



Peatlands quiz

Statements & answers

Round	Statement	Answer	Fact
1	Peatlands are the world's largest natural carbon store.	True!	Peatlands cover less than 3% of the world's land surface but are thought to contain twice as much carbon as the world's forests. This makes them a vital defence against the effects of climate change.
2	Peat is made from a mix of sand and clay.	False!	Peat is made from partly decomposed plant material, mainly sphagnum moss, and forms in waterlogged conditions.
3	Some species of sphagnum mosses can store 16-26 times their dry weight in water.	True!	Multi-coloured, dense carpets of sphagnum which consist of a multitude of individual plants form the building blocks of peatlands with water being stored in their spongy form.
4	Peatlands provide places for animals to graze.	True!	If managed carefully, cows, sheep and horses can be found grazing on peatlands. The rushes that grow on peatlands can also be cut to provide bedding for livestock.
5	Peatlands provide food for humans.	True!	Blackberries, wild plums, elderberries, bilberries and cranberries can all be found growing wild on peatlands.
6	Peat soil has a moisture content of less than 50%.	False!	Peat found in wetlands is likely to have a moisture content of greater than 95% if in an undisturbed state. It is believed that there are more solids in milk than in peat!
7	Damaged peatlands are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.	True!	Peatlands annually release almost 6% of global CO ₂ emissions. Peatland restoration can therefore bring significant emission reductions and help us fight climate change.



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8	Peatlands can help prevent the risk of flooding.	True!	Healthy peatlands provide high surface roughness and, to an extent, act as sponges. Together this can help mitigate against flooding and drought by slowing the flow of water through the landscape during periods of high rainfall. During periods of low rainfall, they help retain and extend the flow of water.
9	A 10-metre-deep peat bed takes a thousand years to form.	False!	A 10-metre deep peat bed takes 10,000 years to form. Peat soils accumulate at around 1mm every year so 1 metre of peat can take up to 1,000 years to form!
10	Sphagnum moss has antibacterial properties.	True!	The antibacterial properties and absorbency of sphagnum have been exploited for centuries. It's absorbent and antibacterial properties made sphagnum an effective dressing for wounds, working to sterilise and prevent gangrene during both World Wars.

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