



I. INSTITUTION-BUILDING / NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY

The Republic of Costa Rica's current National Anti-Drug Plan was adopted on October 1, 2001, and its effectiveness ceases on October 1, 2006. The Strategy defines an institutional framework and its evaluation mechanism, elements that were not included in the 1995-1999 National Anti-Drug Plan. It has a total budgetary allocation of US\$9,659,812 from the national budget, which assigns US\$1,243,731 to demand reduction, US\$545,997 to supply reduction, and US\$17,439,114 to control measures.

Note that, with implementation of the National Anti-Drug Plan, which includes the demand reduction, supply reduction, and control measure areas, which the earlier 1995-1999 National Anti-Drug Plan did not, Costa Rica has fulfilled the recommendation made in the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000, which constitutes a significant advance for the country in the fight against drugs.

Costa Rica made significant progress in strengthening its institutional infrastructure to deal with the drug problem; and in centralizing coordination of its different manifestations in the Costa Rican Drug Institute, the entity to serve as central coordinating entity under the Law on Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances, Unauthorized Drugs, Money Laundering, and Related Activities (Law 8204), adopted on January 11, 2002. In accordance of the mentioned law, the Institute come into operation 9 months after the date of publication of it. Until then, The National Center for Drug Prevention (CENADRO) carried out its coordination functions until October 10, 2002.

In addition, the distribution of resources established by law ensures that the Strategy's programs will be implemented: 60% for prevention programs; half of this amount to be assigned to the Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (IAFA) for drug prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; 30% for drug suppression programs; and 10% for the care taking and maintenance of forfeited proceeds.

The Vice Minister of the Office of the Presidency serves as chair of the Board of Directors, and the Costa Rican Drug Institute will carry out coordination functions in the demand reduction, supply reduction, and control measures. In addition to having a drug information and data point, it plans National Anti-Drug Plan activities of the National Anti-Drug Strategy carry out evaluations of initiatives, and coordinates international assistance.

The central coordination entity Drug Institute of Costa Rica has an independent budget, whose resources come from government allocations and from resources accruing to it in application of the Law.

There has been progress in the area of conventions. In November 2000, Costa Rica ratified the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), thereby implementing the recommendation made during the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000. On March 8, 2002, it signed the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is taking steps to submit to the Legislative Assembly a bill for accession to this convention.

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocols was signed, and the ratification process is under way. In implementing the international conventions on drugs, Costa Rica has signed cooperation agreements with Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru.

To be noted is progress made in organizing and systematizing data through the creation of the Interagency Drug Data and Statistics Commission (CIDED), created by Executive Decree No. 28411-MP, which constitutes a national uniform statistical system. When Law 8204 comes into



force, the Costa Rican Drug Institute will assume its administration. The country will also utilize the CICAD statistical systems: the Uniform Statistical System on Drug Enforcement (CICDAT), and the Inter-American Drug Use Data System (SIDUC).

The country regularly presents drug-related data to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and reports annually to the United Nations Drug Control Programme. Costa Rica also publishes an annual report of drug-related statistics, the "Situación en Costa Rica, Area Represión y Fiscalización 2000." (Status of the Costa Rican Drug Enforcement and Surveillance Areas, 2000).

With respect to information dissemination capacity, Costa Rica, via the web page of the National Observatory on Drugs, publishes short bulletins on drug-related topics of interest, including the results of the most recent research among others. In addition, through IAFA, there is a telephone hotline orientation service that provide drug information.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO RATIFY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS.**
2. **RATIFY THE UNITE NATION CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME AND ITS SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOLS.**

II. DEMAND REDUCTION

Costa Rica's National Demand Reduction Strategy is included in the National Anti-Drug Plan, and covers the prevention, treatment, social reintegration, and aftercare areas. It also incorporates the United Nations Guiding Principles on Drug Demand Reduction and the United Nations action plan. Various government areas and civil society groups are participating in the Strategy's implementation. It should be noted that, for 2002, the government increased by 72% the budgetary allocation for demand reduction, thereby illustrating the country's commitment in this area.

