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Central African Republic Battles Escalating Tree Cover Loss

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

The Central African Republic [CAR] is facing a significant challenge as recent data indicates an escalating trend in tree cover loss. Over the past two decades, the country has experienced a consistent decline in its tree cover, primarily due to shifting agriculture practices. The CAR, with an area of over 62 million hectares and a tree cover extent of approximately 47 million hectares, has seen a net change in tree cover that reflects a 1.32% decrease.

The latest incident report from Bamingui-Bangoran highlights a fire alert, adding to the ongoing environmental stress. While the incident count is currently at one, it underscores the persistent threat of wildfires in the region. The cumulative effect of these incidents, along with human-driven deforestation, poses a severe risk to the country's biodiversity and ecological balance.

Analysis of historical data reveals that shifting agriculture is the predominant driver of tree cover loss, with the most significant losses recorded in recent years. In 2021 alone, the CAR lost over 67,000 hectares of tree cover due to this practice, which also resulted in substantial CO2 emissions.

The net loss of tree cover, after accounting for gains from reforestation efforts, stands at approximately 728,000 hectares. This loss not only impacts the carbon sequestration capacity of the region but also affects the livelihoods of local communities and the overall health of the ecosystem. The ongoing trend emphasizes the need for sustainable land management practices to mitigate further environmental degradation.