



## **From artificial intelligence to bees, 10 success stories that contribute to sustainability in Guanacaste and its communities**

- Projects aim to generate great impacts in the region and contribute to responsible business continuity in Reserva Conchal

**San José, Costa Rica. November 7, 2023.** The practical application of the sustainability strategy of Reserva Conchal, FIFCO's real estate division in Guanacaste, is composed of a wide number of impacted people, more than 10 programs ranging from artificial intelligence for the protection of howler monkeys to communal apiaries. To enter this framework, the initiatives must have a high impact in the region and align with the environmental, social and governance (ESG) pillars with which FIFCO and all its subsidiaries operate since 2022..

Thus, each project adds to the integral continuity of the business and contributes to the corporate purpose of sharing with the world a better way of living.

### **1. Social infrastructure**

Reserva Conchal has participated in the construction of 7 key projects: the children's playground, the fire station, the Nimboyores aqueduct, the Cabo Velas EBAIS, the tourist facilities, the Police delegation and its most recent project, the construction of the school, all in the community of Playa Brasilito, its immediate area of influence. This educational center came to replace the school damaged after the earthquake in Samara in 2012 and to provide an adequate space, as the children received classes in the community hall.

### **2. CEN CINAI bilingualism program**

This program started in October 2021 in Matapalo and Santa Cruz. It is carried out through an alliance between Reserva Conchal, Universidad Latina and the National Directorate of CEN CINAI. It consists of the participation of advanced students of the English teaching program, who dedicate their University Community Work practice to preschool education. In 2 years, more than 250 children have been attended, as well as 24 CEN CINAI teachers.

### **3. Reinforcements in education**

The Monsignor Vittorino Girardi Stellin Catholic Educational Center prepares students for the TOEIC English validation test. The program covers the costs of the test for students in grades nine through eleven, in an 80% scholarship population.

### **4. Dual Vocational Technical Training**

The program has been implemented since 2014 in partnership with the National Learning Institute (INA) and has more than 300 graduates in the courses: Kitchen Assistance Operations



and Food and Beverage Assistance Operations. On average, 8 out of 10 people who complete the process are hired by Reserva Conchal.

"We want to continue promoting the Dual Education model in Costa Rica and strengthen employability to provide a better quality of life for the families of Guanacaste. We will continue working hand in hand with INA (National Learning Institute) to develop more programs under the hands-on modality in different areas and continue with our focus on impacting lives in a positive way", says Fabián Fernández, FIFCO's Hospitality Manager.

### **5. Elegí Ayudar Volunteer Program**

FIFCO's corporate volunteering brings together employees of Reserva Conchal and The Westin Reserva Conchal and W Costa Rica hotels during their working hours and allows them to choose in which area they wish to contribute, whether in social purposes, smart consumption, waste collection or intervention in protected areas. In 2022 they surpassed 12,000 hours of volunteer work.

### **6. Reserva Conchal Apiary**

It was created in conjunction with the national brand Blue Zones Nicoya in order to protect the bees of the area, obtain a high-quality product and generate employment in neighboring communities. It contains about 2.5 million bees (*Apis Melliferas*) distributed in 30 hives, which pollinate about 3,000 hectares of forest (equivalent to the extension of 41 La Sabana parks).

### **7. Najui Agroecological Orchard**

Led 100% by local women, the production of the Najui (which means woman in Chorotega) orchard is used in its entirety in the hotel operations, provides employment and promotes female empowerment for project participants. At the same time, it has an impact on families by combating gender stereotypes and demonstrating the benefits of having two incomes.

### **8. Valorization Center**

100% of Reserva Conchal's organic waste is captured and subjected to a composting process to produce organic fertilizer that is then used in the hotel's green areas, golf course, orchard and common areas of the resort, reducing the use of fertilizers and agrochemicals.

### **9. Conchal Mixed National Wildlife Refuge**

It is a protected area of 39.75 hectares where the ecosystems associated with the mangrove and the Tropical Dry Forest transition to Humid, promoting local interest in environmental issues are preserved. It has a hotel for solitary bees and a teaching center with its honey bee program. Seeds are also collected; seedlings are developed and finally plants are donated for reforestation with local species.



## 10. Sustainability and Artificial Intelligence

In conjunction with McGill University, based in Montreal, Canada, Reserva Conchal launched a project in 2023 in which, through an app, it facilitates the reporting and tracking of wildlife accidents, especially focused on cases of howler monkey electrocution, in collaboration with the *Salve Monos* organization.

The application provides real-time systematized information to facilitate decision-making by non-profit organizations working to protect these species.

The [web tool](#) instantly generates heat maps that identify the coordinates of the reports, the most frequent sites and the types of accidents reported. This, in turn, allows the implementation of prevention strategies.

These initiatives are part of the company's "Expansive Sustainability" vision, where it is invited to generate alliances, to innovate, to be flexible, to look at other people with deep solidarity and to offer "a hand" to those in need.

### **About FIFCO**

FIFCO is a beverage and food company with 115 years of history, and operations in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador and the United States, 7 manufacturing plants and 15 distribution centers. It has 3 business divisions that include "Florida Bebidas" (food and beverages), "Florida Hospitality" (real estate) and "Florida Retail" (retail sales). It exports to 18 countries around the world and has a portfolio of 1,500 products.