### Activity 3.1. Pre-reading Questions - Short Answers

1. \*\*What are the different environmental challenges currently facing the world?\*\*

- Climate change, deforestation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, water scarcity, and waste management.

2. \*\*What are the common natural and man-made environmental disasters that recurrently occur in Ethiopia?\*\*

- Natural disasters: Droughts, floods, and landslides.

- Man-made disasters: Deforestation, soil erosion, and urban pollution.

3. \*\*What are the effects of natural and man-made disasters?\*\*

- Loss of lives and property, displacement of communities, economic setbacks, environmental degradation, and long-term impacts on health and livelihoods.

4. \*\*What measures do you think the government and the people should take to solve the environmental challenges in Ethiopia?\*\*

- Implementing sustainable farming practices, reforestation, enforcing environmental regulations, raising public awareness, and investing in renewable energy sources.

5. \*\*What do you think you can do to protect deforestation in Ethiopia?\*\*

- Participate in tree planting initiatives, promote the use of alternative energy sources, educate communities about the importance of forests, and support policies that protect natural habitats.

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### Questions on "Environmental Challenges: A River Ran Through It"

1. \*\*What is the central idea of the paragraphs above?\*\*

- The central idea is the decline of the River Murray's water levels due to over-allocation for irrigation and drought, which has significantly impacted the region's environment and economy.

2. \*\*What is the cause for Murray’s water level reduction?\*\*

- The reduction in Murray’s water level is caused by over-allocation of water for irrigation purposes and prolonged periods of drought.

### Notes on the Paragraphs

- \*\*Climate Change Skepticism:\*\* Farmers like Louise and Andrew Burge are skeptical of the connection between the current drought and climate change, citing historical droughts as similar in severity.

- \*\*Environmental Impact:\*\* Australia's per capita greenhouse gas emissions are among the highest in the world. The drought has intensified the conflict between farmers and environmentalists, though many farmers are conservationists at heart.

- \*\*Economic and Social Impact:\*\* The drought has led to severe economic hardship for farmers, doubling rural debt between 1999 and 2005, and causing a decline in rural communities, with many young people leaving farming.

- \*\*Mental Health Crisis:\*\* The prolonged drought has resulted in a significant increase in mental health issues among farmers, with rising cases of depression and suicide.

- \*\*Resistance to Climate Change Narrative:\*\* Some farmers, like Neil Eagle, remain unconvinced by the global warming narrative, believing it to be exaggerated and not supported by their own experiences.

### Summary

The paragraphs describe the skepticism among some Australian farmers regarding climate change as the cause of the ongoing drought, despite its severe economic and social impacts. The drought has deepened the conflict between environmentalists and farmers, leading to significant mental health crises in rural communities. While some farmers acknowledge environmental changes, they resist the notion that global warming is responsible, viewing it as overhyped.

### Activity 3.5: Conclusion

The environmental crisis along the Murray River highlights the severe consequences of both human intervention and natural droughts on ecosystems, illustrating the broader global threat of water scarcity and the potential for conflict over shared resources.

### Activity 3.6: Questions and Answers

1. \*\*What was observed on the Murray River?\*\*

- The Murray River is experiencing severe environmental degradation, with entire ecosystems collapsing and ancient trees dying due to prolonged drought and reduced water flow.

2. \*\*What's a gigalitre?\*\*

- A gigalitre is a unit of measurement equal to one billion liters of water.

3. \*\*What two groups are in conflict?\*\*

- Farmers and environmentalists are in conflict, with differing views on climate change and land management.

4. \*\*What has happened to farmer debt?\*\*

- Farmer debt has doubled from £10 billion in 1999 to £20 billion in 2005, reflecting the financial strain caused by the drought.

5. \*\*What evidence has the Burge family got against climate change?\*\*

- The Burge family presents old photographs showing the Murray River in even drier conditions than now, suggesting that the current drought is part of a natural cycle rather than a result of climate change.

6. \*\*Why is Wayne Cockayne unhappy?\*\*

- Wayne Cockayne is unhappy because the drought has severely impacted his farming business, leaving him without income for four years and causing significant mental health challenges.

7. \*\*Someone described Murray as a 'garden of Eden' and a 'graveyard'. Why is that so?\*\*

- The Murray was once lush and thriving, resembling a 'garden of Eden,' but due to drought and environmental degradation, it now resembles a 'graveyard' with dying trees and dried-out landscapes.

8. \*\*What does Neil Eagle mean when he says 'It's become nearly a religion, this idea of global warming'?\*\*

- Neil Eagle suggests that the belief in global warming has become so widespread and unquestioned that it is treated with the same fervor and unquestioning belief as a religion.

9. \*\*When it comes to sorting out climate problems over water, what advantage does Australia have over some other areas of the world?\*\*

- Australia has the advantage of a robust economy and the ability for competing groups to sit down and negotiate over water issues, unlike in other regions where such conflicts could lead to war.

10. \*\*What is meant by 'a wry smile'? In what other ways can we describe a smile?\*\*

- A 'wry smile' suggests a kind of ironic or slightly mocking smile. Other ways to describe a smile include a beaming smile, a faint smile, a forced smile, a warm smile, or a mischievous smile.