

ACTIVITY ONE: WETLANDS ARE WONDERFUL!

During these **LANGUAGES** activities, learners find out more about wetlands. A reading activity introduces the importance of wetlands, followed by a word search, a comprehension and a fun way of writing poetry.



Wetlands are often thought of only in terms of their hydrological importance, but they also hold great cultural significance. Many cultures have developed traditional practices and belief systems for regulating the use of wetlands and to protect these valuable ecosystems.

Wetlands are also known as *vleis, bogs, swamps, marshes or sponges*. They are regarded as some of the most productive ecosystems in the world because they serve as sponges that regulate river flow, they provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species and they help to absorb silt and cleanse water of pollutants.

Wetlands are at risk all around the world due to practices of draining the land for alternative use. Construction of dams, removal of plants, waste water pumped into the area by industries, seepage of agricultural fertilisers and mining are all threats to these sensitive ecosystems.

Each year, government departments, non-governmental organisations, schools and groups of individuals undertake actions to raise awareness of the values and benefits of wetlands as well as the important role they play in sustainable freshwater use.

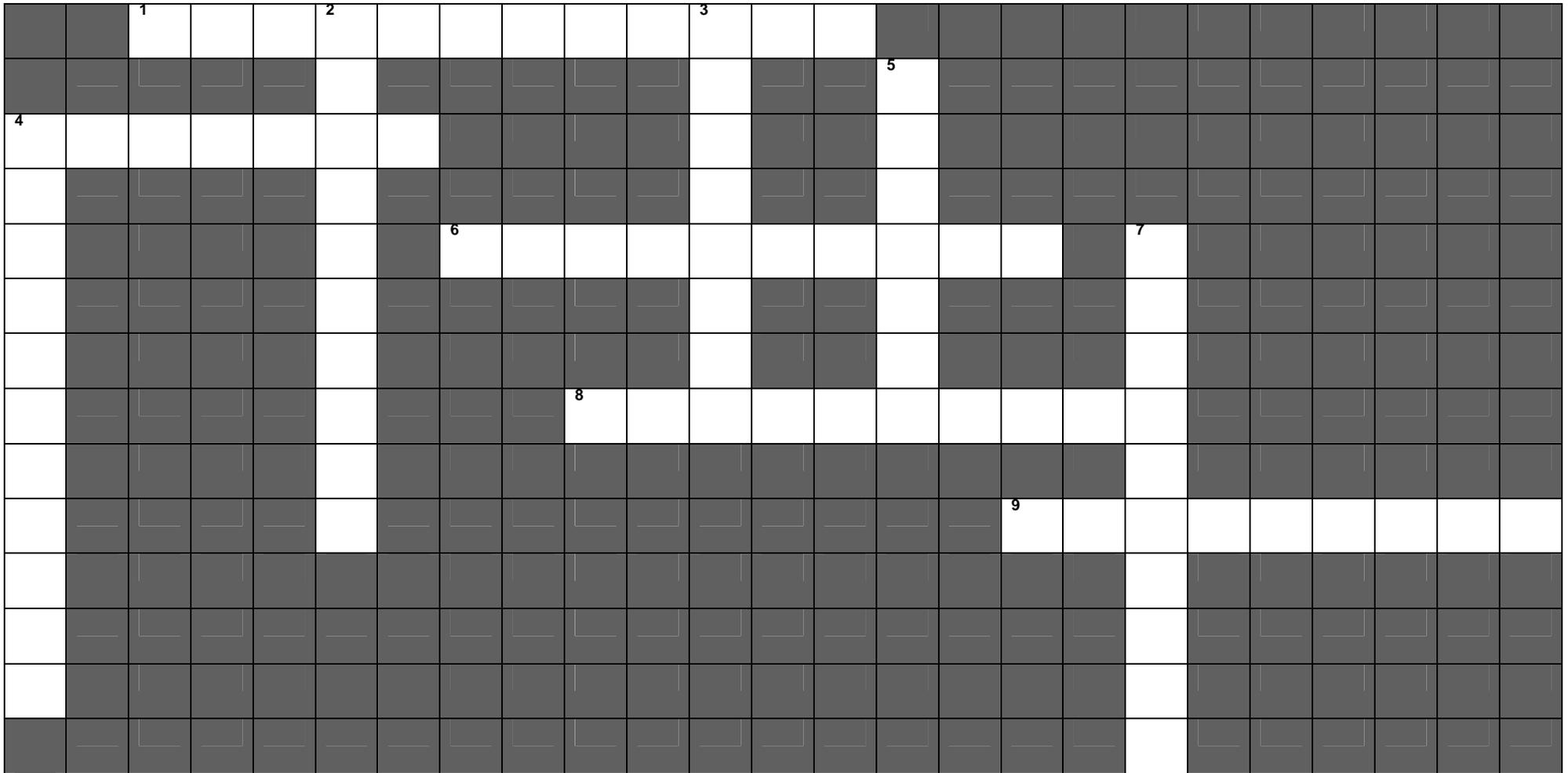
2 February is the anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention in 1971. The Convention took place in the Iranian city of Ramsar and is an inter-governmental treaty to promote national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. There are presently 153 Contracting Parties to the Convention with 1 629 wetlands sites, totalling 145.6 million hectares.



ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING THE VOCABULARY:

- All the words in the crossword on the next page can be found in the text above. Use the clues given (across and down) to fill in the spaces.

Name:.....



Across

- 1. **This word describes the laws and properties of water.**
- 4. Matter that has soaked or oozed through a filter.
- 6. Making or creating.
- 8. Impurities, dirt and toxins in water.
- 9. Things that we are able to use.

Down

- 2. **Adjusting, controlling or keeping order.**
- 3. Of different traditional beliefs and practices.
- 4. Something that is ongoing, that will continue and not be used up.
- 5. Specific areas in which plants and animals live.
- 7. Specific habitats and the relationship between all living and non-living parts within it.

COMPREHENSION:

After reading the article on wetlands, answer the following questions in full sentences.

1. Wetlands are important for their storage and filtering of freshwater. In what other ways are they important?
2. What are other names given to wetlands?
3. Name two threats that endanger our wetlands?
4. If wetlands clean pollutants out of the water, why would waste water from industries be a threat to the wetlands?
5. What is a non-governmental organisation?
6. Do you think raising awareness of the problems in wetlands is enough? Give a reason for your answer.
7. For how many years has the Ramsar Convention been in existence?
8. What is a treaty?
9. By looking at the statistics given here, do you think this treaty has been effective?
10. Do you know of any wetlands in your area that require better management? Describe.

ACTIVITY: THERE'S A POET IN ALL OF US!!!

A cinquain is a special kind of poem with 5 lines that's fun, easy and quick to write.

Here is the basic structure of one:

1 word – subject
2 words – descriptive words about the subject
3 words – also descriptive words about the subject
4 words – a phrase
1 word – the subject again

An example would be:

*Waterlilies
Delicate, beautiful
Round, green, floating
Found in all wetlands
Waterlilies*

Learners can write two or three cinquains on wetlands. If your school produces a yearly magazine, pass the best ones on to the editor!

Criteria to assess learners during this languages lesson

Criteria	Exceeded requirements of the Learning Outcome	Satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome	Partially satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome	Not satisfied requirements of the Learning Outcome
The learner filled the correct words into the crossword puzzle				
The learner answered all the questions in the comprehension correctly, with thorough comprehension				
The learner followed the structure of the cinquain				
The learner was able to describe a wetland in their cinquain				