



ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 17: Environmental protection

**ACTION PLAN OF COSTA RICA AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN COUNTRIES FOR
THE REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

(Presented by Costa Rica and Spain)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 8, 2010 the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, during her opening speech when taking office, established that one of her Government's priorities is for Costa Rica to become one of the first carbon neutral countries in the world.

The purpose of the above is for Costa Rica to continue being a leading country in regard to the environment and to propose solutions to the climatic change problem and not just be part of the problem.

Costa Rica has committed itself for a sustainable development, through the establishment of policies and actions for environmental improvement in all sectors including transportation and ultimately aviation. This support to environmental sustainability includes the introduction of technological and operational improvements in the management of air transport in order to reduce the inefficiencies which increase the consumption of energy raising the greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere.

Costa Rica is interested in preparing an Action Plan which includes a package of measurements and actions ("gate to gate") which would be implemented in the different processes of air transport to help with the compliance of its international promises taken on in regard to the greenhouse gas emissions.

The international cooperation among other States will enable us to work jointly in the development of tools that will be mutually beneficial for the nations, and at the same time increase the efficiency and the capability of the air sector to comply with the global and national objectives in regard to environmental sustainability.

This Working Paper also portrays the objectives outlined by the Government Plan on behalf of the Republic of Costa Rica, and the activities which have been developed in the first one hundred (100) days of government, aiming to achieve strategic objectives such as: The creation of the National Environmental Council, the appointment of the Minister of Energy and Mining as well as its Executive Secretary, the establishment of strategic objectives of that Council as well as its Working Plan for 2010-2014, the appointment of a National Committee of Carbon Neutrality, the enactment of the Solid Waste Law and the expansion of the coverage of the electric train in the Great Metropolitan Area.

¹ English and Spanish translation provided by Costa Rica and Spain.

<p>Action: The Assembly is urged to consider and adopt the following points for their inclusion in the text of the resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) promotion of cooperation among the States with the purpose of working jointly in the development of tools which will be mutually beneficial for the parties; b) if considered necessary, promotion and adaptation of the Action Plan to be developed by Costa Rica to other countries; and c) consideration of the needs of small countries regarding the development of guidance material of the Action Plans so that they can benefit from the introduction of new technologies to improve operations in the air transport sector. A copy of the paper which reflects these proposed amendments is attached for your review. 	
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective C, <i>Environmental Protection – Minimize the adverse effect of global civil aviation on the environment.</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No additional resources required.
<i>References:</i>	High Level Conference on Operational Safety 2010 and the Declaration on Climate Change Resolution of the Assembly of ICAO A36-22, <i>Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies and practices related to environmental protection</i> Government of Costa Rica website, http://www.casapres.go.cr/web/

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Costa Rica has distinguished itself in the world for its solid and stable democracy, for being a privileged country due to its ecological wealth and diversity, for which Costa Ricans feel very proud.

1.2 It is due to the above that the actual Government of the Republic (2010-2014), on behalf of its President, has established as a priority within its agenda, the achievement of ambitious objectives in regard to the environment, one of the goal's for the year 2020 is that our country become a neutral nation in regard to the emission of CO₂ (carbon dioxide), and eventually free of carbon.

1.3 We would like to show the world that we are a leading nation that works arduously in favor of the environment, and that we are concerned about the climatic change, but beyond that, we take interest to solve the problem by creating institutions and developing a working plan to achieve the proposed objectives in regard to the environment.

1.4 During the High-level Meeting on International Aviation and Climate Change (HLM-ENV), carried out in October of 2009, it was agreed upon to review and create guidance material for the development of action programs on behalf of the States, reaffirming the role of ICAO on the issues related to the reduction of GEI emissions from international civil aviation. Also, the Board of ICAO passed a declaration and recommendations related to the future work in the field, inviting the States to present their action plans, emphasizing on their respective policies and actions and to inform ICAO on a yearly basis of their CO₂ emissions originating from aviation, just as it is presented as follows:

1.4.1 The High-level Meeting on International Aviation and Climate Change (HLM-ENV) in October 2009 was the culmination of the GIACC process to reduce the CO₂ emissions in international aviation. The proposal of the development of an action program was the fundamental step to prove the promise of international civil aviation to work in a joint manner in the mitigation of the impact on climatic change. The Action Programme included among other elements the following:

- a) on a short term basis (up to 2012), on a mid-term basis up to (2020) and on a long term basis (up to 2050), the goal is to achieve a two percent (2%) of annual improvement in the efficiency of the fuel consumption. The goals are collective and obligations are not attributed to the States individually;
- b) a group of measures among which the States can choose to formulate their respective action plans and contribute to the global computing to which they are aiming;
- c) the promise to elaborate a global approach, establishing a commitment for the member States to present the Secretary of ICAO with data regarding traffic and fuel consumption levels; according to Article 67 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation; and
- d) the States are urged to develop and present ICAO with action plans that portray their respective approaches and policies.

1.4.2 In regard to the action plan, each State will determine its measures to contribute with the global goals, based on researching its own capabilities and circumstances on a local basis as well as carrying out assessments on the growth of its air sector. Even though all the countries are trying to achieve their objectives, some member States could increase their emissions due to the growth of their international air traffic until other measures of technological improvement, alternative fuels, etc. can be achieved.

