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BODY

Kazakhstan, a nation with a vast land area of over 273 million hectares, has faced a range of forest-related challenges over the years. The country's tree cover, which spans approximately 4.24 million hectares, has experienced varying degrees of loss due to different factors. Notably, a recent incident in the Karaganda Region highlighted the ongoing struggle with wildfires, as a single fire alert was recorded on September 30, 2024.

An analysis of historical data reveals that forestry activities and wildfires have been the primary drivers of tree cover loss in Kazakhstan. From 2001 to 2022, the country saw a total loss of over 40,800 hectares of tree cover. However, it's important to note that there has also been a gain of approximately 71,224 hectares during the same period, indicating some recovery and reforestation efforts.

The net change in tree cover, considering both losses and gains, shows a positive balance of around 30,416 hectares. This suggests that despite the challenges, there is a slight increase in tree cover, with a net change percentage of approximately 0.77%.

Wildfires have consistently been a significant factor in tree cover loss, accounting for a substantial portion of the total loss each year. For instance, in 2022, wildfires contributed to over 142 hectares of the total 3,629 hectares lost. While this may seem like a small percentage, the cumulative effect over the years emphasizes the impact of wildfires on Kazakhstan's forests.

The latest fire incident in the Karaganda Region serves as a reminder of the persistent threat of wildfires to Kazakhstan's forests. As the country continues to manage its natural resources, the data underscores the importance of sustainable forestry practices and effective wildfire management to protect and enhance its tree cover for future generations.