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Q.1) _____ is the first state in India to operationalise a law that makes social audit of government programmes and schemes a part of government practice.

- a) Maharashtra
- b) Meghalaya
- c) Tamil Nadu
- d) Gujarat

Q.1) Solution (b)

The Meghalaya Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act, 2017

- It will make it easier to correct course as the scheme is rolling along; the audit is not after all the money has been spent.
- It gives people a direct say in how money will be spent and fills an information gap for officers as they are directly in touch with the ground.
- Social audits have been civil society initiatives rather than government-mandated. They are now part of the system.
- A social audit facilitator will be appointed to conduct the audit directly with the people. He will present findings to the Gram Sabha, who will add inputs and the result will finally go to the auditors.
- The legislation provides a legal framework for allowing citizens' participation in the planning of development, selection of beneficiaries, concurrent monitoring of programmes, redress of grievances, and audit of works, services, and programmes on an annual basis.
- The real benefit of this process is "quick corrective action."

Source: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/indias-first-social-audit-law-meghalaya-4984781/>

Q.2) Consider the following statements

1. SDG 14 emphasises on Conservation and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources
2. High seas are international waters where no country has jurisdiction

Select the correct statements

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only

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- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2) Solution (c)

Goal 14 targets

- By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution
- By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans
- Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels
- By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics
- By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information
- By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation
- By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism
- Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries
- Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets
- Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal

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framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want

Conservation Treaty for the High Seas

- United Nations votes for the first time on a planned treaty to protect and regulate the high seas.
- The waters outside national maritime boundaries – which cover half of the planet's surface – are currently a free-for-all that has led to devastating overfishing and pollution.
- A debate on whether to move ahead with a High Seas Treaty has been tabled before the end of the year at the UN headquarters in New York.
- Over the next two years the details of a legally binding treaty will be negotiated under the Law of the Sea Convention.
- It would have the authority to create large marine protected areas in the high seas as ocean scientists have long called for.
- The high seas are parts of the ocean outside of the 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of countries with coastlines. That also means the high seas are usually only fished by large vessels, often huge bottom trawlers that can damage the sea floor.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/dec/22/un-poised-to-move-ahead-with-landmark-treaty-to-protect-high-seas>

Q.3) Consider the following statements about International Whaling Commission (IWC)

1. India is a member of the IWC
2. It is one of the United Nations Agencies
3. It acts under the Law of the Sea Convention

Select the INCORRECT statements

- a) 1 and 2
- b) 2 and 3
- c) 1 and 3
- d) All of the above

Q.3) Solution (b)

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The IWC is the decision making body of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. The various governments that are members of the IWC make their decisions through its various meetings and committees, using the IWC secretariat to help manage their discussions and decision making.

The main duty of the IWC is to keep under review and revise as necessary the measures laid down in the Schedule to the Convention which govern the conduct of whaling throughout the world.

India is a member

Conservation Score - 10

Position - Pro-Conservation

Source: <http://www.newindianexpress.com/pti-news/2017/dec/18/international-call-for-japan-to-halt-antarctic-whaling-1730230.html>

Q.4) Consider the following statements about 'Huntington's Disease'

1. It is a degenerative brain disorder, in which afflicted individuals lose their ability to walk, talk, think, and reason
2. It is generally inherited from a person's parents
3. It is more prevalent in females

Select the correct statements

- a) 1 and 2
- b) 2 and 3
- c) 1 and 3
- d) All of the above

Q.4) Solution (a)

Huntington's disease is a degenerative brain disorder, in which afflicted individuals lose their ability to walk, talk, think, and reason. They easily become depressed, and lose their short-term memory capacity. They may also experience a lack of concentration and focus. This disease begins between ages 30-45, and every individual with the gene for the disease will eventually develop the disease. Huntington's is an autosomal dominant genetic disorder which means that if one parent carries the defective Huntington's gene, his/her offspring have a 50/50 chance of inheriting the disease.

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Huntington's disease (HD) affects males and females equally and crosses all ethnic and racial boundaries. It typically begins in mid-life, between the ages of 30 and 45, though onset may occur as early as the age of 2. Children who develop the juvenile form of the disease rarely live to adulthood. There is a 50/50 chance of inheriting the fatal gene from the parents. Everyone who carries the gene will develop the disease. In Western countries, it's estimated that about five to seven people per 100,000 are affected by HD.

Source: <http://www.livemint.com/Science/ANkgZ6wJ7gJQMBTf7NOwiL/Breakthrough-drug-found-to-treat-Huntingtons-disease-repor.html>

Q.5) AG600, the world's largest amphibious aircraft was developed by

- a) Japan
- b) China
- c) Russia
- d) Israel

Q.5) Solution (b)

Source: http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/in-pics-world-s-largest-amphibious-aircraft-ag600-makes-its-maiden-flight-117122500182_1.html

