



Media Contact:

Ines Cano

Cheryl Andrews Marketing Communications

P: 305-444-4033

costa.rica@cam-pr.com

Costa Rica Achieves Two New Records in Sustainability Effort

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica – July 26, 2017 – In just the first half of 2017, Costa Rica has reached a new record in clean energy production and received their latest Biosphere Reserve declaration by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)—solidifying their unshakeable commitment to sustainability.



During the first six months of the year, 99 percent of Costa Rica's electricity came from renewable sources, according to data from the National Energy Control Center (CENCE). In the last 30 years, renewable sources such as wind, geothermal, solar and hydroelectric have been responsible for production of nearly 93 percent of Costa Rica's energy, but this July they broke their own record. With a goal to be the first carbon neutral country in the world by 2021, sustainable practices can be observed in every region of the country, across all industries, adopted by all citizens and embraced by visitors. With almost all of its energy being produced by renewable resources, it's clear that sustainability is embedded deeply in the culture and traditions of Costa Rica.

Another win for sustainability was earned in June, when UNESCO declared Savegre River, located in the Zona de los Santos (Zone of the Saints), a Biosphere Reserve. Biosphere reserves are specially designated areas for sustainable development that reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with the proper use of natural resources. As stated on the UNESCO website: Biosphere reserves are ‘Science for Sustainability support sites’ – special places for testing interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and managing changes and interactions between social and ecological systems, including conflict prevention and management of biodiversity. Costa Rica already has four reserves, but this is the first with coastal marine components, as it includes the marine part of the Manuel Antonio National Park, in Quepos.

The Savegre River stands out for its great biodiversity. The reserve houses 20% of Costa Rica’s flora, 54% of the country’s mammals and 59% of its birds. The territory also includes seven protected wilderness areas: Manuel Antonio National Park, Cerro Nara Protective Zone, Portalón Mixed Wildlife Refuge, Hacienda Barú Mixed Wildlife Refuge, Los Santos Forest Reserve, Quetzales National Park and Cerro Vueltas Biological Reserve.

It is clear that Costa Ricans are proud to live amongst and protect their country’s rich environment. The small nation holds five percent of the world’s known biodiversity, 3.5 percent of all marine life and 30 percent of the country’s territory is protected natural land. A pioneer in the area of sustainability, Costa Rica is a model for sustainable practices for many industries around the world. The tourism trade has had a huge hand in paving the way for growth in this area. Through the Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST) program, which was designed by the Costa Rica Tourism Board (ICT), entrepreneurs can receive recognition and reward for their sustainable practices to help differentiate businesses within the tourism sector. Based on the degree in which they comply with a sustainable model of natural, cultural and social resource management, a large selection of attractions, hotels and restaurants can be officially classified as sustainable.

Businesses in the CST program receive recognition by being awarded “leaves” or level markers. One leaf indicates that a business engages in minimal sustainable practices and a distinction of five leaves indicates that a business exemplifies the highest standard of sustainable practices in its respective sector. Businesses that hold five level markers (leaves) in the CST program are carbon neutral, integrate authentic locally made products into its offerings, give back to Costa Rica’s rural community and more.

CST was introduced in 1997 and has continued to evolve and change with the advancement of technologies over the years. As of May, more than 347 companies, ranging from lodging, tour companies, restaurants and car rentals, in Costa Rica earned CST certification. The program hopes to reach its goal of certifying 425 companies by the end of 2017.

With these two latest wins, it’s clear that sustainability is not only a practice in Costa Rica; it is a way of life.

For more information on Costa Rica, visit www.visitcostarica.com

#

About Costa Rica

Nestled between Nicaragua and Panama, Costa Rica offers visitors an abundance of unique wildlife, landscapes and climates—a trip to this Central American country is anything but run-of-the-mill. The country proudly shelters approximately five percent of the known biodiversity in the world and has become a global leader in sustainable practices. Visitors to Costa Rica enjoy a highly organized tourism infrastructure offering a broad terrain of activities and accommodations.

About Instituto Costarricense de Turismo (ICT)

Established in 1955, the Costa Rica Tourism Board (the ICT), alongside its partners in the private sector, spearheads the vital task of regulating and promoting Costa Rica's extensive tourism offerings.