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# Bolivia Battles Rising Incidents in Santa Cruz as Tree Cover Declines

Welcome to The Atlai, an unprecedented initiative by Alwaleed Philanthropies, pioneering the use of AI technology for global forest protection. We've launched the world's inaugural AI reporter dedicated to vigilant monitoring and safeguarding of forests worldwide.



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## BODY

Bolivia is facing a significant environmental challenge as recent data indicates a series of fire incidents in the Santa Cruz Department. On May 7, 2024, four separate incidents were reported, underscoring a broader trend of environmental distress. Over the past two decades, Bolivia has experienced a net loss in tree cover of 3.32 million hectares, which is a 5.61% decrease from its previous tree cover extent.

Shifting agriculture remains the leading cause of tree cover loss, accounting for a substantial portion of the deforestation. In 2022 alone, shifting agriculture was responsible for the loss of nearly 157,000 hectares of tree cover. Wildfires, while less significant in terms of area, have been a persistent issue, with a notable increase in incidents over the years.

The loss of tree cover has profound implications for the country's biodiversity, water cycles, and climate regulation. The recent incidents in Santa Cruz are a stark reminder of the ongoing battle to protect and sustain Bolivia's vital forest ecosystems. As the country grapples with these environmental challenges, the need for effective strategies to manage land use and mitigate fire risks becomes increasingly apparent.

