

# Costa Rica

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## 1. Fintech regulatory framework: a summary of the most relevant laws and regulations concerning fintech and financial innovation

### Current regulations

Costa Rica does not currently have fintech-specific legislation or a unified regulatory framework governing financial innovation. Therefore, companies operate within the restrictions and parameters of regular financial entities, whereby applicable laws depend on the nature of the services provided, securities offering regulations and anti-money laundering (AML) legislation. In principle, fintech companies do not need a prior habilitating licence to operate, unless they perform a restricted activity, namely: (1) financial intermediation;<sup>1</sup> and (2) the public offering of securities and or securities-related services, as Costa Rican private counterparties can enter into all contracts that are not prohibited by law based on the freedom of contract principle, under which private parties may engage in any economic activity not expressly prohibited.<sup>2</sup>

From a practical standpoint, even when a habilitating licence is not required, depending on the line of business of the company, there are certain regulations to bear in mind, specifically: (1) access to the Costa Rican Central Bank's (Banco Central de Costa Rica or BCCR) Electronic Payment Processing System (Sistema Nacional de Pagos Electrónicos or SINPE); and (2) registration before the Superintendency of Financial Entities (Superintendencia General de Entidades Financieras or SUGEF) for AML and counter-terrorist financing (CTF) controls in the event the business operates local bank accounts.

Payment processing companies that want to have direct access to the BCCR's SINPE will need to abide by the regulation issued by the Central Bank granting direct access to the platform. Otherwise, they can utilise an entity that already has access to the system, as all supervised financial entities do.

Certain activities in Costa Rica do not require a habilitating licence, but are subject to registration requirements under the Law on Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances, Drugs of Unauthorized Use, Related Activities, Money Laundering, and Financing of Terrorism (Law No 7786). Among the economic activities that require AML registration under Articles 15 and 15bis of Law No 7786 are (1) systemic and substantial transfer of funds; (2) the administration of third-party funds; (3) the granting of credit facilities; and (4) providing remittance services. Such registration will be required if the local entity receives or sends funds through a local bank account that originate in such activities.

In addition, depending on their specific activities, fintech companies are also subject to consumer protection rules, interest rate caps and data protection laws. As such, Costa Rica's fintech ecosystem is a multi-layered regulatory environment, with no current unified regulatory framework.

From an institutional standpoint, in 2022, the National Council for the Supervision of the Costa Rican Financial System (Consejo Nacional de Supervisión del Sistema Financiero or CONASSIF), with the support of the BCCR and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) launched the

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1 Organic Law of the Central Bank, Law No 7558 Art 116, defines financial intermediation as: 'being in the business of receiving money deposits from the members of the public and investing it for the intermediary's account and specific risk in any form of credit or securities investments'.

2 Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica Art 28.

Financial Innovation Center for Costa Rica (Centro de Innovación Financiera or CIF). The CIF was established as a collaborative platform for dialogue, consultation and engagement between financial innovators and regulators, with the objective of facilitating compliance with the existing regulatory framework while promoting the development of technology-driven financial products and services.

## **Future regulation**

There are several initiatives that seek to regulate the ‘up-and-coming’ fintech sector in Costa Rica. As is the case in many jurisdictions, regulators are not only adapting to new technology and a desire to foment investment in the fintech sector itself but are also responding to concerns from traditional financial institutions and banking and securities regulators that want to maintain their authority over the local financial system.

The Fintech Framework Law (Bill No 24.429) is currently at an advanced legislative stage, having received a favourable opinion from the Economic Affairs Committee and now pending a first debate before the Legislative Plenary. The Bill establishes a comprehensive legal framework aimed at the promotion, regulation and development of fintech companies as a productive and commercial activity in Costa Rica, with the broader objective of fostering economic dynamism and diversifying business models. In doing so, it is grounded on a set of guiding principles that include financial inclusion and innovation, data protection, competition promotion, financial integrity and stability, consumer protection and the prevention of AML-CTF.

The Bill adopts a broad and technology-neutral approach to defining fintech activities, encompassing a wide range of services based on technological innovation. These include, among others, order routing and intermediation of financial instruments, alternative trading systems, custody services, financial and credit advisory, crowdfunding platforms, mobile banking solutions, big data and predictive analytics, compliance services, automated processes, digital security and technology-driven financing models, as well as emerging practices such as social trading and digital personal finance advisory.

