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# Burkina Faso Battles Wildfire in Est Region Amid Ongoing Tree Cover Challenges

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## BODY

Burkina Faso, a country with a land area of over 27 million hectares, has been grappling with significant environmental challenges, as recent data indicates a persistent loss of tree cover. The latest incident, a wildfire in the Est Region, adds to the nation's environmental woes.

Over the years, the primary driver of tree cover loss in Burkina Faso has been shifting agriculture, which has been responsible for substantial emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. The data reveals that this practice has consistently led to the highest tree cover loss and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to other drivers such as wildfires and urbanization.

The analysis of historical data shows a fluctuating but concerning trend in tree cover loss. Notably, the year 2001 witnessed a loss of over 59 hectares, with shifting agriculture accounting for more than half of this loss. In subsequent years, the loss fluctuated, with some years like 2014 recording no tree cover loss at all. However, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions remained a concern, with thousands of metric tons being emitted each year.

The net change in tree cover over the years has been negative, with a loss of approximately 151,938 hectares and a gain of about 142,766 hectares, resulting in a net loss of 9,172 hectares. This represents a 0.36% decrease in tree cover, which is significant given the country's total area.

As Burkina Faso confronts the latest wildfire incident, the historical context of tree cover loss and its environmental impact is a stark reminder of the ongoing challenges the country faces. The struggle to balance agricultural practices with environmental conservation continues to be a pressing issue for the nation.