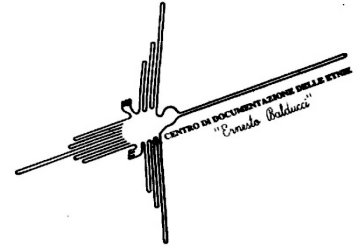


CEDOE - Centro de Documentación de las Etnias

Correo electrónico: [cedoecr@gmail.com](mailto:cedoecr@gmail.com)



**VISIT**

**UTE WANNIG**

**MONIKA TREBER**

**CIL**

**8 - 30 June 2016**

**COSTA RICA**

**TOPIC**

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

*Klaus Beisswenger, CEDOE*

Already a fashionable new topic: Climate change?

On closer inspection it is simply a symptom of processes, which we in CEDOE, CIL and many other organizations have been following critically for many years.

It all has its starting point in the Industrial Revolution, first in 19th. century Europe and then in North America.

The transition from hand crafting to industrial production made possible for the first time

- Mass consumption
- Production under capitalistic conditions
- Stimulation of consumption through new “needs” / marketing
- The gaping divide between poor and rich
- Technological development makes globalization possible.
- Uniformization through the products of transnational corporations into the farthest corners of the earth

The effects of these processes are not new, however for a long time they apparently remained regionally limited:

- Poverty in Africa and parts of Asia and Latin America
- Expansion of the deserts (Sahel zone)
- Environmental problems
- Energy problems

For a long time these problems, which affected many humans, were regarded as unfortunate, but in the long run seen as problems of others, not related to oneself.

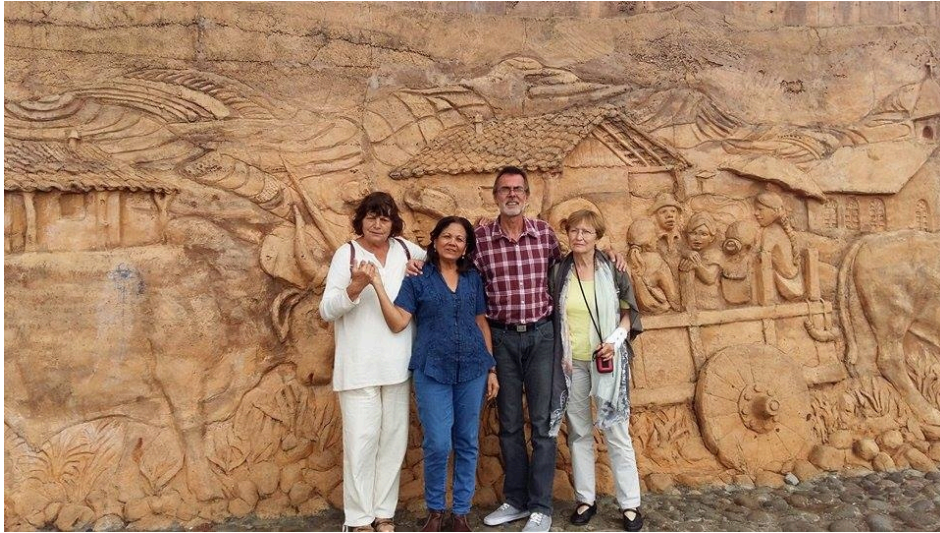
For many years solidary, internationally oriented organizations like the CIL have tried to explain that it is not a matter of isolated phenomena, but that things are interconnected world-wide and are the concern of all.

Today this realization begins to become generally established, because there are two phenomena, which cannot be stopped at any border:

- Migration
- Climate change

So both topics are not foreign to us, but - in the meantime global - faces of processes which we have observed and discussed for a long time.

Therefore, in the following visitation programme it is less a matter of learning something completely new, but rather to set our wealth of experience in relationship to these global processes.



Central America is considered to be one of the most sensitive regions with regard to the effects of climate change.

In **Costa Rica** during the 20th. century it was above all the clearing of the forests which contributed to climate change. Forests were sacrificed for cattle breeding, banana plantations and pineapple plantations.

