



# COUNTRY FACTSHEET

## Costa Rica Pineapples

### A SHIFT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY IS UNDERWAY

With a [five-year national action plan for sustainable pineapple](#) production now signed into law – and widely endorsed by stakeholders: including producers, communities, traders and buyers – the government aims to address issues such as illegal land-use change, agrochemical pollution and labor rights violations that have affected this industry. Sustainable pineapple production is also seen as a potentially powerful engine for development across some of Costa Rica's poorest rural communities.

UNDP's Green Commodities Programme has facilitated this important process since 2011, acting as a bridge between different stakeholders and enabling them to move from a combative deadlock to a collaborative dialogue on what a sustainable pineapple industry would look like and how to reach this vision. Now, the success of implementing their vision hinges on maintaining this collaborative momentum that cuts across institutions and sectors, while also expanding the dialogue to more actively include the large international buyers of pineapples. Leveraging adequate resources to implement the Plan will also be critical.



### FAST FACTS

#### Pineapple Production in Costa Rica

- Costa Rica is among the world's largest pineapple producers, supplying fruits to major supermarket chains in Europe, the US and elsewhere.
- The country has seen a 700% growth in pineapple production over the last 15 years and the industry is worth US\$ 1.3 billion to the national economy.
- Pineapple expansion over the past 15 years has eliminated more than 5,000 hectares of forest cover, the size of over 3,000 football pitches.
- In 2016, President Luis Guillermo Solis signed a National Action Plan for Sustainable Pineapple Production into law.

## ABOUT THE UNDP GREEN COMMODITIES PROGRAMME

We work in 11 countries to address sustainability issues, including deforestation, across seven highly-traded agricultural and marine commodities. We do this by supporting governments to lead multi-stakeholder dialogues, devise national action plans and leverage resources to address

the structural barriers to sustainable commodities. We also act as a bridge for collaboration between the public and private sectors, civil society and donors. Through these partnerships, innovative solutions can be identified, piloted and implemented on a scale that makes a difference.

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## Our Partners

**Government:** Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor National Water Authority, National Ombudsman, National Registry, National Centre of High Technology and the Airborne Research Lab

**Civil Society and NGOs:**

Community representatives in the key pineapple growing areas, the National Coordinator of Fair Trade Small Producers, COOPEPIÑA, PROBIO, Agronorte and COOPEASA

**Private Sector:**

TESCO, Walmart

**Education Institutions:**

EARTH University, Costa Rica Technological Institute, Costa Rica University, National University, Learning National Institute and the National Technical University

**UN Agencies:**

UNDP-REDD+, Food and Agriculture Organization

**Donor:**

Global Environment Facility

*“UNDP has accompanied us every step of the way to reduce the conflicts associated with the cultivation of pineapple, promoting better agricultural practices, reducing environmental impact and enhancing the positive impact.” - Ivannia Quesada Villalobos Vice Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Costa Rica.*

## The UNDP Green Commodities Approach

We have been supporting the government of Costa Rica since 2011 to lead a multi-stakeholder dialogue, resulting in the widely endorsed National Action Plan for Sustainable Pineapple Production. With this Plan now written into law, our focus is on building the capacity of officials and national institutions to implement and monitor it over the coming five years. Some of our key activities include:

- **Stronger Institutions** – We set-up and are now supporting the newly established national and regional commissions tasked with allocating resources for and monitoring compliance with the Action Plan. As sustainable pineapple production cuts across numerous sectors, an important element of our work has been encouraging stronger collaboration between different national institutions. Significantly, the new commissions include four key ministries covering: agriculture, environment, health and labor. Also represented are the national water authority and ombudsman, as well as representatives of small and large producers, traders, and local communities in the main pineapple producing regions.
- **Transparency** – We are helping to roll-out a [a “one stop” website](#) where buyers, journalists and concerned citizens can see what progress stakeholders have made towards achieving their goals under the Action Plan.
- **Addressing Deforestation** – We are helping Costa Rica to develop an innovative [land use change monitoring system](#), aimed at halting deforestation from pineapple production. Free to use, this system is the world’s first to overlay satellite images with land registry records on an annual basis for an entire national territory. Now, every year, it will produce images showing forest loss as a result of pineapple production, with more agro-commodities soon to be included. Buyers can use the system to check if individual producers have illegally deforested to grow their pineapples, and avoid buying from them. Producers compliant with the law can show that their farms are deforestation-free, enabling them to benefit from trade and incentive schemes.