

***De Vuelta a Casa* Project Wins Recognition at AmCham Sustainable Business Awards 2025**

- Imperial and FIFCO's initiative was awarded in the Environmental category and received an honorable mention in Innovation for its pioneering use of artificial intelligence in marine restoration.
- The project has made it possible to classify more than 157,000 seashells and return 1.2 tons to the sea.
- Its AI model, developed in Costa Rica in collaboration with the UCR, SINAC, and AERIS, has been recognized for its scientific rigor and potential for international replication.

October 2025. The *De Vuelta a Casa* (Back Home) project, promoted by Imperial and FIFCO, was recognized as the winner in the Environmental category of the 2025 AmCham Sustainable Business Awards. It also received an honorable mention in Innovation, thanks to its pioneering approach in using artificial intelligence for marine restoration.

The initiative addresses an environmental challenge: the extraction of seashells by tourism, which accelerates coastal erosion and affects biodiversity. Each year, around 6 tons of shells are confiscated at international airports in Costa Rica. Until recently, as their origin (Pacific or Caribbean) was unknown, they were buried to avoid ecological damage.

Thanks to *De Vuelta a Casa*, and in partnership with the University of Costa Rica (UCR), the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC), and the company AERIS, an artificial intelligence application was developed to determine, from a single photograph, whether a shell comes from the Costa Rican Caribbean or Pacific region. The model was trained with 18,500 images, achieves over 90% accuracy, and allows shells to be returned to their natural habitat without compromising the ocean's health.

"This recognition reaffirms that technology can be a powerful tool for sustainability. With De Vuelta a Casa, we combine science, innovation, and purpose to restore ecosystems and raise awareness about the importance of protecting our beaches. This project reflects the essence of our Expansive Sustainability: solutions that go beyond preventing impacts and generate positive and lasting transformations," said Maria Pía Robles, FIFCO's Director of Corporate Relations.

Artificial intelligence at the service of the environment

The tool developed by FIFCO and Imperial represents the world's first AI application for classifying seashells by ecosystem, an advance that has made it possible to process more than 157,000 shells and return 1.2 tons to the Caribbean and Pacific oceans. In addition to its ecological impact, the project has inspired more than 400 volunteers and reached 15 million views of the documentary accompanying the campaign.

In 2025, the initiative reached a new scientific milestone when it was accepted as a scientific article at the International Conference on Computer Vision (ICCV 2025), organized by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). The article, titled "Back Home: A Computer Vision Solution to Seashell Identification for Ecological Restoration," consolidates the technical and ecological value of the project as a globally replicable solution.

The AI model was released as open source, allowing other scientific communities to adapt the technology to their own coasts and species. At the same time, the *De Vuelta a Casa* campaign



promotes environmental education, volunteering, and restoration actions in different areas of the country. In July 2025, a second shell return day was held in Guanacaste, with the participation of more than 150 people and the support of the Guanacaste Airport, adding up to more than 120,000 shells classified in that year alone.

The project's impact has been recognized internationally. In June 2025, *De Vuelta a Casa* was selected as one of the cases representing Costa Rica at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France, and in the same month it won a Silver Lion at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in the *Market Disruption – Public Relations* category.

The initiative contributes directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by promoting quality education (SDG 4) through environmental awareness programs, driving climate action (SDG 13) by reducing erosion and restoring coastal ecosystems, protecting marine life (SDG 14) through the conservation of marine biodiversity, and strengthening partnerships to achieve the goals (SDG 17) by bringing together business, academia, government, and citizens in a common purpose of sustainability.

De Vuelta a Casa exemplifies FIFCO's vision of Expansive Sustainability, which promotes creative and collaborative solutions to social and environmental challenges. In line with the concept of Societies 5.0, the project demonstrates how technology can serve human and ecological well-being, placing people and the planet at the center of progress.

With this recognition, FIFCO and Imperial consolidate their regional leadership in environmental innovation, showing that Costa Rica continues to be a global benchmark in sustainability, applied science, and climate action. We invite you to learn more about this and other projects in the company's 2024 Integrated Report (page 72), available at www.fifcosostenible.com.

About FIFCO

FIFCO is a beverage and food company with 117 years of history, with operations in Costa Rica, Central America, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and the United States, 5 manufacturing plants and 13 distribution centers. It has 3 business divisions that include Florida Bebidas (food and beverages), FIFCO Hospitality (real estate sector) and FIFCO Retail (retail sales). It exports to over 10 countries around the world and has a portfolio of more than 2,000 products.