

**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 24 ET 25 FEVRIER 2014
POUR LE RECRUTEMENT DE CONTRÔLEURS DES DOUANES ET DROITS
INDIRECTS**

Branche du contrôle des opérations commerciales et d'administration générale

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6

Épreuve orale d'admission n° 2

**Interrogation de langue étrangère consistant dans la traduction orale en français d'un texte écrit
dans la langue étrangère choisie, suivie d'une conversation dans la même langue**

(Durée 15 minutes – Coefficient 2)

Conservation efforts aim to save endangered Mexican gray wolves

Aroooooo! Crystal the gray wolf throws her head back and howls. In the wild, the electrifying sound might carry for miles. At home in her wooded hillside enclosure at the Smithsonian's National Zoo, she's probably calling to her pack mate, Coby, or singing along with a wailing siren from an ambulance speeding past on Connecticut Avenue. Crystal howls with a high pitch. Coby joins in with her low voice. These two 10-year-old wolves make up the pack that live within the zoo's American Trail exhibit.

"Crystal and Coby show people that wolves are real, not just something in a picture or a show on TV," says zoo animal keeper Sara Allison. "When you have a connection with a real animal, you're more likely to want to protect it." (...)

An endangered species

Have you ever wondered about the meaning of the words "endangered" or "conservation"? "Endangered" means at serious risk of extinction. "Conservation" means working to save something precious, such as water or endangered wildlife.

For hundreds of thousands of years, wolves lived all over the world, from tundra to mountain to desert. But about 50 years ago, wolves nearly disappeared in the United States. They had been trapped, poisoned and shot to death because many people thought of them as pests and competition for such food animals as elk and deer.

Eventually, people realized that killing off wildlife harms our shared environment. In 1973, a law called the Endangered Species Act was enacted to protect animals and plants in danger of extinction. If not for this law, there would probably be no wild wolves (or other species such as grizzly bears) left in the United States.

Return of the wolves

Thanks to conservation efforts and the resilience of the gray wolves themselves, populations have rebounded. In the United States, gray wolves can be found living in remote areas of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Oregon, Michigan, Idaho, Montana and Washington state.

In 2012, gray wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains were "delisted," or removed from the list of endangered animals. But the southernmost subspecies of the gray wolf — the Mexican gray — remains very much endangered.

Washington Post - May 16, 2014

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**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 26 ET 27 FEVRIER 2014
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INDIRECTS**

Branche de la surveillance

4

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Tax clampdown under threat as Revenue & Customs plans 300 job cuts

George Osborne's budget promise to fund a clampdown on tax evaders appears to be under threat after a leaked memo showed that HM Revenue & Customs is to lose up to 300 staff this year.

Mary Aiston, HMRC's director of specialist tax, which targets high-end taxpayers and complex cases, has written that the jobs from the unit will go by 2015 – and adds that those who remain will be asked to deliver more revenue with less resources.

Her statement sits uneasily with the chancellor's claims last week that the government would increase HMRC's budget to tackle the non-payment of tax.

Ministers have faced a public backlash for allowing large corporations such as Vodafone and the bank Goldman Sachs to come to cosy deals with HMRC over multimillion pound tax debts while small businesses and individuals have been hounded for payments. Last week, Osborne told MPs: "The public tolerance for those who do not pay their fair share evaporated long ago – but we've had to wait for this government before there was proper action.

In the memo, posted on HMRC's intranet under the section headed "Mary's Diary", Aiston says she hopes that half of these jobs will be lost through "natural wastage". [...]

But despite cuts in staff, Aiston says staff will be asked to bring in more revenue. [...]

"Digital transformation is enabling us to move staff into compliance work focused on tackling tax dodging. We have created 2,500 such roles which are more fulfilling and rewarding than old-style clerical processing work."

Mark Serwotka, the general secretary of the PCS union, whose members work for HMRC, said: "The rhetoric from the government on the need to tackle tax avoidance, which deprives our economy of tens of billions of pounds every year, is completely undermined by its actions.

"Instead of investing in the department that collects the taxes that fund the public services we all rely on, it is making it harder to chase down these wealthy individuals and organisations."

The Guardian, Wednesday 26 March 2014

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**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 26 ET 27 FEVRIER 2014
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INDIRECTS**

Branche de la surveillance

7

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Michelle Obama Cites View of Growing Segregation

TOPEKA, Kan. — Sixty years after the Supreme Court outlawed “separate but equal” schools for blacks and whites, civil rights advocates say American schools are becoming increasingly segregated, while the first lady, Michelle Obama, lamented that “many young people are going to schools with kids who look just like them.”