Further problems are waste (too much garbage, too little recycling; waste water) and transport (motor traffic in the San José region; hardly developed rail traffic)

## **Effects and Changes in connection with the climate change in Costa Rica**

### **a. Climate and water supply**

- Changed precipitation
- More frequent extreme weather conditions (hurricanes, floods, and drought)
- Increase of landslides
- Greater accumulation of sediments in artificial lakes (Tárcoles, Reventazón).
- Penetration of seawater into the groundwater (Guanacaste, large hotel complexes)
- Reduction of available water (Guanacaste)

### **b. Ecological systems and diversity of species**

- Migration of species into cooler domains
- More frequent forest fires (Guanacaste)
- Decrease of wetlands.
- Extinction of animal species (e.g. Sapo Dorado)

### **c. Human settlements**

- Increased risks of damage to houses and buildings; insurance companies increase their prices
- Heating of the city centres
- Overloading of the sewers
- Rising energy consumption by air conditioning systems

**d. Energy**

- Decrease of the potential for power production from water power
- Damage to infrastructure caused by climate effects
- Price increases

**e. Transport and communication**

- Damage to infrastructure caused by climate effects
- Impairment of traffic (accidents, flight cancellations, etc.)

**f. Health**

- Spread of illnesses through mosquitoes (Dengue, Zika)
- Infections
- Effects of heat and dehydration on the body

**g. Industry**

- Cost increases caused by environmental protection measures, insurance, water and energy



The Costa Rican Ministry of Environment **MINAE** formed its own department: **Dirección de Cambio Climático**. With international financial support the department works in the following areas:

- Support of the development of cleaner technologies
- Implementation of a national strategy on climate change
- CO<sub>2</sub>-Market (UNDP and Eco-resources)
- Pollution free technologies in transport and agriculture (among other things with Fundecooperación)
- Garbage treatment (giz)
- Control of clearing and protection of the forest (Fondo Nacional de Financiamiento Forestal /FONAFIFO).
- Communication and public-relations work
- Projects of the adjustment to climate change (FUNDECOOPERACION) / see there
- Diversity of species in coastal regions (giz)
- . Standards for CO<sub>2</sub>-neutrality

Despite this impressive list, and despite many small initiatives, the problems will continue to exist locally for the long-term.

We - also during the visitation journey - noted that the effects of the global climate change and local, home-made changes compound each other.



We find examples in the province of Guanacaste, where on broad treeless surfaces cattle breeding is practiced. The traditional long, hot dry period is intensified even more by the climate change, so that damage and losses have increased in the last years.

A further example is Buenos Aires de Puntarenas. Through forest clearing in favour of pineapple production the

temperature rose, and through climate change it is becoming intolerable.

On the mountain slopes there exists - similar to the snow line in the alps - a fog line. With rising temperature the clouds hang higher above, and the area of the cloud forest is reduced, which again has influence on the water balance. The case of the “Sapo Dorado” of Monteverde, a resplendent golden frog which became extinct some years ago, became famous.

When clear-cutting and other human interferences come in addition, the risk of landslides with to some extent fatal consequences (e.g. as happened in Escazú) increases.

In addition, relatively intact landscapes are affected by climate change, as we saw for example in Yorkín.



Birthday celebration in the CEDOE

In the following we present short summaries of our meetings with organizations and initiatives in Costa Rica:

**VA DE NUEVO**

**Yara Salazar**

**Los Yoses San José**

<http://www.vadenuevo.net>



va•de•nuevo is an ecodesign project that's seeking to improve the use of resources. We start with used leather clothes that have been discarded due to damages or fashion trends. The idea is to make good use of second-hand materials, designing and putting together a new products from reused leather. We create totally new, modern products while reducing the amount of waste.

The result: designer handbags and shoes with a totally different style than the ones currently available in the market; high quality leather handbags at a more affordable price than any other leather handbag. Designs are totally unique and can't be imitated, as it is impossible to find two used leather pieces exactly alike.



Our main concept is that everything can be recycled. That's why we also make purses, wallets, wristlets and even necklaces from leftover leather pieces. Thus we enhance the value of a piece of leather; we change its shape and we allow it to live a second life, rescuing the personality of leather that already lived once.





