**Geo summary chapter 5 china**

**Section 1. China: from the mountains to the sea.**

Together with Russia and Canada, Chine belongs to the 3 largest countries in the world.

If you travel from west to east, you descend a type of staircase. You start in the Himalayas with the Mount Everest (8,848 metres) on the border with Nepal and you end 5,000 kilometres later in the ***coastal plains***. Two-thirds of China consists of ***highlands*** and mountains. In the west are ***high mountain ranges*** there are a lot of ***glaciers*** and weather elements have created harsh conditions there.

The Yangtze and Huang He rivers start in the highlands of Tibet and Qinghai. Both rivers follow the staircase and have their ***upstream*** in the west and ***downstream*** in the east.

The Yangtze has many tributaries; that is the reason why it is called the ‘Long River’.

At Shigu the river makes a sharp bend that is visited every year by thousands of tourists.

After 6,380 kilometres, the river ends up in the east China sea.

In the ***middle section,*** the Huang He flows through an extensive loess area.

However, due to centuries of ***deforestation*** and ***over-grazing***, the vegetation disappears and the ***infiltration capacity*** of the soil deceases.

In wet period, the loess flushes from the slopes and disappears into the river. During ***peak discharges***, the river regularly causes floods.

The ***soil erosion*** in China is sometimes also the cause of wind (***wind erosion***).

In dry periods, enormous dust storms form in the barren and uncovered parts of central China; these can darken the skies for days. The fertile soil that once was 100 metres thick has completely disappeared in some places due to water and wind erosion. The area is recovering very slowly.

Due to its location and size, nearly all climates are present in China: a ***tropical climate*** in the south-east, a ***high mountain climate*** in the south-west, a ***desert climate*** in the north-west, a ***temperate sea climate*** in the east and a ***continental climate*** in the north-east.

In the north is also a ***steppe climate***. What is striking is that the north-west is dry and the south-east is wet.

The climates in China are determined by four factors:

1. The geographical latitude.
2. The prevailing wind direction.
3. The mountain ranges.
4. The influence of seas and oceans.

Due to the global climate change, the temperature in China is rising and the ***precipitation regime*** is changing. Areas affected by dry spells become even dryer and in the wet areas there is more and more rain in a short time.

The Chinese living in the low-lying coastal areas or along the rivers will have to protect themselves against the water.

The north-west of China is experiencing droughts more resulting in ***desertification.***

In the high mountains, the ***snow line*** move upwards.

**Section 2. What does China’s treasury look like?**

Parts of China are regularly hit by earthquakes because the plates suddenly shift. Along the ***plate borders***, ***magma*** rose up in the past, which cooled down at a specific depth in the ***earth’s crust***.

Chine possesses a third of all so-called ‘rare earth metals’ in the world. The high-tech industry uses this kind of metals. The Chinese miners in this area often work under bad conditions. Due to there is not a real check if they work under good conditions China can put these special resources on the global market cheaply.

A lot of fossil fuels like coal and natural gas have formed under tropical conditions. About 60 per cent of all Chinese coal is extracted in Inner Mongolia near Shanxi and Shaanxi in ***shaft mining***.

The continental Yangtze plate forms a ***continental shelf*** in the east.

At sea, oil is extracted here too, but large oil fields have not yet been discovered here.

The Chinese government hopes to make big discoveries here with the help of foreign companies such as Shell to develop alternatives.

However, this development needs time and is mainly determined by the price of the oil in the global market.

China also imports a lot of coal from Indonesia and Australia.

**Section 3. Population and migration.**

In China there is a one-child policy. Farmers in the countryside could have two children if their first child was a girl. China is the country with the highest population in the world. There is also a lot of ageing. Not only are there many people living in China, they are also distributed unequally over the country. The average ***population density*** is 137 people per km2, but this is much lower in the west due to the natural conditions.

Many people are living in the east and south east; an average of 3,500 people per km2. China has 8 mega cities and Shanghai is a metropolis too.

China has 56 ***ethnic groups*** that are officially recognised by the government. The Han Chinese (1 billion people) is the biggest group. The other 55 ethnic minorities are not even 10 per cent; the Zhuang is the biggest group of these.

Mongols and Cossacks are the inhabitants of the steppes. They are ***nomads*** who roam the lands with their horses, cattle and sheep.

The smallest group is the Tibetans in the south-west. They are shepherds and farmers who follow Lamaism.

Every day people move to the cities and this labour migration cannot be stopped. The ***urbanisation rate*** is high, which means the cities are growing fast.

**Section 4. China, the world’s workshop?**

Chinese have changed an agricultural country into one of the main economies in the world. They succeeded because they introduced innovations in 3 areas:

1. The countryside was modernised which meant the profits increased.
2. Science and technology were given more attention.
3. The industry changed the arrival of private enterprises, the allowance of foreign capital and the establishment of foreign companies.

The government has created ***Special Economic Zones*** (SEZs) where an attempt is made to draw in investors, increase the export, realise a transfer of technology and to create employment.

The result is that the employment in these zonas has increased significantly and the population is growing.

There is still a lot of ***regional inequality*** in China. In the big cities there are more and more science parks, High-Tech Economic Development Zones (HTEDSZs) and Science and Technology Industrial parks (STIPs).

**Section 5. Is China´s support being exceeded?**