“Today, by some measures, our schools are as segregated as they were back when Dr. King gave his final speech,” Mrs. Obama told 1,200 graduating high school seniors Friday (...). “Many districts in this country have actually pulled back on efforts to integrate their schools, and many communities have become less diverse,” she said, leading to schools that are less diverse.

A Decision That Helped Shape Michelle Obama

“And too often,” Mrs. Obama said, “those schools aren’t equal, especially ones attended by students of color which too often lag behind.” (...)

Today about four in ten black and Latino students attend intensely segregated schools, the federal Department of Education reported on its official blog on Friday, adding that only 14 percent of white students attend schools that could be considered multicultural.

“We have slowly and very steadily slipped backward,” said Catherine E. Lhamon, the department’s assistant secretary for civil rights. “All over the country we are seeing more and more racially segregated schools.”

(...) An alliance of school districts has sued the state, contending that current financing for schools is inadequate and is disproportionately hurting schools in low-income, minority districts.

The State Supreme Court recently ordered the Legislature to restore special aid for poor districts.

But Wade Henderson, president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights in Washington, said Friday that funding systems like that in Kansas “are relegating millions of primarily black and brown children into schools that are separate, unequal and inadequate.”

Saturday marks 60 years to the day that the Supreme Court decided *Brown*, a case whose lead plaintiff was Oliver L. Brown, a part-time pastor and shop welder for the Santa Fe Railroad who wanted his eldest daughter, Linda, to attend integrated schools.

New York Times - May 16, 2014

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INDIRECTS**

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**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 26 ET 27 FEVRIER 2014
POUR LE RECRUTEMENT DE CONTRÔLEURS DES DOUANES ET DROITS
INDIRECTS**

Branche de la surveillance

2

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Weatherwatch: The forecast for D-day

On 23 May 1944, General Eisenhower set the date for the invasion of Europe for 5 June, aided by advice from teams of meteorologists. Weather science could not reliably predict so far ahead, and the forecast for the greatest invasion in history relied on educated guesswork.

The landings required a reasonably calm sea for three straight days, and little cloud cover. Although there had been no public weather forecasts for five years, the military relied on meteorologists for air and sea operations. Existing weather stations were supplemented by a weather ship moored west of Ireland to track oncoming fronts, and the RAF flew long-distance weather-monitoring missions. Even German U-boats contributed unwittingly. Their weather reports to Berlin were deciphered at Bletchley Park and sent to Allied planners.

Prediction was challenging because of the complex feedback mechanisms involved. Cloud cover affects surface warming, which affects cloud cover. Even modern supercomputer models can only project a few days ahead. There were furious arguments between Met office, Royal Navy and American D-day forecasting teams. The senior US military forecaster, Colonel Irving Krick, aggressively promoted his own technique of "weather typing" based on historical experience. Some British colleagues thought he was a charlatan.

On 28 May Eisenhower was advised that the weather for the next few days would be mainly calm, a view endorsed by Krick. But by 4 June conditions had deteriorated. Ships full of seasick soldiers were halted in the Channel, waiting for the signal to proceed. Forecasters correctly predicted a break in the weather for 6 June, and the invasion commenced a day late.

The Guardian, Monday 26 May 2014

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INDIRECTS**

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**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 26 ET 27 FEVRIER 2014
POUR LE RECRUTEMENT DE CONTRÔLEURS DES DOUANES ET DROITS
INDIRECTS**

Branche de la surveillance

8

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High-tech farming, the light fantastic, Indoor farming may be taking root

Portage, Indiana. A grey warehouse in an industrial park in Indiana is an unlikely place to find the future of market gardening. But it is, nevertheless, home to a pristine, climate-controlled room full of eerily perfect plants. They grow 22 hours a day, 365 days a year in 25-foot towers, untouched by pests and bathed in an alien pink light.

Critical to this \$2.5m techno-Eden, run by a firm called Green Sense Farms, are the thousands of blue and red light-emitting diodes (LEDs) supplied by Philips, a Dutch technology firm. The light they give off is of precisely the wavelength craved by the crops grown here, which include lettuce, kale, basil and chives.

The idea of abandoning the sun's light for the artificial sort is not new. It offers plenty of advantages: no need to worry about seasons or the weather, for instance, not to mention the ability to grow around the clock (although a couple of hours a day are necessary, says Gus van der Feltz of Philips, for the plant equivalent of sleep). Moving plants indoors allows them to be coddled in other ways, too. Water can be recycled continuously, and sensors can detect which nutrients are missing and provide them in small, accurate bursts.

