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Angola Grapples with Escalating Tree Cover Loss and Recent Fire Incident

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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Angola has witnessed a significant escalation in tree cover loss over the past two decades, with the latest incident reported in the Cuando Cubango Province. The country, which boasts an area of over 124 million hectares, has a tree cover extent of approximately 55 million hectares. However, this green expanse has been under threat, with a net change in tree cover showing a loss of 3.40 million hectares, a gain of 1.20 million hectares, and a disturbing 1.60 million hectares, leading to a net loss of around 2.20 million hectares, which translates to a 4.41% decrease in tree cover.

Shifting agriculture remains the predominant driver of tree cover loss, accounting for a staggering majority of the total loss each year. For instance, in 2022 alone, shifting agriculture was responsible for over 98% of the total tree cover loss. Wildfires, while contributing to a lesser extent, still pose a significant threat, as evidenced by the recent fire alert in Cuando Cubango Province.

The cumulative effect of these losses is not only a reduction in tree cover but also a considerable release of carbon emissions into the atmosphere. The data from 2021, the most recent year with complete data, shows that tree cover loss resulted in nearly 119 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent emissions. This trend underscores the urgent need for attention to Angola's environmental challenges, as the country continues to lose valuable forest resources at an alarming rate.



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