**Greenbag.”Bolsas de oxígeno para el planeta”**

**Marta Hidalgo C.**

**Tel. 224 4881**

**Cellular: 8337 9459**

**Email: [greenbagcr@gmail.com](mailto:greenbagcr@gmail.com)**

**“Oxygen bags for the planet”**

**One million plastic bags are used per minute on earth.**

**18,000 pieces of plastic garbage per square kilometre sea. Sea turtles, sea mammals and sea-birds perish from it.**

**Plastic bags are not only a garbage problem; their production also uses fossil energy.**

**In Costa Rica the unreflected use of plastic bags is still very common.**

**GREENBAG offers and publicises an alternative for companies and consumers: Companies use the cloth bags with their logo as advertisement, and consumers save the plastic bags and can set an example.**

**GREENBAG understands itself as an environmental-political project, which wants to inform and sensitize. Participation in various trade fairs featuring women's projects increased the name recognition and positioned GREENBAG as a pioneer in the production of bags made of cotton in Costa Rica.**

**A problem for GREENBAG is the pseudo-ecological competition:**

Various companies offer “biologically degradable” plastic bags or re-usable plastic bags, which however are not ecologically harmless.

Among the customers of GREENBAG are state and local institutions, universities and numerous private businesses.

Five sewers earn a regular income of at least 200 US-\$ per week working at home.

Apart from the traditional shopping bag, GREENBAG also develops special packing for different causes and needs.

The cloth remnants resulting from production are given away to women, who use them for handicrafts and arts.



## FUNDECOOPERACIÓN

Marianella Feoli [mfeoli@fundecooperacion.org](mailto:mfeoli@fundecooperacion.org)

Fundecooperación para el Desarrollo Sostenible

Tel: 2225 4507; Fax: 2225 5900

Fundecooperación Web: [www.fundecooperacion.org](http://www.fundecooperacion.org)



**Visit with Fundecooperación para el  
Desarrollo Sostenible. (9 Juni 2016)**

Conversation with Marianella Feoli Peña.  
Director

Participants: Ute, Monika, Laura, Marta Hidalgo, Klaus & Marta Lopez

Fundecooperación began in 1994 as an instrument of development aid from the Netherlands. Later the organization was transformed into a fund for small loans.

The mission involves the improvement of the economic and ecological conditions and the gender question.

The applicants for credit are agricultural and other small businesses which have hardly any access to the classical banking sector. Projects of Indígenas are also included.

Projects which work sustainably and are innovative are given priority.

Beyond that FUNDECOOPERACIÓN accompanies and advises the initiatives and supports them with the marketing.

Special topic areas are

- Agriculture and forestry
- Environment and clean technologies
- Sustainable energy industry
- Sustainable tourism
- Gender questions
- Production and marketing chains
- Cultural values
- Climate change

*Marta López*

### **Adaptacion Fund**

The fund was established in order to finance projects in countries which participated in the Kyoto Protocol and are particularly impacted by the effects of climate change. The World Bank functions as trustee.

The financing takes place predominantly over certification of emission reduction (CER's) and national subsidies.

More information at: [www.adaptation-fund.org](http://www.adaptation-fund.org)

In Costa Rica “**Fundecooperación para el Desarrollo Sostenible**” has been tasked with the implementation since 2012.

Projects in three areas are concerned

- Agriculture and forestry
- Water resources
- Coastal zones

For more information: [www.adaptation-fund.org](http://www.adaptation-fund.org)

**Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Pequeños Productores y Trabajadores de Comercio Justo, San Ramón**



**Edwin Vargas**

Gestor de Fortalecimiento y Desarrollo de Costa Rica y Panamá

**Correo:** [edwin.v@claonline.com](mailto:edwin.v@claonline.com)

**Skype:** leovargasj7

**Dirección:** 25 metros oeste y 200 metros norte, de la Estación de Autobuses de Empresarios Unidos, San Ramón, Alajuela, Costa Rica

**Oficina:** (506) 2445-2186 **Movil :** (506) 8480-0261

[www.clac-comerciojusto.org](http://www.clac-comerciojusto.org)

CLAC is the co-ordination office of the network of small producers and cooperatives, which work in the context of Fairtrade International.

