

# Pilot Project "Reduction of Mercury Use in Costa Rican Hospitals"



# Costa Rica



Costa Rica is located in the Western Hemisphere on the American continent in Central America.

It has about 4,000,000 inhabitants and an area of 51,100 km<sup>2</sup>.

It is divided administratively into provinces. It has seven provinces.

Costa Rica is considered one of the 20 countries with the greatest biodiversity in the world.



## Pilot Project Objective

- To reduce the risk to staff, patients, and the environment associated with the use of mercury in hospitals. Risk reduction will be done through identification, inventory, and proper handling of spills and waste. The goal is to eventually eliminate the use of mercury in hospitals.

## Project Scope

- This pilot project was limited to National Children's Hospital. In 2009 it was extended to the Hospital of San Ramon. We are preparing to begin the project in the Hospital of Limon in April, 2009.

# Participants



**CCSS:** Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social. This institution promotes the health of the inhabitants of the country, guaranteeing efficient public health service management.



**MINAET:** Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications. Through the leadership of the Minister, MINAET is coordinating the participation of other public and private entities to generate and implement policies, strategies and actions aimed at fulfilling national and international environmental laws and goals.



**EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency of the United States. EPA is funding the project.

# Roles and Responsibilities



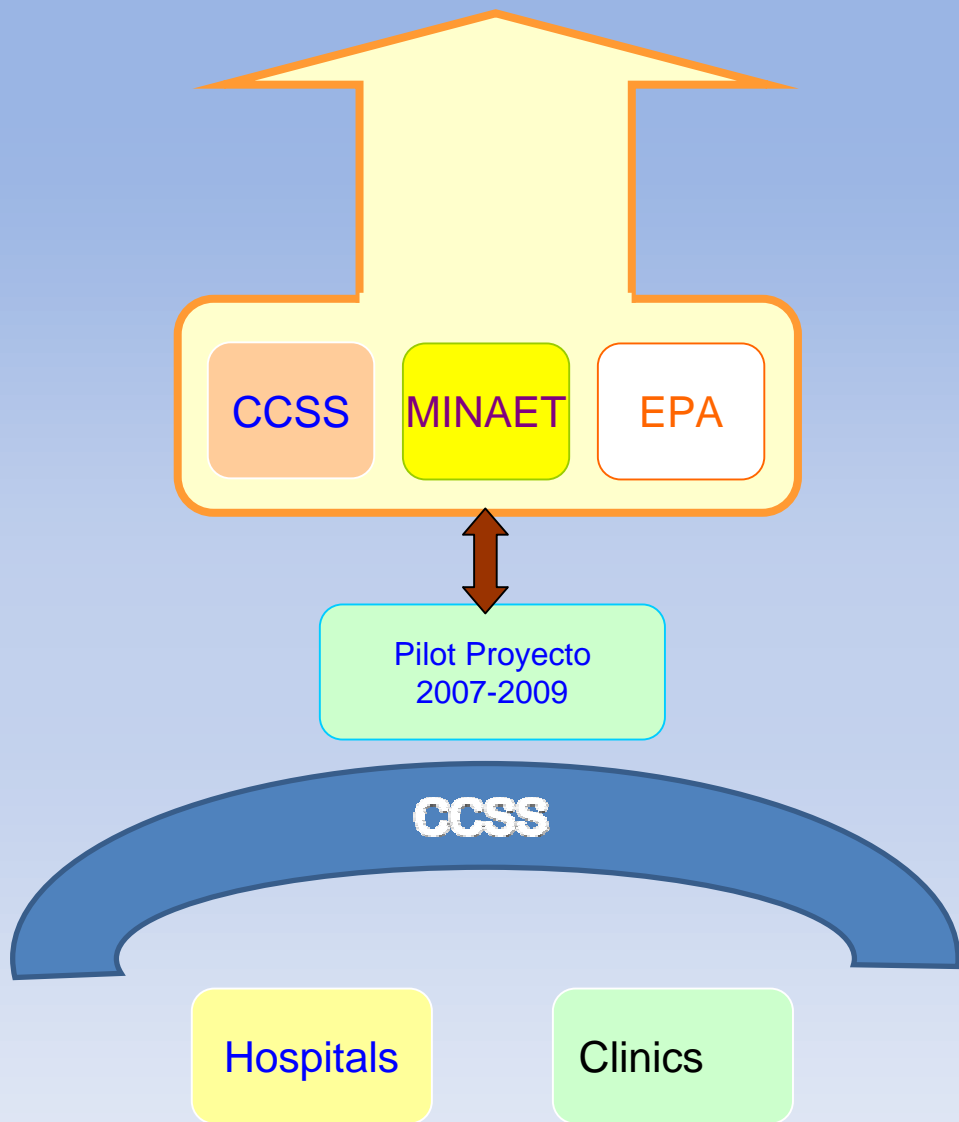
- The Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social reviews and approves the mercury waste handling plans. This institution will continue to be involved with every project location in Costa Rica.



- The Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications has to review the mercury waste handling plans. MINAET is the link with the different organizations within the country.



- The Environment Protection Agency has approved and funded the budget for the development of the project. For example: professional support and equipment replacement.



- These institutions have worked in the pilot project.
- The pilot Project was developed at the National Children's Hospital.

# Pilot Project Outcomes

- The pilot project, [Reduction of Mercury Use in Costa Rican Hospitals](#) developed four interactive plans:
  - Inventory
  - Storage
  - Training
  - Reduction and Replacement of Medical Equipment
- This pilot project was extended to another hospital. The hospital of San Ramon is using the plans elaborated in the pilot project's plans.
- Another outcome was the creation of the General Plan. National Children's Hospital has committed to continue the reduction of mercury.

- # 1: Inventory
- Identified and quantified the medical instruments, chemical reagents, electrical connections and other sources of mercury in hospitals.
  - The plan was developed for the diagnosis and inventory of materials that contain mercury.



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