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## BODY

Ethiopia, a nation with an area spanning over 112 million hectares, has experienced significant changes in its tree cover over the years. A recent incident on December 8, 2024, in the Upper Nile region, has brought the issue of tree cover loss to the forefront once again. The country's tree cover extent, which stands at approximately 12 million hectares, has seen a net loss of 738,331 hectares, marking a 3.61% decrease.

The predominant driver of tree cover loss in Ethiopia has been shifting agriculture, contributing to the vast majority of the deforestation. Over the years, this practice has led to a consistent decline in tree cover, with urbanization also playing a minor role. Notably, the data does not indicate wildfires as a significant driver, which suggests that the recent fire incident is an anomaly rather than a common occurrence.

The impact of these losses is substantial, considering that the tree cover loss from 2001 to 2022 has resulted in millions of metric tons of CO2 equivalent emissions. The trend shows a fluctuation in the rate of tree cover loss, with some years witnessing higher rates than others. However, the overall trajectory indicates a persistent challenge in maintaining and protecting Ethiopia's tree cover.

As the country grapples with these environmental changes, the latest fire incident serves as a reminder of the ongoing threats to its natural landscape. The incident, while isolated, underscores the need for continued vigilance and sustainable practices to safeguard Ethiopia's tree cover for future generations.