

Regional Capacity-Building Workshop to Advance the Integrated State of Convention Area Report (SOCAR) on Marine Pollution, Marine Habitats, and Sargassum

15-17 SEPTEMBER 2026

Panama City, Panama

Information Note for Meeting Participants

15-17 September 2026

Welcome

This document provides essential background information on logistics and arrangements for the **Integrated SOCAR Subgroup Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop, to be held in a hybrid format in Panama City, Panama, from 15–17 September 2026**. Participants are encouraged to review these guidelines carefully prior to traveling to the meeting venue.

The Integrated SOCAR Subgroup Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop forms part of the process to develop the Integrated State of Convention Area Report (SOCAR) for the Wider Caribbean Region. The workshop has been designed to strengthen regional capacity for integrated assessments and to support Working Group recommendations on the purpose, scope, conceptual framework, methodological approach, environmental and ecological objectives, indicator framework, data requirements and reporting structure of the Integrated SOCAR.

The workshop will seek to develop a shared understanding of the conceptual framework, methodological approach, indicators, objectives, data requirements, and reporting structure for the Integrated State of Convention Area Report (SOCAR), while strengthening regional collaboration and advancing a scientifically robust, policy-relevant, and integrated assessment framework for the Wider Caribbean Region.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to welcome you to Panama City, Panama, for the **Integrated SOCAR Subgroup Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop**.

The meeting will take place over three days:

- **Day 1:** Tuesday, 15 September
- **Day 2:** Wednesday, 16 September
- **Day 3:** Thursday, 17 September

For interpretation purposes, all participants, including those attending in person, are required to join the meeting via Zoom. The same Zoom link will be used throughout the three-day meeting:

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Registration and Meeting Link:

<https://un-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/c1y1t3aRfal8gCrKHZJWQ>

Once registered, you will receive the connection details for the meeting.

Language and Interpretation

The meetings will be conducted in English and Spanish, with simultaneous interpretation available in both languages. To facilitate remote interpretation, all attendees are kindly requested to bring their own equipment—specifically laptops and headphones or headsets.

While interpreters recommend wired headsets with a microphone arm (example to the right), participants may use any available equipment.



Meeting Venue

All three (3) meeting days will take place at the **Marriott Panama Hotel**, in Panama City, (**Meeting Room: Contadora IV on the mezzanine level**)



Address and contact information:

Marriott Panama

Ave. Marginal, Albrook Mall, Ciudad de

Panamá Telephone: +507 307-0245

marriott.com/PTYMC

Accommodation

Participants may make their hotel reservations at the Marriott Panama Hotel, Ave. Marginal, Albrook Mall, Ciudad de Panamá. The Secretariat has secured a special rate of USD 85.00 plus tax per night for single occupancy, including breakfast.

To access the special rate please click on this link: [Book your group rate for UNEP CEP SOCAR](#)

Participants are strongly encouraged to make their reservations as early as possible to take advantage of this special rate and ensure room availability. The hotel has advised that a valid credit card is required to guarantee the booking; however, payment will only be charged upon arrival.

Participants who prefer alternative accommodation may also consider the following hotels:

Hotel	Estimated rate/night (single occupancy)	Distance from Marriott Panama
Albrook Inn	USD 70 + tax	Approx. 0.9 mi (1.4 km)
Hyatt Regency Panama City	USD 196 + USD 20 tax	Approx. 2.0 mi (3.2 km)
Hotel Riu Plaza Panama	USD 145 + USD 14.50 tax	Approx. 2.2 mi (3.5 km)
Plaza Paitilla Inn	USD 93.09 + USD 9.31 tax	Approx. 3.5 mi (5.6 km)
Radisson Hotel Panama Canal	USD 144 + USD 14.40 tax	Approx. 4.3 mi (7.0 km)

Daily subsistence allowance (DSA)

UNEP-sponsored meeting participants will receive a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) and terminal expenses to support their travel. Participants who are not sponsored by UNEP will be responsible for covering all costs associated with their participation in the meetings.

The DSA is the United Nations' contribution toward expenses incurred during official travel, including accommodation, meals, gratuities, and other incidental costs. The DSA rate for Panama City is established periodically by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and is currently **USD 230 per day**.

In addition to the DSA, sponsored participants will receive USD 252 in terminal expenses to cover transportation between the airport (or other arrival/departure points) and their hotel or other place of accommodation.

DSA and terminal expense payments will be issued through a United Nations (UN) debit card. UNEP-sponsored participants will receive their card on the first day of the meeting, 15 September. Additional information will be shared with sponsored participants in the coming weeks.

As DSA and terminal expense payments will be disbursed through a UN debit card issued on 15 September, UNEP-sponsored participants are encouraged to make the necessary arrangements for any accommodation or other travel-related expenses incurred prior to that date.

Boarding Passes

Please retain all boarding passes and hotel invoices (where applicable), as these documents will be required for travel verification and post-travel reconciliation. Participants should submit their **inbound boarding passes** to the UNEP organisers on the first day of the meeting and retain their return

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(outbound) boarding passes for submission following travel. The outbound/return boarding passes should be sent via email to jerome.nelson@un.org.

Immigration/visa arrangements

UNEP CCS does not accept responsibility for any consequences of failure to comply with the necessary health, passport and visa requirements.

