



REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —

MINISTERIO DE
RELACIONES EXTERIORES
Embajada de Panamá en
Bélgica

NOVEMBER, 2021

Panama Notes

EMBASSY OF PANAMA TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG, SLOVENIA
AND MISSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

PANAMA REGIONAL LEADER IN CLIMATE ACTIONS



United Nations
Climate Change



UN CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE UK 2021
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR



Welcome to the November edition of the Panama Notes!

In a world shaken by a pandemic, over 20,000 nations representatives, leaders, civil society organizations and media gathered in Glasgow from October 31st to November 12th in the most important climate-related conference in the planet, the United Nations COP26 Climate Summit.

Panama has taken steps accelerating climate actions and made its part for a more sustainable future for generations to come. I feel proud on how far we've come in meeting our ambitious targets, which had turned the country into a leader and a model for Latin America. We encourage other countries to join Panama's efforts in conservating our oceans and protect the environment. Read more about our participation at COP26 and many other topics on the following pages.

We sincerely hope you enjoy the Newsletter and see you in the next edition!

HE Mrs Yavel Francis Lanuza



REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —

IN THIS EDITION

- » **President Cortizo asks at COP26 to provide economic resources to countries like Panama.**
- » **Panama signs declaration to create vast marine protected area.**
- » **First pilot country for the United Nations Fund for Climate Neutrality of Tourism.**
- » **A beautiful Mola at Glasgow.**
- » **An important presence at COP26.**
- » **Youth at the Center of Climate decision making at COP26.**
- » **Carbon Negative Alliance.**
- » **Live for More! new tourism brand.**
- » **How to plan a nature-filled trip to Panama.**
- » **Panama Canal Closed Fiscal Year with Record Tonnage.**
- » **President Cortizo request support with flood of migrants at the 76th Session of U.N. General Assembly.**
- » **Diplomacy in Action.**
- » **Our guest of the month: Dr. Sandra López Verges.**



NOVEMBER, 2021



President Cortizo asks at COP26 to provide economic resources to countries like Panama

The speech of the president of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo at the COP26 climate summit, held in Glasgow, Scotland, he was direct, concise and exalting the compliance that the country is one of the three carbon-free in the world.

Cortizo's speech at COP26 closed by noting that the country, despite achieving this objective of environmental sustainability, did not receive from the Paris Agreement any of the economic support of 100 million that was promised at this summit to the countries that did things well to take care of the environment.

"It is ironic that of the 100 billion committed in the Paris Agreement, for green support to emerging countries, Panama has not received a single penny. Today we are here, once again, talking about funds that should be destined to

encourage the countries that do it well," Cortizo stressed.

The Panamanian president highlighted that the country has become a Blue Leader, protecting forests, giving 33% protection to protected areas and 30% to maritime areas, which has made Panama's forests absorb more carbon than that we emit.

"Panama has achieved this with concrete actions and this is what countries need," said the president.

Cortizo also highlighted Panama's connectivity with 170 countries and with 1,920 ports worldwide.

[Click here for more information](#)

Panama signs declaration to create vast marine protected area



The President of the Republic of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo, signed with his counterparts Ivan Duque from Colombia, Carlos Alvarado from Costa Rica and Guillermo Lasso of Ecuador, the Declaration for the Conservation and Management of the Ecosystems Covered in the Marine Corridor of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Migravías Cocos-Galapagos-Malpelo-Coiba, within the framework of the Twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (COP26) held in the Scottish city of Glasgow.

During his participation, the Panamanian president highlighted: “When you have an activity like this, it gives the world hope, **For Panama it is an honor and a privilege to accompany our sister countries such as Colombia, Costa Rica and Ecuador in an alliance of this nature**”.

The project will have the support of CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, which will provide a technical cooperation of US\$ 1 million to conserve biodiversity and the use of marine and coastal resources of this marine corridor that share Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama, which generates US\$ 3 billion annually derived mainly from fishing, tourism and maritime transport.