Budget for the National Anti-drug Plan in the Area of Demand Reduction, 2001 - 2002		
Institution	Budget	
	Executed-2001	Approved-2002
National Drug Prevention Center	US\$272,790.37	US\$290,048.07
Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency.	US\$2,588,685.30	US\$4,638,002.38
Total	US\$2,861,475.68	US\$4,928,050.45
Exchange rate as of 30-Apr-02 = ₡ 352.82=\$1.00 US		
Source: Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, National Drug Prevention Center		

Prevention programs targeting the school population continue to be implemented. In 2001, Law 8093 established the National Program for Education Against Drugs, which represented a great advance for Costa Rica in the prevention area, as schools are one of the main targets of its prevention programs.

The informal community youth programs target street children and working minors. However, their level of implementation cannot be determined from the information provided, as regional coverage and numbers benefited is not provided.



The program entitled "Trazando el Camino en Comunidades" (Setting the Course in Communities), geared toward women, among others, during the 2001-2002 period, reached 22,276 persons and 1,027 organized groups, in keeping with the recommendation made by CICAD during the First Evaluation Round, 1999-2000.

Prevention programs targeting various sectors reached 9,403 persons in 2001. Two workshops were held in April and November of 2002, on Drugs and the Penitentiary System for 20 penitentiary security staff members, taught by IAFA professionals.

In the area of specialized professional training, the country has met existing demand for training in the drug area. The University of Costa Rica has implemented the first master's degree course on drug dependency, at both national and Central American level, and its faculties of medicine, psychology, public health, and pharmacology offer courses on demand reduction.

As regards evaluation of prevention programs, the evaluation made on the status of the "Trazando el Camino" (Tracing the Path) program, using a pre-test – post-test method, enabled its effectiveness and impact to be assessed. That program, known as "Tracing the Path," is a curriculum proposal seeking to provide school age students with a space to develop essential social and emotional skills with a view to resisting drug use. "Tracing the Path" teaches students how to raise self-esteem, gain assertiveness, improve communication and decision-making capacities and family relations, and handle peer pressure and societal influences, and also provides basic drug information. Such capacities enable young people more effectively to face the challenges of an ever-changing society and to resist drug use

Although the country reports that it has technical provisions to evaluate how well treatment and rehabilitation programs are functioning, it has concerns about the fact that such provisions do not appear to have the legal basis enabling them to be imposed, nor the necessary precision to demand adequate care according to types of service provided. No studies have been conducted to evaluate treatment and rehabilitation methods and programs. However, the country indicates that the Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency will conduct such studies in 2002.

The country reports that 37 new drug dependency treatment centers were established. In 2000, were treated 3,746 persons and in 2002, 2,520 persons were treated, respectively.

In 2000, the Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency carried out a national prevalence survey, which replicated a national drug use study, conducted in 1995. The country indicates that its purpose is to make valid comparisons and determine reliably the trend in the phenomenon of drug use among the Costa Rican population.



Data From the 200 Survey, as the Information on the Questionnaire Dates From 2000						
Prevalence of drug use						
TABLE A - PREVALENCE AMONG THE POPULATION OVERALL						
SURVEY YEAR: 2000		AGE GROUP SURVED				
Type of Drug	National Study -12-70 years N=4588					
	Ever Used (per 1000)			Past 30 days (per 1000)		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Alcohol	653.1	431.5	542.7	367.7	163.9	266
Tabacco	410.7	187.5	299.4	232.8	81.7	158
Solvents or inhalants	10	1.3	5.6	0.8	-	0.4
Marijuana	90.0	19.2	54.9	0.4	-	0.2
Other Opiates*	40	52	45.9	19.1	29.3	24.1
Crack	13.9	9.1	7.4	2.6	-	1.3
Cocaine Hcl	29.5	6.1	17.8	2.6	0.8	1.7
Other Tranquilizers, sedatives, depressants	20	20.5	20.2	5.2	7	6.1
Other stimulants	23.0	14.4	18.7	6	3	4.5

