

# 2024

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### **Question 1: Sustainable Urban Development**

Urban development faces the pressing challenge of sustainability as cities around the world continue to grow at an unprecedented rate. The increasing urban population demands more infrastructure, housing, and services, which often leads to environmental degradation, increased pollution, and the depletion of natural resources. Sustainable urban development aims to address these challenges by integrating environmental considerations with urban planning and policy. This approach involves promoting green building practices, improving public transportation to reduce reliance on private vehicles, enhancing energy efficiency, and managing waste more effectively. Additionally, sustainable urban planning encourages the development of green spaces such as parks and community gardens, which not only provide recreation and improve air quality but also help manage stormwater and reduce urban heat. The goal is to create livable cities that offer high quality of life while minimizing ecological footprints. However, implementing these strategies requires collaborative efforts among government, private sector, and citizens to adapt to sustainable practices and innovative technologies. The success of sustainable urban development also hinges on comprehensive policies that address socioeconomic factors and provide incentives for green initiatives.

### **Question 2: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Employment**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the landscape of work across various industries, bringing both opportunities and challenges to the workforce. AI technologies such as machine learning, robotics, and automation are being integrated into daily business operations to increase efficiency and reduce costs. This integration has led to the creation of new jobs that require advanced technical skills, such as AI specialists and data analysts, while simultaneously threatening traditional jobs prone to automation, like those in manufacturing and administrative support. The debate continues about whether AI will ultimately create more jobs than it displaces. Proponents argue that AI can free workers from mundane tasks, allowing them to pursue more creative and strategic roles, thus driving job evolution rather than job extinction. However, critics warn of significant job losses and widening economic disparities if skills training and educational reforms do not keep pace with technological advancements. The future of employment in the age of AI will depend heavily on policies that promote continuous learning and upskilling, ensuring that the workforce can adapt to the ever-changing demands of technology-driven economies.

### **Question 3: The Evolution of Online Education**

The rise of online education has marked a significant shift in how instruction is delivered globally. Initially spurred by the accessibility of the internet and later accelerated by the pandemic, online learning platforms have become a primary means for educational institutions to extend their reach beyond traditional classrooms. This shift has enabled students from various geographical, economic, and social backgrounds to access quality education that was previously out of reach. The advantages of online education include flexibility in scheduling, a personalized learning pace, and a reduction in associated costs such as travel and accommodation. However, it also poses challenges such as the need for self-discipline, the potential for reduced interaction with instructors, and concerns about the quality of learning. As technology continues to advance, the potential for augmented and virtual reality tools is being explored to enhance the interactivity and engagement of online courses. The future of online education looks promising, with ongoing innovations aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of learning experiences. The effectiveness of online learning, however, will depend on addressing its challenges and ensuring that it complements traditional educational methods.

### **Question 4: The Decline of Bees and Its Environmental Impact**

The global decline of bee populations poses a serious risk to both ecological balance and agricultural productivity. Bees play a crucial role in pollination, which is essential for the reproduction of many plant species and the production of fruits and vegetables. This decline, often referred to as Colony Collapse Disorder, is attributed to a combination of factors including pesticide use, habitat destruction, climate change, and diseases affecting bees. The consequences of bee population decline extend beyond the immediate loss of the species to broader ecological disruptions, such as reduced biodiversity and the loss of crops that depend on bees for pollination, potentially leading to increased food prices and scarcity. Efforts to mitigate this decline involve reducing pesticide usage, restoring natural habitats, and enhancing public awareness and policies focused on bee conservation. The urgency of these efforts reflects the critical role bees play in sustaining natural plant communities and supporting agricultural industries globally.

### **Question 5: Renewable Energy and Global Energy Security**

Renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal play a pivotal role in enhancing global energy security and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. As climate change accelerates and the demand for sustainable energy solutions grows, governments and private sectors are increasingly investing in renewable energy infrastructure. This shift not only helps in mitigating environmental impacts but also promotes energy independence by



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diversifying energy supply sources and reducing geopolitical tensions associated with oil and gas dependencies. Additionally, renewable energy projects create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and contribute to a more resilient and flexible energy system. However, the transition to renewables presents challenges including high initial costs, the need for substantial technological advancements, and the integration of new systems with existing energy grids. Continued innovation and supportive policies are essential to overcome these barriers and realize the full potential of renewable energy for future generations.

#### **Question 6: Urbanization and Wildlife Conservation**

Urbanization continues to expand at a rapid pace globally, significantly impacting local wildlife and their natural habitats. As cities grow, they encroach on surrounding forests, wetlands, and other ecosystems, leading to habitat fragmentation and loss. This not only threatens the survival of wildlife but also disrupts ecological balance, affecting processes like pollination and seed dispersal. Urban development often leads to increased pollution, higher temperatures, and altered water flows, further stressing wildlife populations. Conservation efforts in urban areas are thus becoming increasingly important. Strategies such as creating green corridors, implementing urban planning that includes wildlife considerations, and promoting community involvement in wildlife protection are vital. These efforts help to maintain biodiversity within urban settings and foster coexistence between urban populations and local wildlife. The challenge lies in balancing urban growth with the ecological needs of wildlife, ensuring that development is sustainable and inclusive of conservation goals.

