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ago, Mauritanias capital city was many days walk from the Sahara.

Today it is in the Sahara. 1._____ The sand blows through the city streets and piles up in 2._____ walls and fences. The desert stretches out as far as the eye can see. In some parts of the Amazon rain forest in brazil, all the trees have cut down. The earth lies bare and dry in the 3._____ hot sun. Nothing grow there anymore.

4._____ Over vast areas of every continent, the rainfall and vegetation necessary for life is disappearing. Already 5._____ more than 40 percent of the earths land is desert and 6._____ desert-like. About 628 million people--one out of seven-- live in these dry regions. In the past, they have managed to survive, but in difficulty. Now, largely through problems 7._____ caused by modern life, our existence is threatened by the 8._____ slow, steady spread of the earths deserts. Many countries first became concerned in 1970s after 9._____ a terrible drought and famine destroyed Africas Sahel, the fragile desert along the south edge of the Sahara. Thousands of people died even though there was a worldwide effort to send food and medicine to the starved people.

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