The co-ordination office of Costa Rica and Panama represents 18 organizations of the following sectors certified by Fairtrade (Flo CERT): Coffee, cocoa, sugar, pineapple, bananas and mango.

Fair Trade guarantees quality during production and processes, from the producer to the retail market, and is evaluated by NGOs.

The small producers involved are to unite into cooperatives or similar networks.

We spoke about environmental problems, for example in the production and processing of sugar cane, and the effects of campaigns to reduce sugar consumption.

Topics were the relationship with the public, the sales of less refined sugar and other products of the sugar cane juice such as molasses, sugar water and sweets.

The traditional Trapiches, that is, sugar extrusion presses for cane, are also interesting for tourists.

The value of domestic products and traditions should come more strongly into the public view. In former times in all families in addition to coffee hot sugar water was also drunk.

Fair trade attempts to arrange production and consumption that is fair and sustainable. The factors taken into account when defining a fair price are:

- Coverage of production costs
- Making a decent life for the families involved possible
- Making the investments necessary to sustain and improve production possible.

*Marta Hidalgo; Visit on June 15, 2016*

## **FLOREX Pollution-free cleaning agents**

• **Dirección:** San Ramón, Alajuela, Costa Rica.  
Apdo: 377-4250

• **Teléfono:** (506) 2447-2323 | (506)2447-32-40

• **Email:** infoflorex@florexcr.com

Sales office Central America and production facility

Director Silvia Chávez; Translation Rodríguez,  
Participants Ute, Laura & Marta Hidalgo.

A video showed us the development of the company since its establishment. A tour of the plant led us into the factory, the laboratory, sales office and the cafeteria.



FLOREX is a Costa Rican company that produces and distributes environmentally friendly cleaning agents for households and enterprises.

FLOREX is prominent in Central America for the development of procedures and products that are really environmentally friendly.

Clean production: Measures for the reduction of water consumption, recycling economy and clarifying of the water; catchment basin for rain water

FLOREX participates in networks such as Red de Agricultura Familiar, Comité Regional Mesoamérica sin Hambre, chambers of commerce, etc. and co-operates with ministries and export promotions.

FLOREX is the first company of this kind in Costa Rica, which operates CO2-neutral.

Certifications: ISO 14001, ISO 9001 and CO2-neutral

2009 Central American prize for clean production

2015 finalist with the “Premio Latinoamérica Verde”

The company offers not only products, but also consultation and advanced training to its customers. The service department is responsible for inquiries and evaluations.

*Marta Hidalgo; Visit on June 15, 2016*

## AVENTURAS NATURALES YORKÍN



Elisa Vega

[aventurasnaturalesyorkin@gmail.com](mailto:aventurasnaturalesyorkin@gmail.com)

Tel. 2200 5211

**AVENTURAS NATURALES YORKÍN** is a project of the family of the recently deceased Guillermo Torres, and has at its disposal a "Rancho" with kitchen and dining hall, which are used also for activities, as well as two buildings with simple accommodations. The facility lies on a small hill above the river and is surrounded by numerous fruit and other trees as well as medicinal and ornamental plants.

The visitors are picked up in Bambú and reach Yorkin after approx. 45 minutes of travel in a dugout on the river of the same name, which also represents the border to Panama.

Beginnings: In 1996 28 families organized themselves in order to pursue the cultivation and sales of bio bananas together. Since economic success did not correspond to expectations, they tried it with eco-tourism and a diversified agriculture. The new organization was called "Asociación de Turismo, Desarrollo y Agricultura Orgánica Yorkín" and includes 18 families

Under the brand name "Aventuras Naturales Yorkín" tours of one or several days are offered, which give the visitors a glimpse into the traditions and way of life of the Bribis.

Recently the organization received modern machines for the processing of cocoa.



After a walk through the village, its banana plantation and gardens, past its elementary and high schools, we met in the evening with Elisa Vega for a discussion about climate change:

Very quickly it concerned the Río Yorkín.