The pillar of the proposed framework is the creation of a mandatory fintech registry, to be administered by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce. Under this model, fintech companies must be duly registered in order to carry out activities involving the processing of confidential information or personal data. Registration entails compliance with minimum requirements relating to corporate governance, capital adequacy and information security, and obliges registered entities to publicly disclose the scope of the services they are authorised to provide. Foreign fintech entities seeking to benefit from the regime must establish a local presence in Costa Rica. Importantly, all fintech activities remain subject to existing data protection laws.

The Bill further vests the Costa Rican Ministry of Economy with broad regulatory and supervisory powers, as well as SUGEF's obligations; has an emphasis on data protection and information governance; introduces a structured sanctions regime; and incorporates a policy-driven component aimed at fostering the fintech ecosystem. Importantly, the Bill enables fintech companies to access SINPE and hold accounts at the BCCR, and contemplates proactive measures for the attraction of fintech investment.

Other initiatives for the sector have not been formally presented as a proposed law or regulation but have been discussed at the Central Bank and SUGEF level. For example, there has been a push in recent months to restrict the ability of companies registered in SINPE to offer accounts to their general public customers because this way of operating circumvents minimum legal reserve requirements and SUGEF AML supervision that locally licensed financial entities have to abide by.

## **2. Regulations on crypto assets: a summary of the legal framework regarding crypto assets and how they are regulated**

Costa Rica recently enacted Law No 10961 (please see point 6), which establishes an express regulatory framework for virtual asset service providers (VASPs) in Costa Rica. The law designates VASPs as obliged entities for AML/CFT purposes, requiring registration with SUGEF and compliance with its supervisory regime. It also enhances Costa Rica's KYC infrastructure by centralising customer identification data (including representation, domicile, legal capacity, corporate purpose and source of funds) and requires enhanced due diligence for politically exposed persons (PEPs), whether domestic or foreign. Regulation by the Costa Rican Superintendency of Securities (Superintendencia General de Valores or SUGEFVAL) has not yet been enacted; therefore, there are grey areas regarding whether these obligations will extend to foreign providers serving Costa Rican residents without local presence.

In our experience, such an expansive interpretation would be unprecedented in Costa Rica. Based on SUGEF's prior practice, supervision has typically been limited to entities operating through local bank accounts. However, the law does restrict locally registered entities from transacting with non-registered providers, effectively limiting contractual arrangements with unregistered foreign VASPs.

As for other classifications, in official publications (NT-01-2019 and ESPE-01-2021), the BCCR clarified that virtual assets are not legal tender in Costa Rica nor recognised as regulated financial instruments. However, their use is permitted, provided transactions are lawful, pursuant to constitutional principles of economic and contractual freedom (Articles 28, 45 and 46). The Central Bank's approach is therefore one of vigilant tolerance: the existence and circulation of virtual assets is tolerated, and space is given to technological innovation to enable the emergence of the fintech industry, while continuously monitoring its evolution

To qualify as 'currency' under Costa Rican law, an asset must (1) be issued by a sovereign authority; (2) be granted legal tender status (mandatory acceptance); and (3) possess liberatory power to discharge obligations; virtual assets do not meet these criteria and are therefore treated as private, fungible, intangible goods under the Civil Code, subject to general civil and commercial law. The use of virtual assets is lawful, but they are not considered mandatory means of payment (acceptance is voluntary) and cannot be used to discharge tax obligations. Furthermore, the General Directorate of Taxation has further confirmed that they are intangible assets for tax purposes, potentially giving rise to taxable income or capital gains taxes.

From a financial regulatory standpoint, virtual assets are not currently deemed securities under Costa Rican law and their offer does not amount to a public securities offering subject to registration with SUGEFVAL. Accordingly, activities such as the custody, transfer or exchange of

virtual assets remain outside the scope of SUGEVAL's oversight, except where the structure of the product offered would bring it within the statutory definition of a security.<sup>3</sup>

As regards AML/CFT, as stated in the first paragraph and point 6, VASPs operating in Costa Rica are obliged entities. Under Costa Rican Law No 7786, local financial institutions are obliged to monitor and report transactions, including those related to virtual assets, if processed through the banking system.

As for treatment outside of AML/CFT purposes, cryptocurrencies are currently subject to general legal frameworks applicable to civil and commercial transactions. As private, fungible, intangible digital assets, their transfer and use are governed by the Civil and Commercial Codes. Please note that the current legal framework allows for the circulation and use of virtual assets under private law.