2. DEVELOPMENT

2.1 In our Government Plan we have the environmental work area, which at the same time has ten (10) pro-grammatical goals. One of them is the environment which focuses on approximately four (4) central points, one of them being the “Neutrality of CO₂”.

2.2 We are committed with the sustainability of the environment and for this we have made it our goal to become the first country in the world with renewable electric energy in a 100% (One hundred percent) and one of the first countries in the world to be CO₂ neutral.

2.3 Taking into account the importance of air transport in Costa Rica today, due to the importance of the tourist sector and the transport of merchandise, it is foreseeable in the next years that air transport will continue with this tendency of growth. Costa Rica is the third country in the world in the classification of environmental performance index of 2009. Among the countries of Latin America, Costa Rica is the first country in the classification of tourist competitiveness index and it is ranked 42nd place in the world. In the tourist industry, Costa Rica stands out as the most visited destination of Central America, with a total of two million tourists in 2008. With 460 visitors for each one thousand inhabitants, Costa Rica has one of the highest indexes of tourists per capita of the Caribbean basin.

2.4 Costa Rica has committed to become carbon neutral or “C- Neutral” for the year 2021. It is an ambitious goal which requires for its accomplishment, the help of all of the citizens and the next government authorities. The intention is to reduce carbon emissions in Costa Rica so that by the year 2020 our country will have a neutral condition in regard to global warming and the deterioration of the quality of the air.

2.5 Costa Rica is a pioneer country in the development of compensation programs for emissions in different industrial sectors. On the other hand, Spain is a country that under its regulatory framework has shown great interest in exploring the potential of the establishment of compensation projects for carbon emissions within the context of clean development initiatives foreseen in Kyoto in the aeronautical field.

2.6 Costa Rica has expressed its interest in the development and implementation, with the collaboration of Spain, of an Action Plan which main objectives are described as follows:

- to provide the implementation framework of useful and specific measures for the development of a National Sustainability Strategy in the air transport of Costa Rica;
- to analyze the current status and the provisions for the development of the greenhouse emissions effect related to the air transport in Costa Rica;
- to design a package of concrete actions (“gate to gate”) for the emissions reduction and stabilization throughout the complete cycle of the processes;
- to comply with national and international commitments: To accomplish the “neutral growth” of carbon emissions by 2020;
- to develop a model approved by ICAO for its application in the country and offer support to other countries in the area;
- to become a country with a higher consistency between its economic development and its environmental positioning: With a 95% of sustainable electric energy and neutral CO₂; and
- to redesign the Central American air space structure together with the rest of the countries of the region and the technical support from COCESNA, incorporating more efficient procedures in all the flight phases, such as the implementation of PBN requirements (Performance Based Navigation) in accordance with the ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).

2.7 Among the goals for the year 2014 of the Costa Rican Government, besides the aviation field, are:

- to promote measures in order to reduce the CO₂ emissions;
- to stimulate the use of more efficient vehicles, electrical and hybrid and promote the renewal of the vehicle fleet in order to reduce the emissions of CO₂;
- to encourage the construction of ecologic buildings;
- to promote financing and the investment for the development of new and clean technologies;
- to stimulate the investment and financing for the development of alternative fuels that are environmentally friendlier;
- to improve public transportation in the Metropolitan Area including a greater coverage of the electrical train;
- to promote tele-working in public and private sectors; and
- to introduce compensation mechanisms as a last resort in order to achieve a contribution to the carbon emissions equivalent to zero.

2.8 Among the accomplishments in the first 100 days of Government are the following:

- the creation of the National Environmental Committee which has as its objective to place Costa Rica as a leader country in the fight against climate change, with the promise to be self sufficient in energy and establishing the grounds to become a carbon neutral society (CO₂ neutral). The program is based on three pillars, the third being the “Carbon Neutral National Program”;
- in order to comply with the above, the Carbon Neutral National Committee was created in order to implement standards and certification methodologies;
- at the beginning of this month of September the Legislative Assembly passed the Solid Waste Law; and
- the Executive Secretary of the National Environment Council is the Minister of Environment and Energy, this Council is also made up by the Ministers of the Presidency, Tourism, Decentralization and Local Development, Transportation and Public Works as well as the Executive Presidents of RECOPE National Petroleum Refiner, the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity (ICE), the Water and Sewage Institute, and the National Emergency Commission.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Costa Rica would like to express its commitment in regard to the decision to inform the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) about the CO₂ emissions originating from the international aviation activity and about the development of an Action Plan, for this reason we have decided to work on the development of both initiatives.

3.2 Costa Rica and Spain understand that the international cooperation among the States will enable working together in the development of tools that are mutually beneficial for the parties, increasing at the same time the efficiency and capability of the air sector in order to comply with the global and national sustainability goals.

3.3 The Action Plan to be established by Costa Rica will be presented in the near future to ICAO with the intention of other States being able to benefit from our initiatives with common interests and responsibilities to face the challenges of the climatic change.

3.4 Costa Rica and Spain understand that the challenge of aviation implies increasing its capability to promote growth, and at the same time facing the responsibility to comply with national and international sustainability goals and in this way support the leadership of ICAO in this field.