The river is the lifeline of the village community, and its behaviour is recorded exactly:

- The river is the means of transport and communication for humans and goods
- The agricultural products cacao and bananas are commercialized by means of the river
- If the water level is too low or the river is too rapid, the village community remains practically cut off from the external world. Elisa observed that both extreme situations have increased in the past years. Therefore the inhabitants are anxious and concerned about the topic of climate change.



**SALITRE, Bríbripa Kanèblö** (Visit of Ute & Monika had to be cancelled; pre-visit of Klaus in April 2016)

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The **Asociación Bríbripa Kanèblö** consists of people from Salitre, who practice the protection of nature, preservation of the traditions and operate the income-creating tourism project.

In order to strengthen their own culture and traditions the group built a traditional conical round house, a so-called "Usule" or temple of the Bribri, in order to hold their celebrations and ceremonies. The round house symbolizes the whole cosmos in the

cosmovision of the Bribri and is worth a visit! Of course handicraft art is made and sold, and finally a few words of the Bribri language are taught to the visitors. Within the upper, mountainous and inaccessible range of the Salitre reservation one still finds extensive primary and secondary forests. In the lower range clearing has gone far, however, which is why the Asociación Bríbripa Kanèblö is concerned about reforestation, particularly along the brooks.

Climate change:

The region of Buenos Aires is controlled by the "Pindeco", the Costa Rican representative of Del Monte. At the end of the eighties the industrial production of pineapples in Costa Rica began here, which expanded later into far parts of the north as well.

On the enormous plantations the unprotected soil is exposed to the hot sun and the hard rain. In addition there is the situation between two mountain ranges, so that the temperature has increased markedly. The outside thermometer of the bus showed 39 degrees Celsius at Buenos Aires!

The irrigation of the plantations devours enormous quantities of water, and this water originates from the indigenous reservations.

The indigenous community of Salitre is situated on the edge of the plantations and feels the effects.

The Asociación Bribipa tries to dampen the effects through the protection of the forest and by reforestation.

## The eternal forest of the children

### Bosque Eterno de los Niños / Asociación Conservacionista de Monteverde

Yúber Rodríguez, Director de Ordenamiento Territorial

Apartado Postal 124-5655, Monteverde, Costa Rica, Centro América

Tel: 2645-5200, 2645-5003 / Fax: 2645-5104 / [www.acmcr.org](http://www.acmcr.org)



The Asociación Conservacionista de Monteverde (ACM) is a nationally recognized non-profit association. It was created in 1986 by environmentally conscious inhabitants of Monteverde.

Since its beginning the organization has endeavoured to buy up land in order to place it under nature conservancy. With the help of hundreds of persons from more than 44 countries it has succeeded in creating the

“eternal forest of the children”, with 22,500 ha the largest private protected area in the country.

“We assume that the human being is an important component of the ecological system, because he depends on the soil, air, the plants and animals.” On this basis the ACM developed the following programmes:

- Reforestation
- Research
- Protection and monitoring
- Maintenance work
- Environmental education
- Volunteers

At present, in the framework of natural and social sciences, research in five areas is being conducted:

- Water resources
- Observation of species
- Climate change
- Economic and social effects of the protected area in the adjacent communities
- Effects of reforestation
  - Recovery of the forest, inventory of the diversity of species, endemic species, threatened species

## CODECE, Escazú

Asociación para la Conservación y Desarrollo Sostenible de los Cerros de Escazú

Coordinadora: Meylin Chamorro

ESCAZÚ

**Telefon:** [+506 2228 0183](tel:+50622280183)



Escazú is situated on the southwest edge of San José at the foot of the mountains. The district of San Antonio on the slope of the mountains offers a wonderful prospect over the central valley. Thus, it is no surprise that the area became the preferred area of wealthy city-dwellers and foreigners. The mansions and houses continued to penetrate uphill; this has had serious effects on the ecological system. The mountain slopes are fragile ecological systems and with heavy rain are threatened by erosion; on the other hand they are important for the water supply.

In 1985 local residents of San Antonio united in order to protect the mountains “Cerros de Escazú”. Today CODECE has 66 members and approximately 300 occasional employees.