Providers offering virtual asset services to Costa Rican residents may fall within the scope of consumer protection and competition law where their activities produce effects in Costa Rica. Article 9 of the Competition and Consumer Protection Law (Law No 7472) extends its application to foreign acts with domestic effects. Under Article 34 of the law, the following are the obligations of the trader or producer of a product with the consumer: (1) respect the agreement conditions; (2) inform the consumer, in Spanish, and in a clear and truthful manner, of the elements that have a direct impact on the consumer's consumption decision; (3) in accordance with the provisions of said law, when the product sold or the service provided is paid on credit, the term, the annual interest rate on balances, the basis, commissions and the person, natural or legal, that provides financing, if it is a third party, must always be indicated in a visible manner; (4) provide consumers with instructions for the proper use of the articles and inform them about the risks involved in their intended use or the normally foreseeable risks to their health, safety and the environment; (5) refrain from hoarding, speculating, conditioning the sale and discriminating consumption; (6) fix prudential terms to formulate claims; and (7) establish, in instalment sales, payment guarantees proportional to the conditions of the transaction.

### **Bill No 24.811 (introduced in February 2025)**

This initiative proposes an amendment to the Costa Rican Tax Code aimed at adapting it to international standards by incorporating the Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Its purpose is to ensure that the Tax Code fully embraces both national and cross-border aspects of crypto asset taxation and reporting, thereby aligning Costa Rica with emerging global compliance standards.

### **3. Payment service providers and digital wallets: a summary of regulations applying to payment service providers and/or digital wallets**

Payment service providers (PSPs) and digital wallets do not engage in restricted activity in Costa Rica, as long as they do not perform financial intermediation or an unauthorised public offering of securities.

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3 As defined in Law 7732 Art 2: 'Any right of a patrimonial nature, negotiable in a generalized and impersonal manner in the securities markets, including instruments that represent capital, debt, participation in patrimonies, collective investment contracts and, in general, any other credit right or participation right that may be negotiated in the securities market.'

However, regulated activities include money remittance and local issuance of credit cards. Payment services and foreign exchange activities are primarily regulated by BCCR under its Organic Law.

If such providers issue local credit or debit cards, however, they must abide by the terms of the Regulation on Card Payment System (Reglamento del Sistema de Tarjetas de Pago). In addition, depending on the activity carried out, it is likely that they will have to register before SUGEF for AML control purposes under Law No 7786.

A particularly relevant regulatory debate concerns the status of payment service providers operating through the SINPE. In September 2024, the Office of the Attorney General (Procuraduría General de la República) issued Opinion No PGR-C-196-2024, concluding that fintech companies operating as PSPs in SINPE may connect to the system to manage fund transfers, remittances and payments, but may not hold client funds at sight as if they were deposit accounts because such activity would constitute financial intermediation requiring SUGEF authorisation. The opinion confirmed that SUGEF holds no supervisory authority over non-supervised entities participating in SINPE, with that governance falling exclusively to the BCCR. Following the opinion, the BCCR indicated that the ruling could lead to amendments to the SINPE regulation.

#### **4. Special support to fintechs: a description of special programmes supporting the fintech ecosystem, fintech startups (eg, regulatory sandboxes and accelerator programmes) and regulations regarding special support**

Costa Rica provides a special programme for supporting the fintech ecosystem (please see point 1), via the Costa Rican Financial Innovation Centre, whose purpose is to guide financial innovators in the process of developing and inserting their initiative within the framework of financial regulation.

#### **5. Open banking: a summary of regulations regarding open banking and direct or indirect regulations that affect open banking**

Despite having a thriving fintech sector, Costa Rica remains undeveloped with respect to open banking initiatives, and has no specific regulations for such activity. Concerns about safeguarding sensitive data hinder progress, and convincing financial institutions to share customer information, even with informed consent, is challenging.

Any initiative must navigate strong resistance from financial entities and their clients to sharing their personal data to allow application programming interfaces (APIs) to properly function and coordinate the structure to implement a system to share such data. Currently, even financial institutions sharing individualised data with the Central Bank is contested as a possible illegal action and has been subject to ongoing disputes among the Central Bank, SUGEF and certain banks that have refused to provide such information.

