

## **FIFCO shares 4 business tips for caring for the Earth**

**FIFCO stressed that there are four lessons for building a conservation strategy.**

**April 22 is World Earth Day, an event declared by the United Nations, which calls for global awareness of the importance of protecting nature.**

**In this context, the interest of the productive sector as a key corporate citizen in the implementation of large-scale efforts to achieve a better balance between the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations is gradually increasing.**

**According to Gerardo Miranda, FIFCO's Safety, Health and Environment Manager, each company should evaluate the environmental and social impact of its business, products or services to reduce and compensate the remaining footprint, even advancing towards the generation of positive environmental value, a management that FIFCO already carries out year after year.**

**He explained that FIFCO has been adopting initiatives and programs to ensure the sustainable use of material and energy resources, the conservation and protection of biodiversity in its business model.**

**Adverse weather events due to the increase in greenhouse gases and the consequences brought about by climate change brings us face to face with one of the greatest challenges we encounter. In this sense, we are called to act against the loss of biodiversity and damage to ecosystems, not only from a conservation point of view per se, but understanding our dependence on the goods and services that nature provides and that are fundamental to guarantee a healthy economy”.**

**Specifically speaking about biodiversity, there are four important lessons for building a conservation strategy that is consistent with the impacts of a business operation. Below is an explanation of each:**

- **Determine the major impacts on the ecosystem**

**Miranda stated that it is important to understand the environmental dynamics and effects that a certain productive activity has on the ecosystem. In FIFCO's case, for example, it has been determined that one of the company's relevant impacts is water consumption, so efforts have been made to protect water recharge sources.**

**The main actions include: support for specific projects to protect water recharge areas through FONAFIFO's Environmental Services Certificates (CSAs) in the Cuenca Alta del Barva and the Nimboyores aquifer in Guanacaste.**

**On the other hand, the organization participates, since 2015, in the "Agua Tica" Fund, the first water fund in Costa Rica that contributes to the protection of water sources located in the sub-basins of the Río Grande and Río Virilla rivers. All these actions have allowed the company to acquire the "Water Positive" designation, after compensating the water system for 20% more water than it consumes for its business.**

- **Protect what already exists**

The representative explained that it is possible for companies to contribute to the well-being of ecosystems through the conservation of existing natural resources.

In FIFCO's case, the protection of its water sources in the Beer and Refreshments Plant has had a positive impact on the biodiversity of the Belén and San Joaquín de Flores area, since the conservation of the natural cover acts as a biological corridor that promotes the well-being of biodiversity.

In addition, Reserva Conchal, allocates 4% of its property area to the maintenance of a mixed wildlife refuge, a completely protected space that serves the development of natural regeneration processes. Currently, the Playa Conchal Mixed Wildlife Refuge maintains the best management evaluation score among the protected areas of the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT) of the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC).

On the other hand, investments in Payment for Environmental Services not only help protect aquifer recharge areas but also favor other ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity and scenic beauty.

- Investing in complementary environmental actions

Companies should also look for opportunities to support the communities where they operate and expand their actions to find synergies that can bring complementary benefits to other efforts they are making.

An example is FIFCO's Reserva Conchal project, which is adjacent to a maritime terrestrial zone, mangrove swamp and mangrove lagoon. As a result, the real estate project implements various initiatives to protect biodiversity in different areas both inside and outside the property, through awareness projects, reforestation, implementing environmental certifications, and volunteering.

Every year, competent and accredited professionals carry out marine biology immersions to verify there is no negative effect on the area of influence's marine flora or fauna within the property.

Another example was the placement of eight fauna crossings and the improvement of other existing ones in 2022. These are aimed at maintaining the free and safe movement of animals, facilitating their survival in the ecosystem and expanding their possibilities for reproduction and development.

- Take advantage of natural and social symbioses

Nature conservation should be seen as an opportunity to improve the condition of ecosystems and also to open space for sustainable development with social benefit.

An example is the Apiary of the Reserva Conchal Refuge. This project was created with the purpose of favoring the pollination process carried out by bees and also to obtain a high-quality product that could generate employment for people from neighboring communities.

**This apiary currently houses more than 5 million bees, distributed in 60 hives that pollinate approximately 3,000 hectares of forest. In addition, FIFCO also has a native bee project in the Conchal Mixed National Wildlife Refuge; the purpose of this project is to educate visitors to the protected area about the important role of bees in forest conservation.**

**The company reiterated that regardless of the business scale, its operational complexity or scope, it is always possible to commit to environmental impact mitigation, conservation and ecosystem improvement by taking into account the opportunities and impact areas of the business.**