

# Climate risks in Costa Rica

*a boring story*

Project Link Meeting, Long Island

18 june, 2019

# Once upon a time ...

*There was just water where it is Costa Rica today  
just water*

*It was 200 million years ago  
and North America and South America had not jointed  
together*

*The narrow strip of land had the Pacific Ocean on one  
side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other*

*The Coco plate had pushed the Caribbean plate enough  
and the three elements for climate catastrophe were  
present: a) volcanoes, b) earthquakes and  
c) hurricanes*

*Incidentally, there are mountains 4000 meters high*

# much more recently

1910: Cartago was severely damaged by an earthquake

President Jimenez forbid to built on adobe  
The Construction Code had to wait 70 years

1963: Irazu Volcano erupted  
It lasted for 5 years  
The CNE the National Emergency  
Commission was created

There are over 30 volcanoes in Costa Rica  
and Turrialba is erupting now

*much, more recently*

1974: President Oduber started the National Park Program which reversed the deforestation trend

It now covers all areas and forest coverage is 54% out of 34% in the 1960's

The evil turned into virtue, again

1985: Debt for Nature program was started at the Central Bank. Costa Rica had a huge foreign debt arising from the 1982 stabilization syndrome

Brady Plan was designed to get Costa Rica out the debt crisis. (and it did) It payed up to 70% of the face value of debt as opposed to 18%

The Children Eternal Forest was planted

Evil turned into virtue

# CNE

The National Disaster Prevention and Emergency Commission works on all 81 districts

It monitors possible emergency events and it combines with local and national agencies for preventive measures

There are phases and compulsory rules when needed

The funding comes from taxes

# Hurricane Otto and dengue

2017: for the first time in the last 300 years a tropical hurricane hit Costa Rican soil

They just go by (there are about 30 each year) but this storm entered the country and it lasted for 4 days

There were 2 persons who lost their lives and there was infrastructure collapsing

I did a study on dengue incidence (only 3 persons have die even if it has had the highest incidence level in Central America for more than 5 years)

the study focused on the expected dengue higher levels. It just did not happened

The evil of Otto was controlled by preventive care and 81 districts nation-wide health system

(it has 1000 public health offices)

# Guatemala and Costa Rica

- 1776: the earthquake destroyed old Guatemala City. It was abandoned
- The new capital had an earthquake in 1974 which killed about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the population
- the 1910 Cartago earthquake allowed construction in the same place but with new rules
- Last year Fuego volcano erupted and almost 100 people were killed
- no more than 100 deaths happened in CR