However, LEDs offer a host of benefits over traditional, fluorescent growing lights. For one thing, they are far more efficient, which helps to keep electricity bills down. High efficiency means less heat, which makes air conditioning cheaper. Being cooler, the lights can be placed closer to the plants, so the crops can be planted more densely. The wavelengths of the light can be fine-tuned so that lettuce is crisper, or softer, says Robert Colangelo, the president of Green Sense Farms. Your correspondent tasted soft, sweet kale nibbled straight off the plant. It was delicious.

The crops grow faster, too. Philips reckons that using LED lights in this sort of controlled, indoor environment could cut growing cycles by up to half compared with traditional farming. That could help meet demand for what was once impossible: fresh, locally grown produce, all year round. Hydroponic, naturally lit greenhouses, such as those built by BrightFarms, a firm based in New York, are already supplying produce to cities such as Chicago and New York. Green Sense Farms is not the first to try growing under LEDs, and despite their efficiency, energy costs have been a challenge for its predecessors. But Mr Colangelo is confident. LEDs are becoming cheaper all the time, and the involvement of Philips, which has invested heavily in the technology, suggests that costs can fall further.

The Economist - May 17, 2014

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**CONCOURS INTERNE DES 26 ET 27 FEVRIER 2014
POUR LE RECRUTEMENT DE CONTRÔLEURS DES DOUANES ET DROITS
INDIRECTS**

Branche de la surveillance

5

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Manga about Fukushima cleanup operation becomes hit in Japan

Like many of the thousands of men who have worked at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant over the past three years, Kazuto Tatsuta was driven by a sense of mission. "I had been looking for work around the time of the disaster and wondered if there was anything I could do to help the region," Tatsuta said.

After six months working for one of the myriad subcontractors at Fukushima Daiichi, his exposure to radiation was already nearing the legal annual limit of 20 millisieverts, so he resigned.

He left with a rare insight into the realities of life at arguably the world's most hazardous industrial cleanup site. Now he has framed his memories in graphic form in 1F (Ichi-Efu)[...].

As an insider's account, 1F: The Labour Diary of Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, has proved popular among readers seeking an antidote to patchy information from the government and the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company (Tepco), and at times wildly speculative media reports.[...]

Tatsuta says he did not consider his work dangerous and, despite the rigours of spending hours in protective clothing and a full-face mask, he never thought about quitting. His most uncomfortable moments, he said, were being unable to urinate while sheathed in his radiation suit.[...]

But readers looking to Tatsuta for confirmation that the Daiichi cleanup has been left largely in the hands of unscrupulous firms with links to organised crime, and that workers are sent into dangerous areas with minimal training and substandard equipment, may be disappointed.

"As a group and as individuals, I found them all to be decent people," Tatsuta said.[...] "We hear a lot about what the media are privy to – the water storage problem, the removal of fuel assemblies and the like – but what I hope to do is to tell people about things that the media never see."

theguardian.com, Thursday 22 May 2014

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Paris drafts in Chinese police to reassure valuable Asian tourists after reports they are being targeted by thieves

The French authorities have drafted in Chinese police officers to work in Paris this summer in a bid to encourage more tourists from the booming Asian country.

The Chinese media has reported that tourists in Paris have been targeted by muggers and the French authorities are keen to ensure that they feel protected as each Chinese visitor spends around 1,500 euros in the country.

Around 1.4million Chinese tourists head to France each year and the country is hoping to double that number to help slash its two billion euro deficit.

'The details on these Chinese police officers have not been finalised, but they should arrive some time in June,' an interior ministry source said.

'It's more for the symbol than the policing.'

Chinese tourists are the second biggest group of visitors to France after Americans.

Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has already cut visa approval times for Chinese citizens to 48 hours, which has resulted in a 40 percent rise year on year in applications.

However, Chinese tourism associations complain that their citizens are increasingly targeted in Paris because of the belief they are more likely to carry cash than other tourists.

Fabius, who will sign a deal with online travel agent C-Trip to promote France as a destination while in China, acknowledged more needed to be done.

'Our policemen will ensure safety, but if there can be a psychological measure to help reinforce things then why not? They love France, but France must welcome them well. (They) have a lot of cash on them ... so there has to be safety and we still have things to do to ensure that,' Fabius said.

Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has made enhancing economic ties with China one of his priorities and this weekend embarks on his eighth trip to Beijing since taking up his post in 2012.

He was handed in April the task of reducing the trade deficit, developing external business and enhancing tourism revenue as part of an expanded portfolio.

The Daily Mail , 15 May 2014