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Answer Key: Stewardship or Scar? 8th Grade Human-Landscape Symphony Quiz

Examine 10 scenarios involving global resource management, terracing technology, and the ecological footprints of modern industrial expansion.

1. The construction of the Great Man-Made River in Libya is a massive engineering feat designed to transport water from ancient underground aquifers to coastal cities. This is primarily an example of:

Answer: B) Modification of the environment to overcome water scarcity

By building a pipeline to move groundwater across the desert, humans are physically altering the landscape's hydrologic layout to suit their needs, which is a key form of modification.

2. The Incan practice of carving steps into the Andes Mountains to create flat land for agriculture is known as ____.

Answer: C) Terrace farming

Terracing allows humans to modify steep, vertical environments into usable farmland, preventing erosion and managing water runoff effectively.

3. The 'Dust Bowl' in the 1930s United States was a consequence caused solely by natural climate cycles with no influence from human farming techniques.

Answer: B) False

While drought played a role, the Dust Bowl was significantly exacerbated by human modification, specifically over-plowing and the removal of native grasses that held the soil in place.

4. In the Maldives, the government is exploring the creation of floating cities due to rising sea levels. This response is best categorized as:

Answer: C) Strategic adaptation to environmental change

Building floating structures is a way for the population to adjust and survive in a changing environment where traditional land is disappearing.

5. The process of ____ in the Aral Sea, caused by diverting rivers for cotton irrigation, resulted in the collapse of the local fishing industry and altered regional weather.

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Answer: A) Desertification

Because humans diverted the water source, the lake dried up, turning fertile area into a desert—a severe negative consequence of environmental modification.

6. The use of 'Stepwells' in medieval western India is an example of a cultural adaptation to seasonal monsoons and long dry periods.

Answer: A) True

Stepwells were designed to reach the water table and store rainwater, allowing communities to survive in semi-arid regions by adapting their architecture to the water cycle.

7. How does the 'Heat Island Effect' in cities like Phoenix or Tokyo demonstrate the consequence of human modification?

Answer: A) Concrete and asphalt absorb and radiate more heat than natural landscapes

The replacement of vegetation with dark, non-porous surfaces modifies the local microclimate, creating a bubble of heat that is a direct result of urbanization.

8. Many nations in the Middle East have a high _____ on the Strait of Hormuz for the transport of oil, showing how geographical 'choke points' affect global trade.

Answer: C) Dependence

When an economy relies on a specific geographical feature or resource for its success, it is demonstrating dependence.

9. The 'Great Green Wall' initiative in Africa is a human modification intended to have a positive consequence by halting the spread of the Sahara Desert.

Answer: A) True

By planting a massive belt of trees, humans are modifying the land specifically to restore ecological balance and combat desertification.

10. Which of the following describes a 'feedback loop' in human-environment interaction?

Answer: B) Air conditioning use increasing due to global warming, which then consumes more energy and emits more greenhouse gases

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This is a complex interaction where a human adaptation (AC) to an environmental consequence (warming) further modifies the environment, creating a continuous cycle.