Source: Institution-Building Unit of the IAFA

Average Age at First Drug and Alcohol Use						
What is the average age at first use of alcohol or any drug in your country, by gender?						
Type of Drug	Overall Population Year: 2000			Specific population Year:2001 Secondary School Students Ages 12 to 18		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Alcohol	16.3	18.6	17.2	11.3	11.9	11.6
Tobacco	15.6	17.7	16.3	11.7	11.6	11.7
Solvents or inhalants	16.1	16.6	16.2			
Marijuana	17.7	17.7	17.7	13.4	13.8	13.5
Other opiates*	17.1	16.8	16.9			
Crack	23.1	17.5	22.7			
Cocaine Hcl	20.1	18.7	19.9	11.5	12.2	11.7
Other tranquilizers, sedatives, depressants	22.5	27.9	25.2			
Other stimulants	22.9	20.3	21.9			

*Only when not prescribed or not used for therapeutic purposes.

Data on morbidity related to hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV: The only entity recording such data is the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, which receives information from 29 public medical centers. This is why there is no systematized study showing trends in morbidity from drug-associated disease.

III. SUPPLY REDUCTION

A. Drug Production and Alternative Development

Although illicit crops eradication efforts have been stepped up, they remain extensive and constitute an important problem at the national level. A trend observed recently is that such crops tend to be found on small lots and in the mountains. Air surveillance enables trends in illicit crops



to be determined. Informants are another source of information. However, the true extent and production of crops are very difficult to determine owing to the diversity of geographic areas suitable for this type of crop, their remoteness, and limited availability of human and material resources. The area of greatest crop eradication was Talamanca, in Limón Province.

In 2000, the total area planted with marijuana destroyed by drug control police was 131,426 sq.m. and, for 2001, was 87,553 sq.m.

B. Supply Reduction and Control of Pharmaceutical Products and Chemical Substances

The Directorate of Records and Controls, National Drug Prevention Board, Ministry of Health is the entity with responsibility for controlling the diversion of pharmaceuticals and controlled chemical substances listed in the UN Conventions, until the Costa Rican Drug Institute begins operations. From information provided by the country, it may be seen that it has in place institutional infrastructure and controls at the different handling stages for such substances. The only control not established is that on transportation of chemicals.

For pharmaceuticals, the country also has additional controls and regulations on use and distribution by health professionals. To be noted is the requirement imposed on authorized establishments for these types of product to be sold by unionized pharmacists.

In the area of exchange of operational information and collaboration among entities responsible for the control of both types of substance, the Directorate of Records and Controls, National Drug Prevention Board, Ministry of Health exchanges operational information with the Drug Control Police in cases where irregular situations have been detected. It also coordinates with the Customs Bureau on requirements for importation or re-export. In general, the information provided by the country shows that the institutional capacity is in place to control and prevent the diversion of controlled substances.

In 2000, 2001, and 2002, respectively, 65, 72, and 63 pre-export notifications were issued to countries of the region for controlled chemical substances. It should be noted that the country has been implementing the prior notification mechanism efficiently, in that it responded to 100% of such notices. In 2001 and 2002, six administrative sanctions were imposed for diversion of controlled substances. In 2002, 5 pre-export notifications were rejected, 18 were issued to Nicaragua and 32 to Panama in the total of 55 pre-export notifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. CONTINUE MONITORING TRENDS IN ILLICIT CROP PRODUCTION WITH A VIEW TO PREVENTING ITS GROWTH.**

IV. CONTROL MEASURES

A. Illicit Drug Trafficking

Costa Rica reports that, owing to its geographic position, with both Atlantic and Pacific coasts, it has been used for transit and transshipment of large amounts of drugs from South American countries intended for North America and countries of Europe. One reflection of this is that, in the last five years, almost twenty-five thousand seven hundred (25,700) kilos of cocaine have been seized in that country. In 2002 (January-August) 1,021 kilos of cocaine were seized.



To be noted in counteracting this situation is implementation of the "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica and the Government of the United States of America for Cooperation in Suppressing Illicit Trafficking," known as the "Joint Patrol Agreement," which has made it possible to carry out effective and efficient activities to prevent Costa Rica's territorial waters and air space from being used by international drug traffickers. 72% of all cocaine seized in the last two years was seized from maritime shipments, thereby demonstrating the results of the abovementioned joint patrol operations.