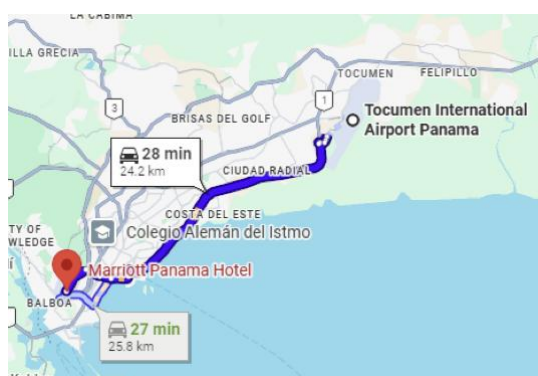
Health Requirements and Medical Services

Any medical expenses incurred while in Panama City will be the responsibility of the participant. Participants are therefore strongly advised to arrange comprehensive travel health insurance prior to departure from their country of origin and arrival in Panama City.

Nearby Medical Facilities & Hospitals:

Hospital Nacional	Clinica Hospital San Fernando	Hospital Punta Pacífica (Pacífica Salud)
Type: Private hospital Address: Avenida Cuba and Calle 38, Bella Vista, Panama City Telephone: +507 207-8100 Distance from Marriott Panama Hotel: Approximately 5-7 km (10-15 minutes) depending on traffic.	Type: Private hospital Address: Vía España, Panama City Telephone: +507 305-6300 Distance from Marriott Panama Hotel: Approximately 6-8 km (12-20 minutes) depending on traffic.	Type: Private hospital Address: Boulevard Pacífica y Vía Punta Darién, Punta Pacífica Telephone: +507 204-8000 Emergency: +507 204-8184 / 8185 Distance from Marriott Panama Hotel: Approximately 8-10 km (15-25 minutes) depending on traffic.

Transportation to and from the Airport



Tocumen International Airport (PTY) is the main international airport in Panama City. Participants are expected to make their own travel arrangements to and from the airport. The trip from Tocumen International Airport (PTY) to Marriott Panama Hotel by taxi is 28 minutes via Corredor Sur (tolls).

We recommend that you take a reputable transportation provider to your destination in Panama City. **The airport has an authorized taxi station, located at the national and international exit.** We recommend using

these stations for transfers to other areas of the city since they are operated by reliable drivers. The rates can be found here: <https://www.airporttransferportal.com/airport-guides/pty>

You may also contact your hotel for their available options. Rideshare services, such as Uber, are also available.

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Getting around

Unless otherwise advised, participants are responsible for their movements in Panama City. The Marriott Panama Hotel is directly connected to the massive Albrook Mall and next to the Albrook Transportation Hub, giving you easy access to the Panama Metro. Top nearby sights include the historic Casco Viejo, the Miraflores Locks of the Panama Canal, and Ancon Hill.

Nearby Entertainment & Attractions include:

- **Nightlife & Dining:** While the Albrook area offers a variety of casual dining options within Albrook Mall, visitors seeking Panama City's vibrant restaurant and nightlife scene may wish to visit Casco Viejo, Bella Vista, or El Cangrejo, all of which offer excellent restaurants, bars, and rooftop venues. These areas are best reached by Uber, taxi, or Metro.
- **Sightseeing:** The Miraflores Locks Visitor Center at the Panama Canal is one of the city's most popular attractions and is located approximately 15-20 minutes by car from the hotel, depending on traffic. Casco Viejo, the city's historic district and home to the Panama Canal Museum, is approximately 20-30 minutes away. Ancon Hill, offering panoramic views of Panama City and the Canal, is nearby and can be reached in about 15 minutes by car. Please note that most attractions charge an entrance fee ranging from approximately USD 5-20.
- **Shopping:** Albrook Mall, one of Latin America's largest shopping centers, directly connected to the hotel. For additional shopping, Multiplaza Pacific Mall and Multicentro Mall are approximately 20-30 minutes away by car, depending on traffic.
- **Activities:** The Amador Causeway, a popular waterfront destination for walking, cycling, dining, and sightseeing, is approximately 20-25 minutes by car. Metropolitan Natural Park offers hiking trails and wildlife viewing and is located about 15 minutes away. Visitors can also easily access attractions throughout the city via the Panama Metro, with the Albrook Transportation Hub located next to the hotel.

Security

Panama City is generally safe to visit; however, it is important to always take precautions. For your own safety while in the city, take note of the tips below:

- Know where you are and where you are going
- Keep your cell phone, camera and wallet secure
- Never leave any valuables out and alone
- Avoid shortcuts in back alleys, keep to the main roads
- Always carry some form of identification and the address and phone number of your hotel
- Do not carry large sums of money
- While travelling in a taxi keep your windows rolled up
- Be aware of pickpockets

Useful information

Weather: Panama City has a tropical climate, with high temperatures and humidity throughout the year. It experiences a rainy season from approximately May to November and a dry season from December to April. Temperatures typically range from the mid-20s to the low 30s degrees Celsius.

Dress code: The dress code for the meeting is business casual.

Currency, payments and banking: Major credit cards are widely accepted. The official currency of Panama is the Panamanian Balboa (PAB); however, the United States Dollar (USD) is widely used and used and circulates at a 1:1 rate.

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Time Zone: Eastern Standard Time (GMT-5)

Wi-Fi: Wi-Fi will be available at the meeting location, **Contadora IV meeting room, Marriott Panama Hotel.**

Contact Information

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