

Maritime Trade Mission to Panama 12 – 15 March 2017

Identify opportunities in the logistic hub of the Americas

Registration for the Maritime Trade Mission to Panama is now open!

You are invited to register for the maritime trade mission to Panama to represent your company on the Holland stand at the Panama Maritime Conference, Panama's most prominent maritime expo and conference.

The Netherlands was present at the expo the last years with a Holland stand and the embassy invites companies from the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten to repeat the success of previous editions.

Minister of Economic Development of Curaçao, Mr. Rhuggenaath, as mission leader.

The delegation of companies from the Kingdom of the Netherlands will be headed by Mr. Rhuggenaath, the Minister of Economic Development of Curaçao. Mr. Rhuggenaath also held this position in the previous Cabinet.

Opportunities within the logistic hub of the Americas

Panama is becoming *the* logistic hub of the Americas and has been the fastest growing Latin American economy for years. The year 2016 marked the maritime sector with the opening of the new locks of the Panama Canal. With these new locks the Canal not only triples its capacity; but it also provides a base for new logistics developments.

To take full advantage of the \$5 billion investment in the expansion of the Canal, and to cope with the competition, Panama will need to invest in the quality of its logistics sector and infrastructure. This creates business opportunities!

Panama already offers a wide range of logistic and maritime services. New investments are expected, such as:

- Commercial development of the 1,200 hectares at the west bank on the Pacific side of the Canal (estimated investment \$1.7 billion). The Dutch companies Antea Group and Stig designed a masterplan for the development of this area. Construction of distribution centers, Value Added Logistic Services and the development of an agro-industrial area are amongst the possibilities. The development of this area possibly starts in 2017.
- Construction of a new container terminal (5 mln TEU), a new RoRo-terminal and further expansion of the (cargo handling) airport Tocumen.

The Canal competes with other shipping routes and other ports for the handling of cargo. To ensure that ships continue to use the Panamanian ports, Panama will have to add value to the cargo transported through the Canal. Strengthening the logistical performance index (LPI) is therefore a priority. Panama already has the highest LPI score of Latin America, but it wants to compete with the best hubs of the world, such as Singapore and Rotterdam. The government is therefore investing in optimization and digitization of bureaucratic processes, in improved customs procedures and in education. Leading multinationals such as Sony, Philips, Unilever 3M, Nestlé, Caterpillar and Procter & Gamble have already acknowledged these opportunities by the creation of regional headquarters, assembly or distribution centres in Panama.

Also the LNG market in Panama offers interesting developments. LNG is transported via the canal in increasing amounts, it is a potential fuel for shipping and used as a fuel for power plants in Panama. In addition, the first LNG terminal is being built in Panama.

Furthermore, agro-logistics is developing as an interesting sub-sector and Panama strives to improve the transit of food products through the canal.

Participating companies

The ample developments in Panama's maritime sector create opportunities for the following companies:

- Companies providing auxiliary maritime and logistics services
- Dredging companies
- Shipbuilders
- Shipping companies and operators

Your company is recommended to participate at the level of a regional business/country manager, or general manager.

Program of the trade mission

Your company will be represented in the Holland Pavilion which provides an attractive space for networking and meetings at the Panama Maritime Conference and Expo. Additionally, the program offers tailor-made matchmaking, networking events, high-level meetings with authorities and a visit to the new locks of the Panama Canal.

The Panama Maritime Conference attracts key players of the Panamanian maritime sector and international maritime companies. In the last years there were more than 450 participants. The conference will address key topics for Panama's maritime sector such as LNG, bunkering, the impact of global developments in maritime trade for Panama and sustainability.

Day and time	Activity
Sunday, March 12	
<i>Afternoon</i>	Welcome Cocktail
Monday, March 13	
<i>Morning</i>	Breakfast with a Presentation on Doing Business in Panama
<i>Morning</i>	Opening Panama Maritime Conference
<i>Afternoon</i>	Matchmaking
<i>Evening</i>	Network Event
Tuesday, March 14	
<i>Morning</i>	Panama Maritime Conference / Individual Meetings
<i>Afternoon</i>	High Level Meeting with Panamanian Authorities
<i>Evening</i>	Networking event organised by the Panama Maritime Authority
Wednesday, March 15	
<i>All day</i>	Individual business meetings / Tour to the New Locks on the Pacific Side of Canal
<i>Evening</i>	Closing cocktails at Miraflores Locks

Registration and costs

The participation fee is € 800,-. This includes international exposure of your company in the Holland Pavilion and participation in the Panama Maritime conference. The fee excludes travel, accommodation and personal expenses. You can also rent an individual stand which costs € 3655,-.

You can register by sending an e-mail to pan-ea@minbuza.nl. After registration you will receive a registration form including hotel information and will be invited for an online intake meeting. Deadline for registration is **February 6 2017**.

Information meeting with Regional Business Developer Jurgen Bartelink:

The embassy organizes a kick-off meeting in The Hague at **February 9 2017** for companies that registered for the Trade Mission. The embassy will also organise kick-off meetings for companies participating from Curacao, Aruba and Sint Maarten.

More information

For more information on the trade mission, please contact Carlijne Blom, Economic Officer, via carlijne.blom@minbuza.nl [mailto:](mailto:carlijne.blom@minbuza.nl) or call the Embassy +507 2806667.