

PINEAPPLE

Costa Rica: The National Platform for the Responsible Production and Trade of Pineapple

The Platform was established as a result of global controversy around the environmental impact of pineapple production in Costa Rica. Agrochemical run off into water sources, high levels of soil erosion and violations of trade union rights by some plantation owners are some of the issues that led to an escalating conflict between producers and exporters and damaged the reputation of Costa Rica as a responsible pineapple producing country.

The Project objective: To improve the pineapple production practices

Who are the main partners engaged in the Sustainable Palm Oil Initiative?

Platform is led by :	Second Vice-Presidency of the Republic of Costa Rica, the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) and the Ministry of Environment (MINAET)
Government	Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), Ministry of Environment (MINAET), Ministry of Labour,
Platform participants	40 stakeholders including government, producers and civil society organisations
Industry	Chiquita, Del Monte, Dole, Tesco, Walmart

Creation of a National Platform for responsible pineapple

The National Platform for the Responsible Production and Trade of Pineapple in Costa Rica was launched in June 2011, to establish a multi-stakeholder and inter-institutional dialogue to create a joint Action Plan to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of pineapple production.

Facilitated by the UNDP, the Platform brings together over 40 stakeholders. It includes all the main players in the pineapple supply chain like the chamber of pineapple exporters, CANAPEP, representing 90% of the land under cultivation in Costa Rica.

90% of the land under cultivation in Costa Rica is engaged with the Platform.

The Platform connects three main themes, which provide the basis of all platform activity and discussions: sustainable production, responsibility and action of the state and alliances with the pineapple supply chain actors. All three are needed to make significant advances towards the responsible production and trade of pineapple in Costa Rica.



What has been achieved so far?

❖ Initial results:

Despite the challenging context and fragmented sector, the Platform has achieved substantial progress. The coordination between the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment has also improved and they are now working together to establish joint programmes and policies to strengthen and acknowledge good agricultural practices. For example, they are working to develop a joint protocol for farm inspection that will allow staff from all ministries to conduct inspections. This means that a Ministry of Environment Officer can check compliance with health, labour, trade migration laws all in the same site visit. The Ministries have also requested that the strategy being developed by the Platform incorporates existing national strategies, illustrating that they recognise the Platform as an important mechanism to communicate their concerns and policies with the supply chain stakeholders.

As a result of the Platform's work and intense discussions, a National Pineapple Action Plan has been formulated and presented to all stakeholders at the 4th plenary meeting held in February 2013. The process has already fostered a much greater collaboration spirit among the various stakeholders. The Action Plan outlines a number of strategic actions to be taken by the involved parties for a responsible production and trade of pineapple in Costa Rica. This is a key step as it is the basis for implementing a major transformation in the pineapple sector.

To complement the plenary sessions, working groups are convened to discuss specific topics. Labour issues and soil conservation are two topics that have been high on the agenda. The labour working group is a significant step forward as it is the first time plantation owners and trade unions have agreed to sit at the table together. ILO facilitates the working group which contributes towards resolving legislation compliance issues on plantations. The soil conservation working group identified problematic areas, such as cultivation in inappropriate areas, soil erosion and excessive use of agrochemicals, and the group jointly developed concrete activities to address them.



Workshop with main stakeholders of the Pineapple Platform to review progress of the first year. August 2012

❖ Driving things forward:

There is a great deal of momentum building with the Platform, and the year's activities and achievements that led to the Action Plan for the Responsible Production and Trade of Pineapple in Costa Rica. Now, the focus is to leverage on the positive collaboration between industry, government and producers to implement the actions prioritized in the Action Plan needed for a more responsible pineapple sector in Costa Rica.

Impacts to date

- Draft National Pineapple Action Plan presented at plenary meeting in February 2013
- Improved coordination between ministries (e.g. working on a joint protocol for farm inspection)

For more information about the pineapple platform visit its webpage at: www.pnp.cr

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