

“Experiencia de Costa Rica en la implementación del Plan Nacional de Descarbonización”

"Costa Rica's experience in the implementation of the National Decarbonization Plan"

SLIDE 1 - Introduction

- Hello and thank you for the invitation to participate in this meeting of the Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform group, to present this Case Study about **Costa Rica's experience in the implementation of the National Decarbonization Plan.**
- I am making this presentation on behalf Rafael Monge, Director of the National Center of Geoenvironmental Information at the Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica. And allow me to say, Chair, that for Costa Rica, this is a great opportunity to showcase what we believe is an example of cooperation coming from a developing country, in sharing expertise and knowledge on strategies to adapt and mitigate to climate change

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- Costa Rica has built a world-renowned Green Country Brand, focused on conservation, reforestation and our system of national parks and protected wildlife areas. This has been an important driver of economic growth and well-being for Costa Ricans. Thanks to our natural resources and visionary policies, we gained independence from fossil fuels to produce the electricity we consume.
- Currently, 60% of our territory is covered by forests and since 2013 the land use sector came to be considered a carbon sink in the accounting of our greenhouse gas emissions, absorbing up to almost 5 million tons of CO₂ in 2014.
- Costa Rica decided its future 30 years ago, when it started changing incentives for deforestation, and creating payments for ecosystem services. Its economic success, and its ecological success, is a direct outcome of decisions taken 3 decades ago by enlightened leaders.

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- In 1990, Costa Rica's human development score was 66; in 2019 it was .81. In the 2020 Human Development Report, with the adjustment of the Human Development Index for planetary pressures (HDI-P), Costa Rica became the country with the highest increased ranking worldwide, rising 37 places, from 62nd to 25th place. This confirms the results of decades of policies integrating economic development and environmental protection.
- Our commitment to environmental protection has been evidenced not only in our laws and policies, but also in the various international conventions and treaties that the

country has signed with countries from the entire world. These include the National Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

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- Within the framework of the Paris Agreement, in 2015 the country developed the National Decarbonization Plan as a long-term strategy, with strategic actions to promote the decarbonization of the country's economy, also as a commitment to a development model based on the bioeconomy, green growth, improving the quality of life of citizens and social inclusion.
- As such, the National Decarbonization Plan aims for a 2050 goal in which Costa Rica will have decarbonized its economy and achieved the lowest possible level of emissions, with the aspiration of having net zero emissions.
- Despite the health emergency generated by COVID-19, more than 90% of the goals established in the Plan for the period 2018 - 2022 show significant progress and I will show you some examples:

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- **Sustainable Mobility and Public Transportation Axis:**
Implementation of exclusive bus lanes, piloting of three electric buses, first stage of the bicycle lane to the east of the GAM, municipal actions towards the implementation of a transport-oriented development.

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- **Zero-emission light transport axis:**
Acquisition of electric vehicles in government institutions, installation of vehicle charging centers, identification of financial mechanisms for sustainable mobility and low or zero emission vehicles.

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- **Zero Emission Freight Transportation Axis:**
Implementation of 60% in the plan to integrate into the freight distribution and commercialization model, market study on the intensive use of rail transport.

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- **Renewable electric energy at competitive costs**
It is important to highlight that Costa Rica has a clean electricity matrix, more than 99% from renewable sources.
Advances in advising high consumer companies, establishment of the Medium Voltage "B" tariff, applicable to large consumers and ISO-50001 companies; installation of smart meters; study on offshore wind power potential for electricity generation in Costa Rica.

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- **Sustainable and low-emission buildings**
Significant increase in the number of organizations obtaining sustainable construction certifications; creation of the "Sustainable Construction" category of the Ecological Blue Flag Program; 170 companies with carbon neutral declarations under the standards of the Carbon Neutral Country Program.

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- **Low-emission industrial sector**
Promoting technological changes in refrigeration and air conditioning systems, in line with the Kigali Amendment.
Promotion of pilot projects aimed at the adoption of circular economy practices.

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- **Integrated waste management**
75.5% progress on the San José Metropolitan Area Environmental Improvement Project, as well as on the design of sanitation networks in cities outside the GAM; development of national technical standards for labeling single-use plastics; promotion of integrated waste management and recovery of materials.

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- **Low-carbon agrifood systems:**
Coffee and livestock NAMAs have been consolidated. In addition, NAMAs for the musaceae, rice and sugar cane sectors are in the process of being implemented.

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- **And finally, Management of territories with nature-based solutions.**
Restoration of urban biological corridors and launching of strategies in areas such as urban watershed recovery, mangrove management and recovery, among others.

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- One Nature based solution developed in Costa Rica decades ago to and currently is providing its benefits is the Costa Rica's Payments for Environmental Services Program.
- This is a financial mechanism that promotes forest ecosystem conservation and combats land degradation – the first scheme of its type in the country and the region.
- In this program, landowners receive direct payments for the environmental services that their lands produce when adopting sustainable land-use and forest-management techniques.

- To date, more than eighteen thousand families have benefited from the program, with an investment of USD 524 million in the PES projects and more than 1.3 million hectares under PES contracts.
- The program is funded through Costa Rica's fuel tax and water charge, as well as its own initiatives, such as Certificates of Conservation of Biodiversity, carbon credits, and strategic alliances with the public and private sector.
- It is worth remembering that the National Decarbonization Plan focuses on promoting programs, projects and actions for the mitigation of Greenhouse Gases coming from fossil fuels. This is clearly a priority. However, we have to think about adaptation actions to face the adverse effects of climate change. This involves Reducing Human Vulnerability to Climate Events, Promoting Ecosystem Adaptation to Climate Change and ensuring Ecosystem Services for Human Population.

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- Rapid improvements in spatial data and computation present new opportunities for predicting biodiversity at different levels and understanding the relationship between biodiversity and its benefits to people. Costa Rica is making strides in the use of geospatial information to enhance conservation policies and promote a sustainable and resilient development for everyone.

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- We are building a National Land Use, Land Cover and Ecosystem Monitoring System and working in collaboration with national and international partners in the creation of a scientific framework and decision support system that can help Costa Rican policymakers to take actions to deliver on policy priorities, and to monitor the impact of these actions. For this objective we are building partnerships with international stakeholders to work together to develop our capacities and generate the analysis that can yield to policies that
 - Increase Agricultural productivity and sustainability
 - Add value to our Tourism industry
 - Improve land use management
 - Among other priorities, according to the reality of each territory.

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Thank you very much for your attention. Muchas gracias!