The biodiversity of the Marine Corridor, which includes coral areas, passage of large migrants, reptiles or numerous sharks, it has a close relationship with the great cultural and tourist offer of customs, gastronomy and handicrafts. In this sense, sustainable tourism will also be promoted.

“It is imperative to adopt nature-based measures to preserve our natural ecosystems. **With these funds for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor, we will help protect a unique place, and with this we**

will contribute to preserve the economy of local communities and to promote regional tourism”, said **Sergio Diaz-Granados**, executive president of CAF.

As part of the explanatory memorandum, **The Declaration establishes that the goal known as 30 × 30 encourages the protection of 30% of the global land and sea surface by 2030** as a way to face the environmental, climate and biodiversity crisis in an integrated way, an achievement reached by Panama in June 2021.



The Panamanian ruler stated that, **Thanks to the protection of ecosystems and marine species, Panama is recognized as a “Blue Leader” country**, Therefore, he called on the countries of the region to carry out joint actions to ensure resilience to climate change and the conservation of diversity.

[Click for more information](#)



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

First pilot country for the United Nations Fund for Climate Neutrality of Tourism



On November 4, was announced at COP 26 that **Panama will be the first pilot country for the United Nations Fund for Climate Neutrality of Tourism**. An agreement was signed between the government of Panama, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the Network of Ocean Ambassadors Headquarters (NOAH) to establish Panama as the first pilot country to support the implementation of the United Nations Fund for Climate Neutrality in Tourism.

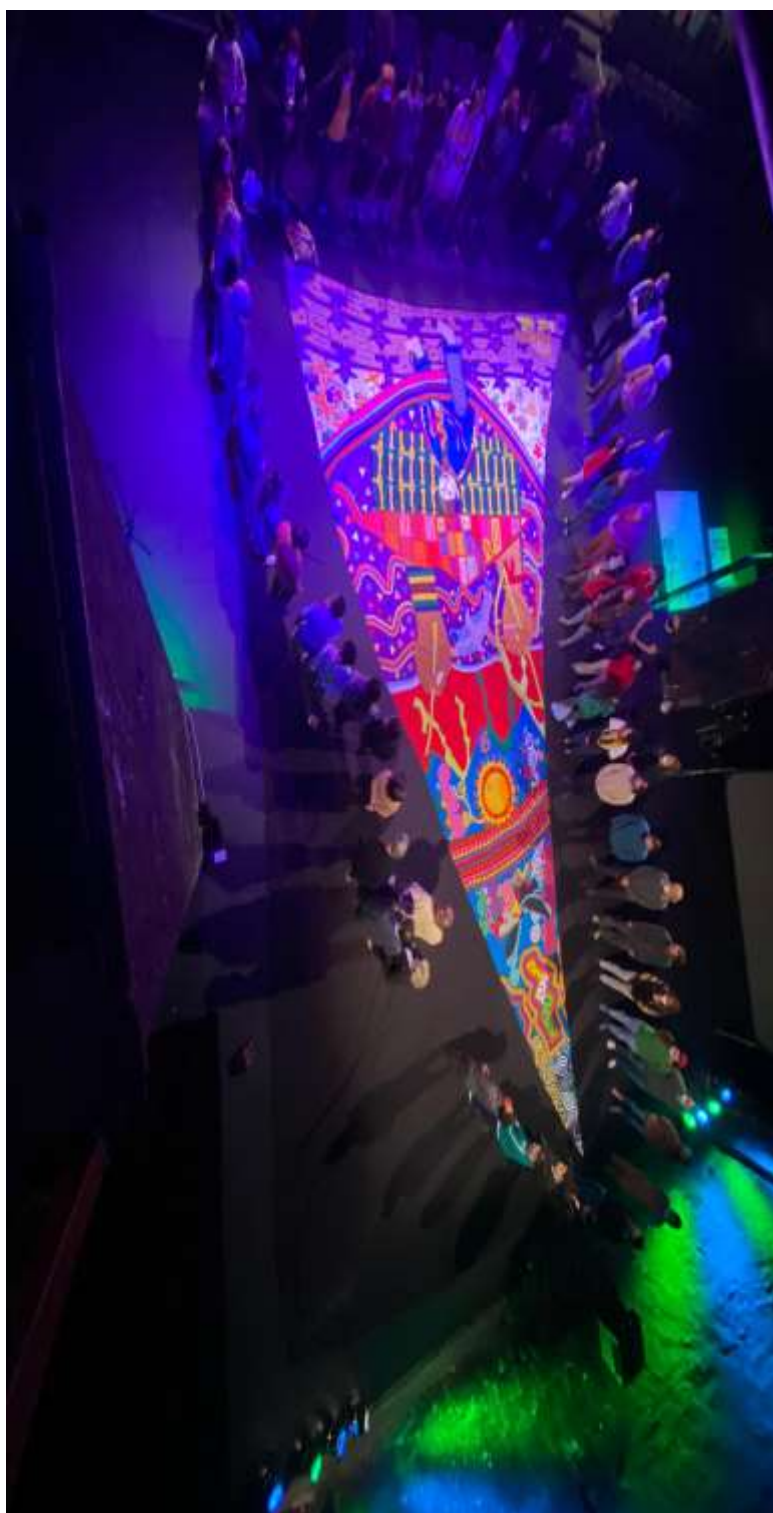
This is an innovative financing instrument promoted by the UNWTO to respond to problems related to the climate crisis. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. With this agreement, **Panama ratifies its climate leadership and its efforts to conserve and regenerate nature and, at the same time, trigger economic growth through tourism that benefits local communities.**

