

Trade Mission to Panama and Costa Rica 17 – 21 March 2019

Identify opportunities in the most developed economies of Latin America, around the logistics junction of the Americas

Costa Rica recently opened the second largest reefer container port in the world which was constructed by Van Oord and BAM International and operated by APM Terminals, improving significantly Costa Rica's productivity, capacity and reliability in supply chains. At the same time **Panama** will invest in creating more value added logistics services and a stronger intermodal transport system to take full advantage of the expanded Canal of 2016. This creates business opportunities!

You are invited to register for the logistics trade mission to Costa Rica and Panama, which will take place from 17-21 March 2019. Companies from the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten are very welcome to join.

Developments in Costa Rica

With the recent inaugurated container terminal, larger vessels running between Asia and the US east coast can now call at Moin Port on the backhaul leg to transport bananas and pineapples among other items from Costa Rica and the rest of Central America to Asia. This new direct route to Asia change the dynamics of shipping and supply chains of Costa Rica and the region!

Costa Rica is currently the world's largest exporter of pineapple and the third largest exporter of bananas. Fruit juices (orange and pineapple concentrate), palm oil, sugar, coffee and beef are also important export products (\$ 2.5 billion) in addition to medical equipment (\$ 3.5 billion). A large part finds its way to Europe via Rotterdam. Costa Rica is looking for solutions on how to adapt logistical systems to climate change and reducing post-harvest losses: there is a need for more refrigerated storage facilities and moving food processing and distribution centres closer to production zones. Costa Rica wants to realize its role as "Central American logistics hub" with more infrastructure projects and the development of the hinterland around the ports. Currently the most serious logistics deficiencies in Costa Rica are bridges, ports, and both domestic and regional road transportation. Also, solutions are needed in freight security, border management, supply chain management and urban transportation.

Furthermore, Costa Rica strives to diversify its economy through advanced manufacturing, medical devices, services and tourism. Today, Costa Rica hosts over 300 high-tech multinational companies like Intel, Amazon, HP Enterprise, Boston Scientific, St. Jude Medical, Philips Medical and Abbott and is one of the top 25 leading exporters of high-tech products.

Developments in Panama

Panama is becoming the logistic hub of the Americas and has been the fastest growing Latin American economy for years. The expanded Panama Canal not only tripled its capacity, it also became a firm base for diverse logistics developments. Panama's main challenge is adding value to cargo.

Panama already offers a wide range of first-line logistic services, and new investments are in full fledge:

- Expansion of Tocumen airport (2nd terminal and 3rd runway) and its new logistics cargo zone
- Development of an agro-logistics hub and RoRo terminal on Pacific side of the Canal
- Construction of the 4th bridge crossing the canal on the Pacific side
- Expansion of first metro line and building of new metro lines
- Development of warehousing facilities
- Improvements in e-governance

As Panama goes beyond the Canal, opportunities are materializing quickly. The Dutch consultants Antea Group and Stig Delta created a comprehensive plan for the development of the west bank of the Panama Canal; including amongst others agro-logistics opportunities. Panama would like to make better use of the flow of perishables trade through the Canal. Leading multinationals such as Philips, Unilever, 3M, Caterpillar, BASF,

Bayer and Procter & Gamble have already acknowledged the developments, creating regional headquarters, assembly or distribution centers in Panama.

Participating companies

The ample developments in Costa Rica and Panama's logistics network create opportunities for companies in:

- Import and export activities
- Land-based logistics and infrastructure; rail and truck services
- Air-based logistics; passenger- and cargo services and intermodal logistics
- Cold chain logistics
- Support systems and solutions for all types of logistic services
- Food processing/Added value agro-food sector

Your company can best be represented on the level of a regional business or country manager, or general manager.

The program

The trade mission starts in Panama with the opening of the Panama Maritime Conference. The mission program focuses on Panama as a logistics hub, on intermodal connections with airports and roads, and developments in warehousing. The Panama Maritime Conference attracts key players of the Panamanian maritime sector and international maritime companies. 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 networking events, high-level meetings with authorities and a visit to company visits.

The second half of the mission will take place in Costa Rica, where you will be offered tailor-made matchmaking. Also, you will be provided with key insights on Costa Rica's business climate and promising business opportunities.

Day and time	Activity
Sunday, March 17	
<i>Evening</i>	Opening Panama Maritime Conference
Monday, March 18	
<i>Morning</i>	Business breakfast with Panamanian private sector
<i>Morning</i>	Opening of Panama Maritime Conference
<i>Afternoon</i>	Round table with Chamber of Commerce Panama
<i>Evening</i>	Network drinks at Residency
Tuesday, March 19	
<i>Morning</i>	Panama Maritime Conference
<i>Afternoon</i>	Company visits – Tocumen Airport & cold chain logistics company
<i>Evening</i>	Departure to Costa Rica
Wednesday, March 20	
<i>Morning</i>	Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Trade
<i>Morning</i>	Round-table meeting with PROCOMER
<i>Afternoon</i>	Company presentations – preparation for matchmaking
Thursday, March 21	
<i>Morning</i>	Business opportunities Costa Rica (CINDE - CICR)
<i>Afternoon</i>	Doing Business-lunch with Costa Rica private sector (NAVE)
<i>Afternoon</i>	Matchmaking activity

Registration and costs

The participation fee is € 1000,-. This includes international exposure of your company on the Holland Pavilion and participation in the Panama Maritime Conference. The fee excludes travel, accommodation and personal expenses. You are invited to register for this mission by sending an e-mail to pan-ea@minbuza.nl. Deadline for registration is **February 1, 2019**.

More information

For more information on the trade mission, please contact Carlijne Blom, Economic Officer, via carlijne.blom@minbuza.nl or +5072806667.