

Regional consultations of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States in preparation for the second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-5.2)

3-5 June 2025,
Sheraton Grand Panama, Panama City, Panama

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. City of Panama

Panama's capital is composed of three cities in one: a historic district, a rebuilt district, and very modern areas. This vibrant and dynamic urban centre is a truly cosmopolitan city in the middle of the tropics with breathtaking nature.

Panama City, the oldest permanently occupied European settlement on the Pacific coast of the Americas, was founded in 1519, following the discovery of the South Sea by the Spanish in 1513. Archaeological remains of the original settlement (known today as the Panama Viejo Archaeological Site) include pre-Columbian remains of aboriginal occupation in rock shelters and now encompasses a 32-hectare protected heritage site. The site is an exceptional testimony of colonial urbanism: the ruins of its cathedral, convents, and public buildings present technical and stylistic characteristics typical of their temporal and cultural context.

The current appearance of the Historic District known as Casco Viejo is marked by a unique fusion of 19th and early 20th century architecture, inspired by styles from the late colonial period, the Caribbean, the Gulf Coast, France, and eclectic (especially neo-Renaissance) influences. In the 19th and early 20th century, the styles of the buildings changed greatly, but the principles of spatial use remained essentially the same. The plan of the Casco Viejo, an intricate grid of streets and building blocks of different widths and sizes and fortifications inspired by late Renaissance treatises, is an outstanding and probably unique example of 17th century colonial urban planning in the Americas.

1.2. Currency and credit cards

The official currency of Panama is the Balboa and the US dollar, which have the same value (1\$=1.00 Balboa).

Major credit and debit card franchises (MasterCard, Visa, AMEX), as well as US dollars in cash, are accepted in most hotels, major restaurants, and shops.

1.3. Electricity

In Panama the common voltage is between 110V and 127V (the same in the United States, Canada, and most Central American countries). You can see in the image below the type of plugs.



1.4. Language

The official language of Panama is Spanish; however, English is used in hotels and in the city's main restaurants and bars.

1.5. Climate and time zone

Panama City's climate is characterised by a tropical savannah climate. The rainy season is between May and December, while the dry season is between January and April.

The average temperature is normally around 27°C. The maximum daily temperature is approximately 30°C.

The standard time zone is GMT-5.

1.6. Other considerations

Tipping: Tipping is a common practice in Panama. Generally, it is a voluntary service, and you contribute 10% of the total value of the bill.

Dress code: We recommend business casual clothing. Although the weather is warm, the temperature in the meeting rooms is usually around 21°C (70°F), so we suggest you dress with covered sleeves or a light coat.

2. BEFORE LEAVING FOR PANAMA

2.1. Venue and accommodation

Please note that participants are responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements. It is recommended that participants make their reservation in advance of the event. Most hotels offer free cancellations.

Venue: The meeting will be held in the [Sheraton Grand Hotel](#), address: **Vía Israel y Calle 77, San Francisco, Panama City, Panama**. The hotel is located next to the Atlapa Convention Center.

Some accommodations around the venue are provided below:

HOTEL	WEBSITE	ADDRESS	INFORMATION
Aloft Panama	Link to Aloft Panama	Via Israel & Calle 76, San Francisco, Ciudad de Panamá, 0819-05896 Panamá	Next to the venue, 2 min walk
Ramada Plaza by Wyndham Panama Punta Pacífica	Link to Ramada Plaza	Via Israel y, C. 71 Este, Panama City	Located next to Multiplaza Pacific Mall, 3 min by car
Residence Inn Panama City	Link to Residence Inn	Edificio Pacific Center, C. Ramon H. Jurado,	8 min by car

		Panama City, Panamá Province	
Courtyard by Marriott Panama Multiplaza Mall	Link to Courtyard	Multiplaza Pacific Mall, Via Israel Avenue, Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá	Located inside Multipaza Pacific Mall, 11 min by car
Hotel Las Américas Golden Tower Panamá	Link to Las Americas	Av. Balboa y Calle Esquina, Marbella, Panamá	Seaside, 14 min by car

* Please be reminded that each participant must contact the hotel of their preference directly to make their respective reservations.

2.2. Documents of interest

The [Chair's Text](#) (1 December 2024) and other INC-5.1 [in-session documents](#).

Information regarding the INC-5.2, along with upcoming documents, can be found [here](#).

Please note that UNEP makes every effort to make this event a green meeting; this meeting will be paperless. No documents will be printed. We encourage participants to bring their laptops to download presentations or work on files that will be available during the meeting.

We kindly ask participants to bring their own pens and notepads (if needed).

3. UPON ARRIVAL

3.1. Visas

Registered participants are kindly reminded that it is the responsibility of each participant to apply for their entry visa to Panama, as applicable. Therefore, participants are strongly advised to get acquainted with the entry requirements and processes to obtain an entry visa. The information on visas to enter Panama can be found at: [Permisos Migratorios – Migración Panamá](#).

3.2. Tocumen Airport and transportation

Tocumen International Airport (IATA: PTY, ICAO: MPTO), commonly known as Tocumen, is the main international air terminal serving Panama City. It has two terminals, which are connected by a pedestrian walkway and is located about 20 km east of Panama City.

The transfer to downtown Panama City takes approximately 30 to 50 minutes. UBER service in the Republic of Panama is reliable. At the same time, you can use a private transportation service referred to from the hotel where you are staying. The suggestion is **not** to take yellow cabs at the airport or on the street.

The Tocumen Airport Metro departs every 10 minutes and the cost for the metro lines is USD 0.85. It is possible to pay directly with a Visa or Mastercard card (debit or credit). Take the Tocumen Airport Metro from the new terminal by boarding the train that takes you to the

Corredor Sur station. On the ground level of the airport there is a shuttle bus that passes between terminals one and two. Platform two takes you to Panama City.

3.3. Funded Participants (DSA information)

Participants funded by the INC Secretariat will receive Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) in accordance with the United Nations DSA rates applicable for Panama City, Panama. The designated contact person for the distribution of DSA during the meeting is Zhulma Soto.

Participants will receive specific instructions on the disbursement of the DSA at the registration desk. **Funded participants will need to hand in their boarding pass to Panama, their passport and sign the participation list to receive an authorized debit card** (Cash Card) (if applicable) with the daily subsistence allowance to cover the cost of travel to and from the airport in both the country of origin and in Panama, as well as food, accommodations and incidentals¹ expenses.

3.4. Medical and Travel insurance

Participants attending the Regional Consultation are not covered by insurance for any illness or injury. Medical costs incurred in Panama will be directly borne by the participant.

Travel Insurance is not provided by the United Nations. Therefore, all participants are strongly encouraged to ensure that they have appropriate travel and medical insurance coverage for the full stay in Panama. Participants' insurance should cover both health and accident and should be arranged prior to departure from the country of residence. The INC Secretariat will not be responsible for travel or health insurance coverage.

4. CONTACT

For any additional information please contact at the following emails:

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