[Click here for more information](#)

These projects follow UNWTO's commitment to transform the tourism sector – in cooperation with the UN system, international organizations, UNWTO Member States and the private sector at large – to accelerate the decarbonization of the sector.

Regarding the concrete initiatives to take place in Panama as a pilot country, NOAH will prepare a study in coordination with the Ministry of Environment to estimate the reserves of “blue carbon” in mangroves and seagrasses of protected areas of the Republic of Panama, as well as carbon stocks in wetlands. **Likewise, NOAH will establish in Panama the headquarters of an international Intelligent Carbon Exchange Market (MIIC)**, as established in a previous Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNWTO and NOAH.

A beautiful Mola at Glasgow



In front of hundreds of international delegates, the mola with a sail design was hoisted, at the National Pavilion of Panama at the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland.

It is a huge mola approximately ten meters high in the shape of a sail that It was made by women from the Guna Yala Region and that contains a vision of climate change, from the perspective of that ethnic group.

The entire cosmogony and history of the town is presented on the large canvas with its own biodiversity aspects.

Milciades Concepción, Minister of the Environment, said that the making of this cool mola constitutes a great achievement and what he will represent at the COP26 world climate change summit in Glasgow, Scotland: “It has a lot of meaning and very deep. With that ancestral knowledge that they have, we arrived here and we feel satisfied and excited about the meaning of the worldview of their components,” he said.

In the extensive canvas a great message is reflected at the international level about the importance of conserving in these difficult times that we live, especially that indigenous community and how communities should unite to combat climate change.

[Click here for more information](#)

An important presence at COP26



President Nito Cortizo inaugurated the Panama Pavilion at COP26. The objective is to publicize efforts to care for the environment.

"We show the world the efforts as a country to mitigate and reduce the effects of climate change on the planet, and our progress in meeting the goals and objectives proposed in the Paris Agreement," said the president.

"COP26 is undoubtedly the most important summit in the last 2 years and the one that has had the largest presence of heads of state and government. **The commitments that we have as a country in favor of the environment are recognized by the world. We need to unite, align ourselves with the purpose of sustainable development, which not only includes the reduction of emissions, but also implies**

inclusion, equality, equity and the achievement of climate resilience," said Cortizo.

In the opening ceremony, the President was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama - Erika Mouynes; the Minister of the Environment, Milciades Concepción, the Ambassador of Panama in the United Kingdom, Natalia Royo and Ivan Eskildsen, Administrator of the Tourism Authority of Panama.

