Its diminishment is to be prevented at all costs”.

Thank you.



*Biodiversity is the greatest treasure we have . . .  
Its diminishment is to be prevented at all costs.*

Thomas Eisner

*Closing slide of speaker's presentation*

**END OF SECTION C  
TURN OVER**

## Biodiversity

Following the 2000 commitment to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss, Professor Chris Lee argues for a significant improvement in the level of “serious action” taken to preserve the earth. Dejectedly reflecting on the lack of progress made, he addresses delegates of different countries in his speech, urging for their cooperation in ameliorating the severe damage already done.

Opening with “fellow delegates”, Lee establishes himself as an amicable and approachable man who views his audience as his equals. He immediately conjures vivid images of a “lush jungle” full of “interesting flora and fauna” alongside a “clear river”, emphasising the idyllic picture of the world’s thriving natural environment. In his opening slide, the fish and waves flow into the flamingo, parent and child hand in hand and tree, encapsulating his picturesque ideal and emphasising that all forms of life are inextricably linked and codependent. The delegates are inclined to appreciate the depicted synergy between different forms of life, that cohesively support biodiversity. However, suddenly shifting to acknowledging the “scorched earth”, “gooey mudslide” and “hard, cracked ground”, he intends to bring his audience’s attention to the dire reality of earth’s environment, that has suffered at the hands of people. As he refers to the “few remaining trees” as “barren sticks helplessly groping for life”, the delegates are likely to recognise that the natural world has become victim to human destruction and exploitation. Repeating that “hauntingly”, the frogs, beetles and birds are “gone”, the professor generates an eerie and sinister picture of an empty planet. This is likely to arouse fear at the prospect of a dead and lifeless future, as well as anger at mankind’s selfish disregard for the beauty of the dynamic energy of earth’s biodiversity.

The delegates’ fear for the earth’s future wellbeing is magnified as Lee highlights the increasingly “uninhabitable earth”. This phrase may subsequently result in paranoia about the grave possibility of being left homeless. Quoting a leading scientist’s words, the professor stresses that “we can wait no longer” and “the time is now” to actively counter the existing problems, urgently pushing for collective action. In this way, after hearing from an expert and reputable source, the audience

members might be more disposed to safeguard life on earth “before it is too late”, in order to prevent irreversible damage that threatens their own safety and life certainty.

Referencing the title in his opening slide, “taking stock”, the speaker announces that in the conference, “we will be reviewing our progress”, encouraging his audience to reflect and assess their own progression. However, by questioning, “how well have we done” and “weren’t many of you present... at our last major conference”, Lee insinuates that the delegates have been unsuccessful in their promised efforts to establish meaningful projects to help preserve biodiversity. He refers to the “collective commitments” made “idealistically”, targeting the representatives’ prior unrealistic expectations. The audience may consequently acknowledge that their impractical ideals prevented them from actualising their hopes for the earth’s future health, and the responsibility now lies on them to rectify their inaction.

Lee specifically refers to the “35% of mangroves, 40% of forests and 50% of wetlands” lost over the last century, using these figures to alert and alarm his audience to the significant consequences of human carelessness. Averting that the earth’s damage is “not due to natural disaster” as “some deniers claim”, he condemns those too ignorant to admit fault and take responsibility for their “reckless actions”. As a result, the delegates may also denounce those who refuse to admit culpability, and are likely to strive to be proactive in order to avoid being associated with the undesirable status of the deniers. Reinforcing the vast degree of species’ degradation, the professor declares that “38% of species are threatened and 804 already extinct”, aiming to compound the audience’s guilt for having allowed these numbers to rise. Furthermore, he reminds the delegates that it might be “too late” for “the noble tiger”, “athletic cheetah” and “human-like orangutan”; by affiliating these animals with human qualities, Lee implies that all creatures deserve a chance to thrive, just like humans. He reiterates the increased prevalence of the “destruction of natural habitats”, “hunting”, “alien predators”, “disease” and “climate change” for the first time “since the dinosaurs disappeared”, endeavouring to point out the flawed and selfish nature of the current generation. Those in the audience are likely to be ashamed of their contribution to rupturing the earth’s vitality, that had been in prosperity since the dinosaurs. Contending that reversing the negative trend is “essential to human wellbeing”, the speaker warns his audience of their dependency on a healthy environment. This may catalyse the delegates into action, as realise that their inaction affects them personally as much as it does the planet.

As “the most educated generation”, Lee asserts that there is “no excuse for inaction”, bolstering the audience’s guilt at having ignored the repercussions of their laziness. He regretfully recounts the disingenuous nature of the “wonderful words”, “glossy brochures” and “inspiring documentaries”, intending to bring attention to the superficiality of ostensible moral activity. Additionally, he juxtaposes the “faint promises” and “talk-fest of targets” with “real action” and “concrete results”, explicitly enlightening the delegates to the meaning of genuine action. The delegates who have participated in flashy, materialistic activities might accordingly be ashamed of their attention-seeking, faux-efforts, that have ultimately done little to improve the earth’s condition.

Compounding the threat to animals and plants, the speaker moves to acknowledging the “environmental degradation”, “rampant illnesses”, “deepening poverty” and “inequitable and untenable growth” affecting the livelihood of people. The delegates’ sympathy may be stimulated, as they consider the suffering of “poor rural communities” who “depend on biodiversity” for their overall functioning and wellbeing. With the awareness of the poor’s vulnerability and powerlessness, the audience’s moral responsibility is targeted, and they are propelled to use their positions of power to help those in need.

Fiercely proclaiming “WE are the leaders”, and raising the question, “what will YOU do”, Lee conclusively calls on each country’s delegates to unite and collectively pave the way for the planet’s future prosperity and sustained growth. He insists that this message must be reinforced to “politicians”, “corporate leaders” and “the everyday householder”, in order to take advantage of the skills of as many influential figures as possible. His closing slide of the world held in a pair of human hands signifies his final hope for a “lush world”, reflecting the opening slide as the numerous organisms depend on a stable planet earth. The audience is left with the inspiration that “together”, humanity has the power and the capacity to instigate significant positive change that promotes longevity.