Drug seizures made by enforcement agencies in 2001 have shown an increase mainly in heroin (136.2%) and cannabis leaf (145.3%) over those made in 2000. There is a downward trend in seizures of crack, amphetamines, ecstasy and LSD. The rise observed in heroin seizures suggests the increased use of Costa Rican territory for illicit drug trafficking therein.

Drug Institute of Costa Rica Drugs Seized by Drug Control and Enforcement Agencies Over the Past Three Years				
Type of Drug	Unit of Measure	Quantity		
		2000	2001	2002 (1)
Heroin	Kilogram	7.78	20.29	48.02
Cocaine salts	Kilogram	5,870.73	1,748.59	1,021.08
Crack	Rocks	64,998	58,948	19,901
Cannabis	Cigarette	18,439	7,421	1,154
Cannabis	Plants	2,048,421	1,906,454	687,007
Leaf cannabis (grass)	Kilogram	1,140.05	2,888.41	610,77
Amphetamine	Tablet	195	468	
MDMA (Ecstasy)	Tablet	46	89	
Others (LSD)	1- Dose	1,045	277	

(1) Data pertain to period from Jan. to Aug. 2002

Regarding new trends in the global phenomenon of the mobility of the different manifestations of the drug problem, it has been observed that, as of 2000, seizures of synthetic drugs, such as amphetamines, ecstasy, and LSD, are reflected in the statistics. These types of drug appear in coastal areas and San Jose clubs or discotheques, which organize activities known as "raves."

In 2000, 1,118 arrests were made, 635 prosecutions brought, and 441 convictions obtained in connection with illicit drug trafficking. In 2001, there were 1,114 arrests, while data is not reported on prosecutions and convictions.

Costa Rica has replied to all requests for judicial cooperation in connection with the investigation and prosecution of drug traffickers. This reflects the country's willingness to provide judicial assistance to other states. In the area of extradition for drug trafficking, the country received three requests, and acceded to one. One is being appealed. There is no additional information for 2002.

The country states that Costa Rican criminal law defines corruption-related offenses in keeping with the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

B. Firearms and Ammunition

For control of the diversion of firearms, ammunition, and explosives, the country demonstrates important progress in the legislative area. In fulfillment of the commitments made through the recently ratified the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials, (CIFTA) the General Office on



Weaponry, Ministry of Public Security and through a Law 8291 dated May 27, 2002, was designated the central authority. Such legislation will implement the commitments made under that Convention.

The country has legal and regulatory provisions on importation and exportation, which establish administrative controls to prevent the diversion of firearms and ammunition. However, such controls do not regulate the transit of firearms. Costa Rica states that it is making efforts to implement a database that would contain information on seizures of firearms and on illicit drug trafficking organizations. It also indicates that records containing import, export, and in-transit permits are kept manually,⁽¹⁾ for four years, and then destroyed.

The country shows deficiency in the area of organization and systematization of information to control firearms and related materials adequately and prevent their diversion. There are at present no databases on numbers of persons arrested, prosecuted, or convicted for firearms-related offenses; administrative sanctions imposed; shipments refused; privately-owned firearms; or requests for information among countries.

Another area of deficiency in connection with prevention of the diversion of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and explosives is interagency coordination. Information provided by the country indicates that "Joint Operations" are carried out, by their nature, sporadic, along with operations where diversion or trafficking is suspected.

C. Money Laundering

In the legislative area, it should be noted that, so as to give greater scope to legal provisions defining the offense of money laundering, Law 8204, which entered into force on January 11, 2002, it regulate financial activities, and impose sanctions for infractions, to prevent the penetration of the proceeds of these serious offenses, such as illicit trafficking in drugs, firearms, human beings, and organs, prostitution, pornography, kidnapping, extortion, corruption, terrorism, fraud, and all forms of laundering such proceeds. In 2001, 6 persons were arrested for money laundering.

Costa Rica also has legal provisions establishing administrative controls to prevent and control money laundering. However, such controls do not cover insurance companies, casinos, real estate brokerages, attorneys, or notaries. In 2000 and 2001, 26 suspicious transactions were reported, based on which 158 investigations were opened, and 3 prosecutions brought, with 3 convictions.