Through a statement from the Presidency, it was explained that the Panama Pavilion is a venue to hold meetings with strategic allies, environment ministers, presidents and organizations, to work in the fight against climate change.

[Click here for more information](#)



Youth at the center of climate decision-making at COP26



Juan Carlos Monterrey Gomez is organized, passionate and 29 years old — **young for the lead negotiator of a nation** (America’s top negotiator, John F. Kerry, turns 78 next month). **Monterrey and Panama occupy what passes for moral high ground inside the conference; the country of just over 4 million identifies as one of only three nations on the planet to be carbon negative.** Monterrey is an insider — and was namechecked by Barack Obama during his Glasgow speech Nov. 8 — but his goals align with the protesters outside the barriers of COP26. He and they are desperate to persuade bigger nations to slash their emissions faster and to support vulnerable nations that disproportionately suffer climate effects.

In the final 48 hours of COP26, the young Panama’s negotiator pinballed between meetings and hugged his way through the main corridor, exuding a mood that clashed with the drudgery of the conference and the dread of this epoch.

Monterrey “has the capacity to look at the issue from the perspective of a young person with an

activist’s mind-set and a negotiator who can sit at the table and pursue pragmatic solutions — and that’s an all-too-rare combination,” says Obama’s former deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes, who knows Monterrey through the Obama Foundation’s scholars’ program. At 23, Monterrey attended the triumphant COP21 in Paris.

At the start of COP26, the Panamanian government declared that “youth must be at the center of climate decision-making.” Monterrey in the lead “has raised the profile and ambition of the issue for Panama,” Rhodes says. The country claims to have the youngest delegation in the history of U.N. climate conferences.

“I want to make a call to the youth of the world: The most effective way to change a system is to get in the system,” Monterrey wrote in black pen in his notebook, urging young people to join diplomacy, politics and climate activism.

“We need more of you”

[Click here for more information](#)

Carbon Negative Alliance



The heavily forested Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan - which measures its success in "Gross National Happiness" - hasn't made a net-zero pledge, like a growing number of nations. That's because it is already "carbon negative", absorbing more climate-changing emissions each year than it produces.

The forests of the thinly populated country of less than a million people absorb more than 9 million tonnes of carbon each year, while its economy, designed to reduce fossil fuel use and waste, produces less than 4 million tonnes.

"We are showing the world what we can do if we have the political will," Sonam Wangdi, secretary of the National Environment

Commission, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview at the U.N. climate talks in Glasgow.

At COP26, they formed a formal alliance, signing a declaration calling for international finance, preferential trade, carbon pricing and other measures to support their economies and other "carbon negative" nations yet to emerge.

"We are taking the first step. What is the world doing for us? We're looking for support," said Albert Ramdin, Suriname's Foreign Minister, at the signing.

"What these three countries have achieved has been based on national efforts and national sacrifice," he added.

JOIN THE CLUB

Erika Mouynes, Panama's Foreign Minister, said channeling economic benefits to nations that protect their forests is key to expanding the

"carbon negative" club and helping drive global efforts to cut climate-changing emissions.



Educating citizens about protecting nature is also crucial, she said, since "they are the actual forest-keepers".

Panama now hopes to share what it has learned on its path to being certified carbon negative by

the U.N. climate secretariat - including lessons from its indigenous forest communities.

"If we're able to do it, then many more can do it."

[Click here for more information](#)





Live for More! New tourism brand

Panama announced the launch of its new tourism brand platform anchored by the tagline 'Live for More'. The brand is a beacon of Panamanian pride, rooted in the country's sustainable tourism vision and inspired by its radiant culture, rich history and biodiversity. It inspires purpose-driven travelers to make a positive impact on the destination through its immersive tourism offerings.