#### **6. Regulation of virtual asset service providers**

Until recently, VASPs were not subject to a specific regime in Costa Rica. This gap has now been addressed by Law No 10961 (formerly Bill No 25.340), which amends Law No 7786, the country's

principal AML/CFT statute, by introducing a new Article 15 quáter dedicated to VASPs. The law was approved in a second debate on 25 May 2026, published in *La Gaceta* on 19 June 2026 and has been in force since 19 September 2026, three months after its publication. The implementing regulation, which will set transaction thresholds and technical requirements, is to be issued by CONASSIF and, as of the date of this report, remains pending. The reform does not make virtual assets legal tender and does not prohibit them; it brings certain crypto businesses within the AML/CFT perimeter.

For the first time, Costa Rican law defines the concepts of virtual asset and VASP. A virtual asset is a digital representation of value that can be traded or transferred digitally for payments or investments, without thereby acquiring legal tender or foreign-currency status. A VASP is any natural or legal person who, as a business, carries out the exchange between virtual assets and legal tender currencies or among virtual assets; the transfer of virtual assets; their custody, deposit, administration or control by any means; or the provision of financial services related to the issuance, marketing, offer or sale of virtual assets, whether on its own behalf or on behalf of clients. The definition is functional, so the activities of exchange, transfer, custody and issuance are what trigger obligated-entity status, regardless of the label a firm adopts.

The regime is built on registration and supervision rather than on a licensing or authorisation model. VASPs must register with SUGEF, which maintains a single centralised registry, but registration does not amount to authorisation to operate. Registered providers must comply with the ordinary preventive obligations: identification of customers and beneficial owners through independent sources; customer due diligence; record-keeping sufficient to reconstruct transactions; controls over new products and technologies; reinforced controls over higher-risk jurisdictions; the freezing of and prohibition on dealings with persons or entities designated under international sanctions regimes; and the reporting of suspicious operations. Transfers of virtual assets are subject to the obligations that CONASSIF establishes by regulation, consistent with the FATF standard on originator and beneficiary information.

Although the Law provides that SUGEF must ensure that unregistered providers do not operate within Costa Rican territory, responsibility for monitoring compliance with this requirement is, to a significant extent, effectively shifted to other entities already registered under Articles 14, 15 and 15 bis of Law No 7786. Such entities will be subject to fines and sanctions imposed by SUGEF if they engage in business relationships with parties that do not maintain valid registration with SUGEF. This leaves the question of how the territoriality principle will be regulated and what level of diligence will be expected from registered entities in their dealings with commercial counterparties. For example, may they engage in business relationships with foreign digital asset service providers that are not registered in Costa Rica? The Law contemplates this possibility by providing that CONASSIF may 'impose limitations or prohibitions on the entities subject to this law with respect to transactions involving virtual asset service providers that are not subject to regulation in any jurisdiction in matters of anti-money laundering ...'

However, the Law leaves this measure to future regulation and does not distinguish among varying levels of regulation, but rather only between providers that are regulated and those that are not (regardless of the jurisdiction or level of regulation). It also remains unclear how frequently these entities must verify a counterparty's registration status and what documentation would be sufficient for that purpose, particularly in the context of an ongoing business relationship. The regulations to be issued by CONASSIF within the subsequent three months after

publication of the law in Costa Rica's *Gazeta* have a term that has already expired; however, the Regulation, as of the date of this report, has not been enacted.

Enforcement is distributed among several bodies, all outside the Central Bank. SUGEF is the supervisory and enforcement authority: it maintains the registry, supervises AML/CFT compliance on a risk basis and exercises sanctioning power. CONASSIF is the regulator that issues implementing rules and sets applicable thresholds.

Suspicious operation reports are directed to the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Costa Rican Drug Institute. The Central Bank retains only its monetary role and continues to treat virtual assets as neither legal tender nor foreign currency.

## **7. AML and the Travel Rule in crypto asset transactions**

Due to Law No 10961, VASPs are subject to a specific regulatory regime in Costa Rica, so, in the country, there is now a binding framework imposing tailored AML and CTF obligations on VASPs; however, the VASP-Costa Rican framework does not detail the mechanics of a Travel Rule.

Law No 10961 establishes a set of preventive compliance obligations broadly aligned with international standards, particularly those promoted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Under the new regime, VASPs will be required to implement robust due diligence measures, including the identification and verification of customers and beneficial owners through reliable and independent sources. They will also be obligated to maintain detailed transaction records sufficient to enable the reconstruction of transactions and to make such information available to competent authorities on request. Additionally, the framework introduces requirements for the implementation of internal controls and risk management systems, particularly in relation to new products, services and technologies that may present heightened money laundering risks.

