

## Air Quality Policies

This document is based on research that UNEP conducted in 2015, in response to Resolution 7 of the UNEA 1. It describes country-level policies that impact air quality. Triple question marks (???) indicate that information for the section couldn't be found.

Please review the information, and provide feedback. A Word version of the template can be provided upon request. Corrections and comments can be emailed to [Vered.Ehsani@unep.org](mailto:Vered.Ehsani@unep.org) and [George.Mwaniki@unep.org](mailto:George.Mwaniki@unep.org).

| <b>COSTA RICA</b>                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>GOALS</b>                     | <b>CURRENT STATUS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>CURRENT / PLANNED POLICIES &amp; PROGRAMMES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| GENERAL OVERVIEW                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Overall situation with respect to air quality in the country, including key air quality challenges:</b> ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in world and 1<sup>st</sup> among the Americas in terms of 2012 Environmental Performance Index, with the third cleanest air in Latin America (after Uruguay and Argentina); however in larger urban areas (San Jose, Heredia, Cartago), significant pollution from traffic</li> <li>● Sea winds provide natural removal of air pollution</li> <li>● <b>Air quality monitoring system:</b> Yes, although PM2.5 isn't monitored</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>National Ambient air quality standards:</b> PM10, Ozone meet WHO Interim Targets; SO2 and NO2 don't meet standards; no PM2.5 standard</li> <li>● <b>National Air Quality Policy:</b> Currently, in the country there is no specific policy; however, in the National Energy Plan VII (PNEVII, acronym in Spanish) there is a section that defines actions regarding the reduction of emissions of criteria pollutants.</li> <li>● <b>Air Quality legislation / programmes:</b> Regulation over the Emission of Atmospheric Contaminations (Decreto 30221-S, Decreto 30222-S)</li> <li>● <b>Other:</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                |
| REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM INDUSTRIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Industries that have the potential to impact air quality:</b> construction materials</li> <li>● <b>GDP of country:</b> \$70 billion</li> <li>● <b>Industries' share of GDP:</b> 21%</li> <li>● <b>Electricity sources:</b> hydro (80%)</li> <li>● Exports electricity to neighbouring countries and is generally self-sufficient for energy needs apart from transport fuel</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Emission regulations for industries:</b> The country has regulations for industrial emissions: Regulation of boilers and indirect type furnaces which are currently in review DE 36551-S-MINAE-MTSS). Regulation co-incineration (DE 39136-S-MINAE). Regulations governing use of alternative fuels in Cement kilns (DE 31837-S).</li> <li><b>Small installation's emissions regulated:</b> (Yes/No) Yes, in each of the regulations the size of the establishment is set; so that for instance, in the Regulation of boilers all types are taken into account.</li> <li>● <b>Renewable energy investment promoted:</b> national renewable energy target of 97% electricity from renewable sources by 2018; geothermal, biomass and biofuels laws to promote; fiscal</li> </ul> |

