



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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“2013 REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING FOR MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN”

Panama City, Panama, 18-19 November 2013

United Nations Environment Programme Informative Note for Participants

Organizing Agency:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

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Administrative support in Panama:

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Accommodations and meals:

UNEP will provide accommodations for all participants at the Hotel Country Inn & Suites Panama Canal (Amador): <http://www.panamacanalcountry.com/amador/>, in a single room, during the days of the meeting. Breakfast and lunch are also included. Participants who do not wish to stay at the hotel must cover their own lodging expenses.



UNEP will also provide a small per diem (daily subsistence allowance, or DSA) at the United Nations daily rate to cover dinner costs on 17 and 18 November as well as sundry expenses.

If you must remain in Panama the night of 19 November due to flight-connection issues, your dinner and sundry expenses will be covered for that day as well.

To receive the DSA, please submit a copy of your passport and the original boarding pass for your flight to Panama City. UNEP staff may not pay the allowance without the required documentation. The DSA will be delivered on the first day of the meeting.

For the reimbursement of airfare, the original invoice in the participant's name will be required.

Hotel: Country Inn & Suites Panama Canal



The *Country Inn and Suites Panama Canal* is close to the bay and in the vicinity of the Bridge of the Americas, just a few minutes from the marine exposition centre and the Smithsonian Institute of Panama.

Map:





Visa requirements to enter Panama:

Participants are responsible for obtaining a visa. Panama has visa waiver agreements with the following countries: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Immigration, Safety, and Document Revision at the Tocumen International Airport:

You will need a valid passport to enter the country and you should bring the letter of invitation to the event and the agenda for the immigration and security revision at the Tocumen International Airport.

At the airport passengers may be randomly asked to demonstrate their economic solvency for their stay in the country (US\$ 500). The letter of invitation from UNEP should be sufficient, but keep in mind that this process depends on the immigration authorities.

Arrival and transportation to and from the airport:

- UNEP, through the Hotel Country Inn & Suites Panama Canal, will provide transportation service from the airport to the hotel and vice versa.
- UNEP will not provide transportation services for participants who for personal reasons decide to travel on days other than those scheduled. We recommend that such participants take a "Tourist Service" taxi at the airport. For safety reasons, you should avoid getting in taxis which already have passengers (that is, sharing a taxi). Taxi fares from the airport range from US\$ 20 to US\$ 40.
- Please make arrangements with Elba Cortés for your ride to the airport at the end of the meeting, and remember that you need to be at the airport three hours before your flight.

Registration:

Registration will be at 8 a.m., Monday 18 November, and the meeting will begin at 8:30, at the Hotel Country Inn & Suites Panama Canal, in Panama City.

UNEP supports the green-meetings policy and the limited use of paper. We ask that you consider the following environmental conservation rules:

1. Print out documents only when absolutely necessary.
2. Consider bringing a laptop in order to download the presentations and working papers.
3. If possible, bring your own notebook and pen.
4. Turn off the lights and electrical appliances when not in use.
5. Reuse the towels in your room if possible.



Banking Services:

In Panama most banks are open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The currencies in circulation are the Panamanian balboa (at an exchange rate of 1:1 with the U.S. dollar) and the U.S. dollar.

Health:

- Visitors from the following countries of South America should receive a yellow fever vaccination: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
- You must be in good health in order to travel, and bring any medication you normally use. You must have a valid medical insurance policy or sufficient funds to cover the costs of medical care in the event of an illness or emergency. The Government of Panama offers a free one-month insurance policy to tourists.

Meals:

Breakfast will be served in the hotel restaurant. Lunch will be served at the time indicated on the event schedule. On 17, 18 and 19 November, participants will make their own dinner arrangements.

Agenda and working papers:

The working papers for the meetings will be sent out electronically before the meeting. To ensure a green meeting, documents will be provided in digital format; hence, there will be a limited number of printed hand-outs.

Safety in Panama:

Although Panama is generally a safe country, and the hotel where the event will be held is in a safe area of the city, we recommend that participants take all normal precautions when away from the hotel. Walking alone at night is not recommended, and if you must walk alone do so only in well-lit areas. Take taxis only at the hotel. Do not carry large amounts of cash or other valuables, especially when you will be away from the immediate vicinity of the hotel.

Presentations:

UNEP requests that participants who have been asked to give a presentation kindly send a copy no later than 14 November 2013. Please limit presentations to a maximum of 10 minutes (10 slides). Send your presentations to **Montserrat Valeiras** with a copy to **Elba Cortés**: montserrat.valeiras@pnuma.org; elba.cortes.affiliate@pnuma.org.

Climate:

Panama has a humid tropical climate. In November, the average daytime temperature is 28°C, and it frequently rains. We recommend light clothing as well as a jacket because most buildings have air



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conditioning. Updated weather forecasts are available at:
<http://espanol.weather.com/weather/today/PMXX0004:1:PM>.

Additional information:

- Time: Panama does not have daylight savings time; the time is UTC/GMT -5 hours throughout the year.
- Electricity: 110 V, 60 cycles.

The following websites offer further information on places to visit in Panama City:

<http://visitpanama.com/>

<http://panamainfo.com/en>

The UNEP team would like to extend you a warm welcome.

Welcome to Panama!