The law further establishes controls over virtual asset transfers; these transfers are subject to the obligations set by CONASSIF regulation, consistent with the FATF standard requiring originator and beneficiary information to be obtained and retained, which is the statutory basis for a Travel Rule, whose operational detail awaits that regulation. Enhanced risk-based measures are also set in relation to transactions involving high-risk jurisdictions, including the application of restrictions, freezing measures and prohibitions on dealings with individuals or entities designated under international sanctions regimes. These provisions are complemented by an emphasis on international cooperation and the need for efficient, and potentially automated, compliance systems capable of addressing the evolving risk landscape associated with virtual assets.

Importantly, as previously noted, the Regulation has not yet been enacted, therefore the operational detail of the Travel Rule, namely the mechanics for collecting, verifying and transmitting originator and beneficiary information, awaits the implementing regulation to be issued by CONASSIF. SUGEF is the authority responsible for supervising VASPs' compliance with these AML/CFT prevention obligations, of which the transfer-information requirement forms part, while suspicious operation reports are directed to the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Costa Rican Drug Institute.

## **8. Enforcement and cross-border recognition of tokenisation and structuring of secured transactions involving crypto assets**

Costa Rica does not currently have a comprehensive legal framework in relation to tokenised assets. However, under the Securities Market Regulatory Law and the Regulation on the Public Offering of Securities (Reglamento sobre Oferta Pública de Valores or ROPV), a security is defined as any right of economic or patrimonial content, whether or not it is incorporated in a document that, due to its legal configuration and transfer regime, may be traded on a securities market. Additionally, ROPV Article 3 section c defines securities documents as those that have the nature of a security according to law or commercial practice, while documents or instruments representing investment contracts are presumed to be securities per ROPV Article 4, section a. Specifically, tokenised assets are understood to be characterised, with no current official confirmation or precedent, under the category of ‘investment contracts’, given that investors contribute funds in exchange for rights to the underlying assets, without having direct involvement in the management of those assets. Therefore, tokenised assets with the description provided would fall under this category of a security, given that they share certain characteristics with traditional financial instruments, such as negotiability, ownership rights and the ability to be traded or transferred. Therefore, as there is a preliminary characterisation as investment contracts, registration before SUGEVAL is required to be able to offer the product through a Costa Rican entity and/or from Costa Rican territory for a public offering.

From a collateral perspective, obligations arising in tokenised structures are typically secured through traditional asset classes, rather than the tokens themselves, particularly given the absence of a clear legal regime recognising crypto assets as standalone collateral under Costa Rican law. Common forms of collateral include movable assets, receivables, contractual rights, bank accounts and equity interests. If the contract involves security interests over real estate or vehicle assets in Costa Rica, these must be granted before a notary public and registered in the National Registry. These security documents have to be granted in Spanish and within the jurisdiction. If granted outside the jurisdiction, they must be granted before a Costa Rican consulate.

Security granted over movable assets (excluding vehicles and other inscribable assets under Law No 9246) may be granted by simple contract, and can be in English and within or outside the jurisdiction. The secured party must be previously registered in the Moveable Asset Registry; this registration is performed through a power of attorney and the officer’s certificate must be apostilled.

Costa Rican courts generally recognise and enforce foreign governing law clauses in crypto asset-related agreements, provided that such clauses do not contravene public policy or mandatory local law. This is consistent with general principles of private international law and party autonomy in contractual matters.

In the event of default, secured lenders have access to both judicial and extrajudicial enforcement mechanisms, depending on the structure of the security agreement. Under the secured transactions framework, enforcement may be carried out through private sale, public auction or other commercially reasonable disposition mechanisms, as agreed by the parties. Importantly, the law allows for a degree of flexibility, and public auction is not strictly required in all cases, particularly where alternative enforcement methods have been contractually agreed.

The foregoing security interest arrangements are primarily governed by the Movable Asset Guarantee Law (Ley de Garantías Mobiliarias de la República de Costa Rica; Law No 9246), enacted in 2015, which created a unified and simplified regime for the creation, registration, priority and enforcement of security interests over movable assets in Costa Rica.

Importantly, Costa Rican law expressly prohibits the direct appropriation (adjudication) of collateral by the secured creditor, except for specific moveable asset cases.