Drawing on Panama's longtime heritage as the bridge of the world, 'Live for More' conveys the country's offerings as an exuberant purpose-led destination that both beams with life and connects travelers to its deep cultural roots. It awakens travelers with the intrigue, energy and power of worlds converging in this small, yet mighty country. The initial launch leads with immersive visual elements including a new logo, a film, a redesigned website, new photography and a series of digital content published across the brand's social media channels. **The 'Live for**

More' brand platform is founded on Panama's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism, recently recognized by UNESCO as an example of innovation and sustainability, highlighting Panama's unique tourism routes. The plan reactivates Panama's Tourism, Conservation and Research (TCI) strategy, and focuses on three core areas: Cultural Heritage (multifaceted culture), Green Heritage (extraordinary biodiversity) and Blue Heritage (ocean wonders).

"Combined with our Master Plan, the launch of this new brand is a pivotal step in attracting quality travelers that aspire to make a difference, serving as a catalyst to improve the quality of life of local communities, while conserving and protecting our natural and cultural resources," added Minister Eskildsen.

[Click here for more information](#)



HOW TO PLAN A NATURE-FILLED TRIP TO PANAMA

On the isthmus (a narrow strip of land) linking central and south America, lies Panama, a diverse country with unique flora and fauna. Home to hundreds of tropical birds, rare ecosystems, and, of course, the famous Panama Canal which cuts through the middle of the mainland.

With so much nature to protect, Panama is keen to attract eco-tourists looking to immerse themselves in the landscape and engage with the natural world. As well as the mainland, Panama also has a whopping 1,400 islands to its name, with land masses in both the Caribbean and the Pacific.

What's the best time of year to visit Panama?

Panama is effectively divided in two by the Tabasará Mountains, which form a central spine down its middle. This makes its Caribbean and Pacific ecosystems quite different from one another, with higher levels of rainfall throughout the year on the Caribbean side.

Tourists looking for sunnier days should visit between mid-December and March, while April to early December is a great time of year to explore Panama's lush landscape and see migratory birds and wildlife.

How to explore the Panama Canal

One of the most famous maritime trade routes in the world, the Panama Canal connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The man-made canal opened in 1914 and has been a vital waterway for global shipping ever since. What you may not know, though, is that the Panama Canal is also a great place for watersports and birdwatching. With kayaking, canoeing and boat tours on offer, you can explore this famous waterway and the surrounding tropical rainforests.

[Click here for more information](#)

Panama Canal Closed Fiscal Year with Record Tonnage



The Panama Canal closed its fiscal year 2021 (FY21) with a record-breaking annual tonnage of 516.7 million Panama Canal tons (PC/UMS), coming in 8.7% higher compared to the 2020 fiscal year (FY20) and 10% above tonnage registered in FY19, the waterway’s last pre-pandemic fiscal year.

“I am grateful for and proud of our world-class workforce, whose resilience and dedication allowed us, throughout the pandemic, to continue providing a service of excellence and enabling the uninterrupted delivery of essential goods around the world,” said Panama Canal Administrator **Ricaurte Vásquez Morales**. “This commitment was key in our ability to manage a record tonnage, which reinforces the Expanded Canal’s value to global trade after five years of successful operations.”

Looking Ahead – Securing a Sustainable Future

The Panama Canal also advanced its commitments to accelerating the decarbonization of shipping in FY21. In January 2021, the Panama Canal announced the creation of the CO2 Emissions Dashboard, which calculates the carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions saved by vessels that choose to transit the Panama Canal over the most likely alternative route. Building on

these and other longstanding efforts, the waterway then committed in April 2021 to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, with plans already underway to invest roughly US\$2.4 billion in modernizing its equipment and infrastructure to meet this commitment. The Canal will also spend US\$2.8 billion in maintenance, as well as US\$500 million in digital transformation initiatives to maximize its capacity and value offered to customers for years to come.

The Panama Canal is working on its roadmap outlining the specific steps it will take to reach carbon neutrality by 2030, from generating electricity from renewable sources to migrating the Canal’s fleet to electric vehicles and hybrid tugboats. The Canal will also explore a pricing strategy that promotes the efficiency and low-carbon emissions of the ships that transit the waterway, as well as participate in the upcoming 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) and IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC77) meetings.