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|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>incentives (income tax exemption, import/export fiscal benefits) provided; pre-investment support provided; 13% decrease of tax on renewable technology; National Strategy for De-carbonisation of the Economy to promote: use of renewable energy; diversify sources of renewables; electrification of land transport; use of multimodal transport; and energy efficiency policies; electricity users can sell excess energy they generate with renewable technology back to the grid; National Energy Plan 2008-2021 to promote renewable energy technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Energy efficiency incentives:</b> National Energy Plan 2008-2021 to promote more efficient transport based on clean energy, develop education strategy to improve energy efficiency</li> <li>● <b>Incentives for clean production and installation of pollution prevention technologies:</b> there is a National Cleaner Production Centre</li> <li>● <b>Actions to ensure compliance with regulations:</b> (monitoring, enforcement, fines etc). The actions to assure the fulfilment of regulations are in the control procedures established within such regulations, the Ministry of Health is the responsible entity.</li> <li>● <b>Other actions at national, sub-national and / or local level to reduce industry emissions:</b> The Ministry of Environment and Energy promotes other non-regulatory instruments, but of the voluntary type that seek to reduce the emissions on the productive entities of the country; environment; such as water, land, etc. within these instruments there are the voluntary agreements of clean production, the National System of environmental recognitions and currently in process the implementation of the System of Environmental Eco-tagging.</li> </ul> |
| REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM TRANSPORT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Key transport-related air quality challenges:</b> low vehicle standard; 80% of vehicles are older than 10 years; petrol has high Sulphur content; no age restriction on second hand vehicles; significant source of pollution in larger urban areas</li> <li>● Public transport provided by a variety of operators and vehicles of varying technology (often not up to current environmental standards) and age</li> <li>● Commuter trains between a few urban areas</li> <li>● Rigorous vehicle inspections have removed dirtier vehicles</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Vehicle emission limit:</b> Euro 1</li> <li>● <b>Fuel Sulphur content:</b> 50 ppm (diesel), 1000 ppm (petrol)</li> <li>● <b>Restriction on used car importation:</b> must pass EPA Smog Test</li> <li>● <b>Actions to expand, improve and promote public transport and mass transit:</b> Sustainable Urban Mobility Program for San Jose – to support the creation of a transport framework that will improve transport efficiency, service integration, support of non-motorised transport, travel demand management policies and technology improvement; National Transport Plan to invest in roads, public transport and railways; construction of an electric train from San Jose to Heredia</li> <li>● <b>Actions to promote non-motorized transport:</b> (ex: include sidewalks and bike lanes in new road projects, car-free areas etc) Sustainable Urban Mobility Program for San Jose</li> <li>● <b>Other transport-related actions:</b> The regulation on vehicle emissions in being updated, it regulates article 38 of the Traffic Act. The regulation on fuel quality was also updated so that it adjusts to the requirements of vehicles with engines of less emissions.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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| REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM OPEN BURNING OF AGRICULTURAL / MUNICIPAL WASTE (OUTDOOR) | <p><b>Outdoor, open burning:</b> (ex: is it commonly done? burning what kinds of wastes? etc) The outdoor burning of municipal waste is not authorized, neither is the burning of domestic waste. The burning of agriculture waste is authorized, though it is ruled by a regulation that seeks to reduce this practice. Companies must request permission to the competent authorities, previous to the burning of agriculture wastes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Legal framework:</b> burning of trash or other waste is banned</li> <li>● <b>Actions to prevent open burning of municipal waste and / or agricultural waste:</b><br/>In this aspect, the country recently issued Executive Decree 39136-S-MINAE "Regulations on operating conditions and emission control facilities for ordinary solid waste incineration" by which it regulates and defines the requirements for thermal processing activities for municipal waste, setting maximum emission limits for these types of facilities as well as technical aspects of engineering and operational control.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM OPEN BURNING OF BIOMASS (INDOOR)                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Dominant fuels used for cooking and space heating:</b> 23% use solid fuels, mainly wood</li> <li>● <b>Impact:</b> 200 deaths/year from indoor air pollution (200 from outdoor air pollution)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>Indoor air pollution regulated:</b> (Yes / No) Yes, It is regulated and it corresponds to the area of Occupational Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, for the case of industries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Promotion of non-grid / grid electrification:</b> 98% electrification rate; programme for renewable energy in rural areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Promotion of cleaner cooking fuels and clean cook stoves:</b> Emissions in the case of indirect industrial furnaces are regulated by the rules of indirect type furnaces and boilers (mentioned above). Don Edgar, dice que “cook stoves,” se refiere a cocinas en casas, no hornos industriales. Favor revalorar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Other actions to reduce indoor biomass burning, or to reduce its emissions:</b> In the country, more than 95% of the population has access to electricity, which is produced by more than 98% from clean sources (hydro, wind, geothermal). The people mainly use electrical energy for food preparation. There are tax benefits and subsidies for the use of LPG gas for cooking as well as for the purchase of energy-saving electric tools (such as microwave ovens, electric ovens and coffeemakers), which reduces the population using biomass for their domestic needs. The national electricity company provides solar panels to homes that are not connected to the mains, to favor lighting homes and other minor needs, without requiring burning biomass.</li> </ul> |

**Secondary Sources used in the research:** <http://www.reegle.info/countries/costa-rica-energy-profile/CR>,  
<http://www.liveincostarica.com/blog/2010/11/air-pollution-in-costa-rica-can%E2%80%99t-compare-to-that-of-american%E2%80%99s-most->

[dirty-cities.html](#), <http://news.co.cr/air-pollution-in-san-jose-costa-rica-threatens-health/24733/>, <http://insidecostarica.com/2013/01/09/costa-rica-seeks-to-further-diversify-renewable-energy-sources/>, <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=39206211>, <http://www.ineco.com/webineco/en/country/costa-rica/costa-rica-national-transport-plan>, <http://www.ticotimes.net/2009/03/20/costa-rica-railway-to-go-electric>, <http://www.amcostarica.com/071610.htm>, <http://www.cleanairinstitute.org/calidaddelaireamericalatina/cai-report-english.pdf>, [http://www.unep.org/Transport/new/PCFV/pdf/Maps\\_Matrices/LAC/matrix/LAC\\_FuelsVeh\\_June2015.pdf](http://www.unep.org/Transport/new/PCFV/pdf/Maps_Matrices/LAC/matrix/LAC_FuelsVeh_June2015.pdf), <http://latinlawyer.com/>, [http://www.irena.org/DocumentDownloads/Publications/IRENA\\_RE\\_Latin\\_America\\_Policies\\_2015.pdf](http://www.irena.org/DocumentDownloads/Publications/IRENA_RE_Latin_America_Policies_2015.pdf), <http://airlex.web.ua.pt/pm10>, [http://www.who.int/quantifying\\_ehimpacts/national/countryprofile/en/#I](http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/national/countryprofile/en/#I)