## **9. Litigation and jurisdiction on crypto assets: legal implications of disputes involving crypto assets**

A party's submission to a foreign jurisdiction is, in principle, valid and enforceable in Costa Rica, and exclusive jurisdiction clauses are respected, provided the agreement does not contravene public policy and does not encroach on matters reserved to the exclusive competence of Costa Rican courts. This follows from the international-competence rules of the Code of Civil Procedure (Código Procesal Civil de la República de Costa Rica; Law No 9342), which recognise the party's autonomy to determine competence contractually, while reserving to Costa Rican courts exclusive competence over certain matters, such as rights *in rem* over real estate located in Costa Rica. Notably, the Code provides that party-agreed competence in favour of a Costa Rican court requires that at least one of the parties be Costa Rican and that some connection with the national territory exists; competence may also be extended tacitly or expressly by the defendant. Where neither exclusive competence nor public policy is engaged, a choice-of-foreign-forum clause will be given effect.

A final and conclusive civil judgment obtained in courts outside the Republic of Costa Rica will be recognised and enforced through an exequatur proceeding before the First Chamber (Sala Primera) of the Supreme Court of Justice, which holds competence over civil and commercial matters. In the exequatur proceeding, the court does not re-examine the merits of the case; it verifies, pursuant to Law No 9342, that:

- the judgment is not contrary to public order within the meaning of Costa Rican laws;
- such a judgment was rendered after effecting personal service on the defendant;
- the documents evidencing such a judgment or award are in an authentic form according to the law of the relevant court and have been duly legalised by a Consul of the Republic of Costa Rica or pursuant to the 1961 Hague Convention on the Legalization of Documents;
- the judgment is translated into Spanish by a licensed translator in the Republic of Costa Rica;
- the judgment does not resolve matters that are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Costa Rican courts (ie, real estate matters or bankruptcy);
- there are no pending legal proceedings in the Republic of Costa Rica between the same parties that relate to the same matters, and that were initiated prior to the filing of the complaint that concluded with such a foreign judgment;

- such a foreign judgment or award is not incompatible with other foreign judgments that meet the admissibility and enforceability requirements established by Costa Rican law, and that have been previously issued with respect to the same subject matter; and
- the submission for local enforcement must state that:
  - the judgment has the authority of *res judicata* per the laws of the country where issued; and
  - the judgment is a result of a personal action (*acción personal*), being an action brought by a party against the other, demanding the satisfaction of an obligation.

If a contract is deemed null and void under Costa Rican law, the primary consequence is that it is treated as if it never produced legal effects, requiring the parties to be restored, to the extent possible, to their original position. For example, unauthorised financial intermediation or a local offering of securities/brokerage services.

## **10. Intellectual property (IP) and crypto assets: legal protection, ownership, enforcement and monetisation of IP rights related to digital and virtual assets**

IP rights in Costa Rica are protected under a well-established legal framework that includes copyright, industrial property (patents, trademarks and industrial designs) and trade secret protection. This framework applies without distinction to innovations linked to digital and virtual assets, including software, blockchain protocols, smart contracts and tokenised platforms. The form of protection ultimately depends on the nature of the asset. Software and code are typically protected under copyright, while technical solutions may qualify for patent protection if they meet applicable requirements. In other cases, particularly where value lies in the visual or functional configuration of a product or interface, protection may be sought as an industrial design.

Ownership is largely a matter of contractual allocation and the role played in the creation process. As a general rule, IP developed within the scope of an employment or services relationship is assigned to the sponsoring entity, while joint or third-party ownership commonly arises in collaborative or multi-party development environments.

From an enforcement perspective, Costa Rican law provides a full range of civil, administrative and criminal remedies, including injunctive relief and damages. In practice, enforcement strategies tend to combine formal legal actions with more immediate measures, such as cease-and-desist letters, platform takedowns and precautionary relief. Where agreed, arbitration is increasingly used as a more efficient dispute resolution mechanism.

IP rights can be commercially exploited in Costa Rica without crypto-specific restrictions. Monetisation is typically structured through contractual mechanisms, including assignments (transfer of ownership), licences (without transfer of title) and broader collaboration arrangements, such as know-how agreements or joint ventures.

At an international level, Costa Rica follows the principle of territoriality, meaning that protection must be obtained on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis. In practice, decisions on where to seek protection are driven by commercial considerations, including target markets, user base and the jurisdictions where enforcement is likely to be most effective.



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