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Chiquita acts on biodiversity

The banana giant has provided an update on efforts to reduce its global impact on the environment, including partnering with local farming communities



The Nogal reserve in Costa Rica

Banana giant Chiquita has announced that it is taking action to preserve and enhance biodiversity on its plantations in order to demonstrate its commitment to reducing the company's environmental impact.

Chiquita stated that it recognised "the need for significant change in how businesses think about and interact with the environment".

The company ceased forest clearing for agricultural expansion back in 2005 as it focussed on rejuvenating and re-engineering pre-existing farmland.

"Current production is limited to areas that can support long-term cultivation," the company stated, "and lands that are not suited for production are transformed into conservation areas. Chiquita supports this transformation by partnering with stakeholders and local communities to plant new trees and return previously cleared areas to their normal state."

The success of the reforestation plan is measured by tracking wildlife. In 2017, according to the company, three new species, including a tapir, a bellbird and a yellow spotted lizard, were found within the conservation areas.

"At Chiquita, we value our commitment to protect the ecosystems in which we produce our bananas," said Jamie Postell, director of sales for North America. "As an authority in the produce industry, we lead by example by implementing preservation tactics that will reduce our global impact and ensure environmental prosperity."

Chiquita also highlighted its efforts to form partnerships with local farming communities in order to support biodiversity.

"In 2004, Chiquita founded the Nogal reserve with support from the Rainforest Alliance to promote conservation in Costa Rica," the company stated. "Reforestation in the Nogal area helps to reduce land maintenance costs and

floods. In Panama, Chiquita partnered with leading German retail and tourism group Rewe to create a conservation area in the San San Pond Sak wetlands. Chiquita not only planted thousands of trees, but also helped to support financing of the purchase of the land from its previous owner."

In 2018, Chiquita donated the reserve to the local community. Since then, Chiquita and Rewe have continued to finance the maintenance, surveillance and protection of the reforested land, according to the company.

"Several species live in the area, in particular sea turtles and manatees," Chiquita revealed. "From the beginning of the project in San San, at least 30,000 hatchling turtles have been released."