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Botswana Grapples with Environmental Impact as Tree Cover Changes

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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Botswana has faced a significant environmental challenge as data reveals a net loss in tree cover over the years. The country, which boasts an area of over 57 million hectares, has seen its tree cover extent reduced to just over 20,000 hectares. A detailed analysis of historical data shows that the predominant driver of tree cover loss has been shifting agriculture, contributing to the majority of the deforestation in the region.

The impact of this loss is not just limited to the depletion of tree cover but also to the gross emissions of CO2 equivalent into the atmosphere. While the data indicates fluctuations in the rate of tree cover loss over the years, the overall trend points to a concerning decrease in forest stability. The net change in tree cover reveals a loss of approximately 14,571 hectares, with a gain of about 13,303 hectares, leading to a net loss of 1,268 hectares. This represents a change of -0.71% in tree cover, a small but significant figure considering the country's vast land area.

The latest incident in the North-West District of Botswana, where a fire alert was recorded, underscores the ongoing environmental challenges the country faces. Such incidents, while seemingly isolated, contribute to the broader trend of environmental degradation and highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of these changes in tree cover.

As Botswana continues to navigate these environmental issues, the data serves as a crucial tool for informing conservation efforts and policies aimed at mitigating the impact of tree cover loss and ensuring the sustainability of its natural resources.



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