“El Encanto de la Piedra Blanca” was formed in 1996 as a joint eco-tourism project of CODECE. So on the one hand the cultural wealth of the former farming village is maintained, and on the other hand income is gained. The tour, lasting several hours, begins at the church of San Antonio and leads the tourists to a traditional sugar extrusion press for cane, a mask workshop and to a typical meal in the house of CODECE.

Actions for the protection of the mountains:

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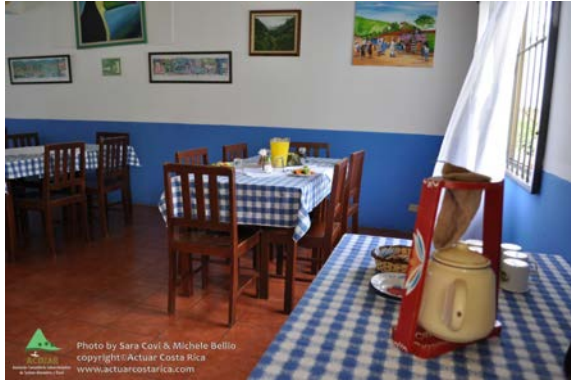
With the help of the population and international support (BfdW) 13.2 hectares of land within the “Zona Protectora Cerros de Escazú” were acquired and placed under protection. Reforestation of 7000 trees on soil which for many years had been used as pasture and suffered from erosion

Publications and environmental education in the schools of Escazú; guided hikes into the mountains of Escazú

Participation in a commission for a land-use plan (in progress.)

Advanced training and sensitization of farmers; 25 farmers work sustainably or have at least reduced their consumption of chemistry.

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## Discussion with Meylin Chamorro. (29 June 2016)

Participants: Ute, Monika, Laura, Marta Hidalgo, Klaus & Marta Lopez

The “Zona Protectora Cerros de Escazú” consists of 7060 hectares, from which over 90% are private property. In this nature reserve no houses may be built. However, not least because of the scenic attraction strong interests for receiving building permits in even higher situations exist. CODECE resists such efforts; in the population the opinion is divided. The local administration reacts to complaints of CODECE (e.g. against the creation of illegal paths) slowly and half-heartedly.

On the topic of climate change Meylin notes:

- The farmers are anxious because of the varying precipitation and ask CODECE for alternatives; some products need more water or more regular watering than others; CODECE coordinates advanced training with the Ministry of Agriculture
- Co-ordination with the correspondence university “Universidad Estatal A Distancia (UNED)” for the study of the Rio Agres over possible acid rain caused by the volcano Turrialba
- In recent times there were three forest fires; previously these were rare, because the fog kept the forest damp and today is no longer so low and/or heavy
- In former times one saw many more fireflies; today the gnats are increasing instead - probably a consequence of the temperature increase

*Marta Lopez and Marta Hidalgo*

## PARTING ROUND WITH MARTA HIDALGO



28 June 2016

Participants: Monika, Ute, Klaus, Laura, Nicolás, Mónica Camacho, Marta Hidalgo & Marta Lopez

Topic: Impressions from the visitation journey and continued work

Ute and Monika announced that in September in Germany a workshop of the CIL is planned about “climate change in everyday life.”

Then impressions from the visitation journey will be presented.

- a. Guatemala: together with the Council of Elders of the Consejo Maya we looked for an answer to the question about the relationship between climate change, economic framework and the everyday life of indigenous peoples
- b. Costa Rica: a visitation journey prepared by CEDOE to non-governmental organizations, enterprises and local initiatives. The impressions are reflected in the above report

- Ute and Monika comment that the talk of climate change implies a new way of approaching the love for the creation. On one hand the topic concerns us all, is on the other hand complex and abstract. The topic particularly concerns the young generation, which is represented in the round with the birthday children Mónica and Nicolás (both 15). It is suggested to address the topic in the families and to ask what seems especially important to each individual.

Salitre could not be visited, however will be considered in further work.

Toward end of the yearly a representative of the CIL will come to Central America, report on the September workshop report and coordinate the continued work.

*Marta López*