[Click here for more information](#)



President Cortizo request support with flood of migrants at the 76th Session of U.N. General Assembly



Panama’s President Laurentino Cortizo has requested support to address the flood of migrants passing through his nation.

He told the U.N. General Assembly that, this year alone, already 80,000 migrants have traversed Panama. It’s been an exponential rise, from 800 in January to 30,000 last month, and Panama dedicates some of its limited resources to providing them with food and shelter.

“Panama does its part. Now we appeal to the international community to, as soon as possible, make a joint effort, with coordinated strategies and resources,” he said.

Cortizo said the migrants largely originate in Africa and the Caribbean. The crisis is centered in the deep forest of the Darien Gap at Panama’s border with Colombia, which migrants attempt to cross en route to the U.S.

Panama’s Foreign Minister Erika Mouynes said in an-interview with The Associated Press, that the nation hasn’t received “a cent of international cooperation” to face up to the flow of migrants.

“This is everyone’s responsibility,” Cortizo said.

[Click here for more information](#)

DIPLOMACY IN ACTION



Ambassador H.E Yavel Francis participated in the lunch organized by the Latin American Group (GRULA) in Brussels, to welcome the new ambassadors of the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Mexico and farewell to the Ambassador of Cuba.



At the end of September, the PPT of the Central American Integration System (SICA) coordinated a visit of the Central American Ambassadors to the Port of Antwerp to learn by first-hand about the port operations and the possibilities for cooperation between the Port of Antwerp authorities and the countries of our region.



Ambassador H.E Yavel Francis imposed the National Decoration of the Vasco Nuñez de Balboa Order in the Grade of Grand Cross, to His Excellency Michel Dewez, former Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium in Panama from 2017 to 2021. The decoration was awarded in recognition of his contributions to the strengthening of diplomatic relations between our countries. The ceremony was attended by family and friends of Ambassador Dewez and members of the diplomatic mission of Panama in Brussels.



OUR GUEST OF THE MONTH



WE ARE PROUD to have as guest of the month:

Dr. Sandra López Verges

The International Women’s Forum Announces Its 28th Annual Class of Leadership Fellows and Dr. Sandra Lopez has become the first Panamanian woman to be selected by the Organization.

The class consists of 32 participants representing 10 countries including: Bahamas, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Mexico, Panama, United Kingdom, United States, and Slovenia.

Dr. López is committed to Women in Science. She has helped organize the Panama National UNESCO-L’OREAL award with SENACYT, L’OREAL and UNESCO in 2017 to encourage young women to pursue scientific careers in their country. She works for gender equity in science with the Global Young Academy (GYA), CienciaEnPanama,

As a Senior Health Researcher and Chief of the Department of Research in Virology and Biotechnology at the Gorgas Memorial Institute of Health Studies since 2020, she has been developing research on innate and adaptative immunity during arboviral and emergent virus infections, mentoring students at the Ph.D., master, bachelor, and high school level. She also participates in the national molecular laboratory response for the COVID19 pandemic.

Her research has resulted in one patent and many publications in peer-reviewed journals and awards such as the Gorgas Memorial award from ASTMH in 2013, UNESCO-L’OREAL International Fellowship for Young Women in Science in 2014, TWAS-APANAC award in 2014, selected as member of the Global Young Academy (GYA) in 2018.

© 2021 REPÚBLICA DE PANAMA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
EMBASSY OF PANAMA TO THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM, GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG,
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA AND MISSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION
AVENUE LOUISE 475, 1050 IXELLES – BRUSSELS
TEL: (+ 3 2) 2 6 4 9 - 0 7 - 2 9 EMAIL: info@embpanamabxl.be



The Embassy of Panama is not responsible for the accuracy or content of the information or news contained in the sites linked to and any mention in this Newsletter cannot be taken as an endorsement of any product or service.