The country indicates that it has a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the system to report suspicious transactions, in which institutions such as the Superintendency of Banks, the Financial Intelligent Units (FIU's), the Office of the Attorney General, and the Specialized Police participate.

The country did not report the imposition of administrative sanctions on financial institutions and their debtors, as Law 8204 has only recently been adopted.

The FIU belongs to the Egmont Group. It has signed memoranda of understanding with Panama, Colombia, the Central American countries, and the Dominican Republic. It is noted that additional training has been provided for administrative officials on application of laws and regulations for the control and suppression of money laundering.

In 2001 and 2002, the country did not make requests to other countries for extradition for money laundering-related offenses. For its part, it received two requests from the United States, and one from Belgium. It is not reported whether these were acceded to.

¹ The country reported without providing initial dates, that a computerized system is already installed within the sphere of the control of arms and Explosives Department, where information of the manual systems is being incorporated.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **CONTINUE EFFORTS TO SEE THAT THE DATABASE NEEDED TO MONITOR FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EXPLOSIVES BEGINS OPERATIONS ON THE ANTICIPATED DATE.**
2. **ESTABLISH COORDINATION AMONG ENTITIES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTING THE DIVERSION OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EXPLOSIVES.**
3. **INCLUDE IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO PREVENT THE DIVERSION OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION, OPERATIONS RELATING TO TRANSIT OF THESE MATERIALS THROUGH NATIONAL TERRITORY.**
4. **EXPAND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO INCLUDE INSURANCE COMPANIES, CASINOS, REAL ESTATE BROKERAGES, ATTORNEYS, AND NOTARIES TO PREVENT MONEY LAUNDERING.**
5. **PROVIDE TRAINING FOR ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES ON SYNTHETIC DRUG-RELATED ASPECTS, SO THAT THEY CAN TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PHENOMENON, WHICH IS EMERGING IN THE COUNTRY.**

V. CONCLUSIONS

Costa Rica has complied with the recommendation formulated in the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000 by implementing the current Anti-Drug National Plan approved on October 1, 2001. The strategy covers the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction, and control measures, which were not included in the 1995-1999 Strategy. This constitutes important progress for the country in the fight against drugs.

Costa Rica has made progress in strengthening the institutional structure by centralizing coordination of the drug issue in the Costa Rican Institute on Drugs. It has also shown progress in the organization and systematization of information through the creation of the Institutional Commission of Data and Statistics on drugs.

In 2002, the government increased resources allocated for demand reduction by 72%, an illustration of the country's commitment in this area.

The country has made important progress in its legislation governing control of arms, ammunition, and explosives. Nonetheless, a weakness is evident in the area of organization and systematization of information necessary to adequately monitor such materials and prevent their diversion.

Progress also was observed in legislation related to the prevention and suppression of money laundering.

The advances that the country has made in the areas of demand reduction and supply reduction demonstrate its willingness to comply with the commitments acquired under the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM).



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO RATIFY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS.
2. RATIFY THE UN CONVENTION ON TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME, AND THE SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOLS THERETO.
3. CONTINUE WITH THE SURVEILLANCE MECHANISM THAT ENABLES TRENDS IN ILLICIT CROP PRODUCTION TO BE DETERMINED.
4. CONTINUE EFFORTS TO SEE THAT THE DATABASE NEEDED TO MONITOR FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EXPLOSIVES BEGINS OPERATIONS ON THE ANTICIPATED DATE.
5. ESTABLISH COORDINATION AMONG ENTITIES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTING THE DIVERSION OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EXPLOSIVES.
6. INCLUDE IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO PREVENT THE DIVERSION OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION, OPERATIONS RELATING TO TRANSIT OF THESE MATERIALS THROUGH NATIONAL TERRITORY.
7. EXPAND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO INCLUDE INSURANCE COMPANIES, CASINOS, REAL ESTATE BROKERAGES, ATTORNEYS, AND NOTARIES TO PREVENT MONEY LAUNDERING.
8. PROVIDE TRAINING FOR ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES ON SYNTHETIC DRUG-RELATED ASPECTS, SO THAT THEY CAN TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PHENOMENON, WHICH IS EMERGING IN THE COUNTRY.