#### **Question 7: The Effects of Plastic Pollution on Marine Life**

Plastic pollution in the oceans is a growing environmental concern, impacting marine ecosystems globally. Millions of tons of plastic waste enter the oceans each year, originating from both land-based and marine sources. This pollution has detrimental effects on marine life, including entanglement and ingestion by a wide range of species, from small fish to large marine mammals. Microplastics, which are tiny fragments of degraded plastic, pose an even greater risk as they can be ingested by plankton and enter the marine food chain, eventually accumulating in the tissues of larger animals, including humans. The consequences of plastic pollution are not only ecological but also economic, affecting coastal communities and industries such as fishing and tourism that rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Efforts to address plastic pollution include enhancing waste management practices, innovating biodegradable alternatives, and implementing strict regulations on plastic production and disposal. Public awareness campaigns and international cooperation are also crucial to effectively reduce the input of plastics into our oceans and mitigate their impact on marine life.



Answer: Plastic pollution severely affects marine ecosystems through entanglement and ingestion by wildlife, disrupting the food chain with microplastics and impacting economic activities dependent on marine health; addressing this requires improved waste management, development of biodegradable plastics, and enhanced global regulatory and public awareness efforts.

#### **Question 8: The Rise of Smart Cities**

Smart cities utilize digital technology to enhance urban services, improve infrastructure efficiency, and increase citizens' quality of life. Integrating IoT (Internet of Things) devices, such as sensors and smart meters, smart cities can optimize energy usage, streamline traffic management, and enhance public safety through advanced surveillance systems and emergency response strategies. Additionally, these technologies enable better waste management and water conservation, contributing to environmental sustainability. The data collected from various sensors provides city officials with insights necessary for proactive governance and policy-making. However, the transition to smart cities raises concerns regarding data privacy and security, as well as the digital divide between those who can and cannot access these technological benefits. Moreover, the high costs associated with implementing and maintaining smart city technologies pose significant challenges, especially for less affluent communities. Successful smart city initiatives must address these challenges by ensuring equitable technology access, safeguarding citizen data, and fostering public-private partnerships to finance these ambitious projects.

#### **Question 9: The Impact of Globalization on Cultural Identity**

Globalization has profound impacts on cultural identity, often leading to both the diffusion and dilution of cultural norms and values. As countries engage more deeply in global networks of trade, communication, and migration, cultural exchanges become commonplace. This interaction can enrich local cultures by introducing new ideas, practices, and innovations. However, it also poses a risk of cultural homogenization, where dominant cultures overshadow local traditions, potentially leading to loss of indigenous identities and practices. Moreover, globalization can exacerbate the spread of consumer culture, influencing local economies and lifestyles to align more with global trends. The challenge is to balance openness to global influences with the preservation of cultural heritage. Strategies such as promoting cultural education, supporting local artists and traditions, and legislating protections for cultural heritage sites are essential in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of globalization.

### **Question 10: The Role of NGOs in Global Health**

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in addressing global health issues, particularly in regions where government resources are limited. These organizations provide essential services such as disease prevention, health education, and direct medical care. NGOs often fill gaps left by local health systems, offering services in remote or underserved areas and responding rapidly to health emergencies like epidemics and natural disasters. Moreover, they advocate for public health policies and work to increase awareness about health issues on a global scale. Collaborations between NGOs, governments, and international bodies can enhance resource allocation and strategy implementation, making health interventions more effective. Challenges for NGOs include securing consistent funding, navigating political landscapes, and ensuring sustainable impacts without fostering dependency. Effective NGO operations in global health require transparency, strong local partnerships, and a clear focus on capacity building within communities.

### **Question 11: The Future of Work in the Age of Automation**

The rapid advancement of automation technology is reshaping the landscape of work, prompting significant changes in job roles and industries. Automation, including robotics and artificial intelligence (AI), is not only streamlining production processes but also increasing efficiency and reducing costs in various sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, and even services. While automation promises productivity gains and the potential for higher economic growth, it also raises concerns about job displacement. Many routine and manual jobs are at risk of being replaced by machines, leading to potential job losses in certain sectors. However, this technological shift also creates new job opportunities in areas such as AI development, machine maintenance, and system management, which require more specialized skills. The future of work will likely emphasize the need for reskilling and upskilling, as workers must adapt to coexist with increasingly capable machines. Governments and educational institutions will play critical roles in preparing the workforce for this transition, through policy adjustments, education reform, and support for continuous learning.

### **Question 12: Climate Change and Agriculture**

Climate change poses significant challenges to agriculture, impacting crop yields and food security globally. Increasing temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events such as droughts and floods affect the productivity of farms and the stability of food supply chains. These changes compel farmers to adapt their practices, which might include altering planting schedules, adopting more resilient crop varieties, and implementing advanced irrigation systems to conserve water. Additionally,





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