



Regional Newsflash December 2010 Edition 35

Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Dominican Republic

The regional newsflash is a publication composed by the Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic. The newsflash provides an update in terms of imperative economical developments, the most important tenders and a selection of other relevant business news that have to do with the region. This newsflash is shared with a distinctive group of Dutch businesses with special interests in the region or in a specific country. It consists of publicly available information from various sources such as news articles, press releases, and third party information. The Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in San José, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic are not responsible for the accuracy of the published information. If you do not want to receive the regional newsflash, or wish to add a person to the distribution list, or would like to send a response, please feel free to send an email to sanjose@trade-minbuza.nl. For Panama a separate newsletter is published.

Central American region



The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Costa Rica (also responsible for Panama, El Salvador and Honduras), Nicaragua and Guatemala welcomes you to the new Business Guide for Central American firms that are interested in doing business with the Netherlands. The Netherlands are part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which consists of four countries, namely, Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten. All are islands in the Caribbean. In 2008, the Dutch embassies in Central America launched the digital trade guide for Dutch entrepreneurs known as "Handelswijzer" with the purpose of providing information on doing business in Central America (www.handelswijzer.com). In 2009 we launched the virtual trading platform to facilitate communication between Dutch and Central America companies (www.centralamericab2b.com). Now we produced a guide to Central American firms wishing to do business with the Netherlands and Europe (EU), named www.guiadecomercio.nl. All these instruments were developed to assist companies in finding business opportunities and promote trade.



CA Exports Up 10.5% (Source: Infolatam) Sales abroad from the region closed with a 10.5% increase for 2010 in comparison to 2009. According to the Central American Economic Integration Department, exports from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua totaled \$ 22,187.2 million at the end of 2010, 10.5% higher than the \$ 19,863, 8 million of 2009. A quarter of the exports amounting to U.S. \$ 5.726.9 million is intra-regional trade, ie between countries in Central America.

Unified Regional Trade Regulations (Source: Nacion.com) This first unification of regulations will benefit the export sector of food and medicine industry. The signing of the agreement to unify technical regulations will be held next Monday and will then be submitted for review to the countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The unification of rules prevents companies to have the need to arrange export permits for each country in the region. The Costa Rican Foreign Trade Minister, Anabel González, without providing many details, quoted the example of uniformity of labels.



Recycling is Up and Coming in Central America (Source: ipsnoticias.net)

The recycling industry grows in the region as a way to save costs, create jobs and protect the environment. Nicaragua has exported until October of this year about 40 million Dollars in recyclable material, primarily iron, while in 2009 it exported 24 million Dollars, stated as evidence of the sector's growth Carlos Marin, president of the Recycling Association of that country. In Guatemala there are reports of a similar situation: Raul Bonilla, from the firm Friends of Nature, said that in 2006 they collected 96 tons of recyclables, while between January and October 2010 they collected 1,250 tons. The

waste exchange between companies is an activity in itself, as evidenced by the Market Industrial Wastes and Byproducts, which operates in Costa Rica since 2004. This entity uses electronic means to sell between 100 and 120 tons of garbage per semester. More recently, in August 2009, the Industrial Waste Exchange of Central America and the Caribbean was created, comprising Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. It operates similarly to its counterpart in Costa Rica and during the first 10 months of operation it sold 8 tons of waste.



Project for Container Port in Costa Rica (Source: elfinancierocr.com)

The National Concessions Council began the process of studying the financial proposal made by APM Terminals (Rotterdam), after they formally approved the technical proposal.. APM Terminals was the only company to bid for construction and operation of a container port in Moin. The National Concession Council has until the end of January to decide whether to accept the proposal and grant concession to the Dutch company or declare the process void and prepare a new process. On 15 December, at the Dutch residence a meeting took

place between APM Terminals (Rotterdam), Francisco Jimenez, Minister of Transportation and assembled press and opinion leaders. Leslie Moyaart, Vice President, APM Terminals and Paul Gallie, Director of Port Development Latin America, presented the plans for a new container port in Moin, Costa Rica. APM plans set out along these lines; Terminal de Contenedores de Moin (TCM) will be the new container terminal just north-west of the existing port Moin. The planned project consists of constructing a 70 hectare island just off the coast, with a breakwater of 1600 meters, six berths and 13 gantry cranes. The port will have the capacity to attend ships that carry up to 8,000 containers each. The new terminal will offer many advantages to Costa Rica; it will be operational 24 hours a day thru the whole year, with the breakwater the port will remain open even in bad weather, modern cranes



and more and larger birth sites will make the port more efficient which in turn will lead to lower shipping tariffs, thus benefitting everyone.



Minister of Economic Development Curacao Abdul Nasser El Hakim visited Costa

Hakim visited Costa Rica to discuss investment and trade opportunities in and thru Curaçao. The Minister visited the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, there he was welcomed by the Ambassador, Matthijs van Bonzel. At the Dutch Embassy he also met with students from the University of Twente who visited the Embassy as part of their research trip on entrepreneurship in Costa Rica. Meetings took place with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Chamber of Export and

a visit with the Ministry of Foreign Trade. Furthermore the Minister has a chance to meet with Dutch companies such as Seatrade, KLM, TMF and Cafe Britt. The Minister is interested in getting high quality products such as fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products and meat among others at competitive prices in order to lower the cost of living in Curacao.



Holland promotion thru Team Amsterdam in cycling Tour of Costa Rica

On Dec. 15 Amsterdam Team presented itself to Costa Rican press and TV. The Dutch Embassy was one of the main sponsors (Holland, pioneers in international business!) was also present and promoted business opportunities between the two countries. The Embassy helped Team Amsterdam to find sponsors: Pan-American Life, Seatrade, Fides and Proagroin. For ten days, it was the main sporting event in the country with daily live coverage on TV and plenty of exposure in the media. Several dutch companies have already expressed interest in sponsoring them in 2011 if their shedule allows them to participate.



ICE Invites Bids for \$ 24 Million in Equipment (Source: Mer-Link) The Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad bids the purchase of electromechanical equipment. The electromechanical equipment acquisition is for the expansion of the Cachi Hydroelectric Project. Some of the items listed are: Francis turbine, 40 MW, 514 RPM, 18 M3 / S., Automatic Speed Regulator p / Turbine, Hydraulic Turbine automatic controller. Schedule for reception of offers is February 9th, 2011

ICE Invites Bids for \$ 4.2 Million in Machinery (Source: Mer-Link) The "Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad" invited companies to bid for supplying 3 radial drilling rigs. According to technical specifications the equipment consists of a high production underground drilling rig, hammer head, with chassis mounted on wheels, equipped with self-propelled relocation package electro-hydraulic type with power for the drilling system. The contract should also include training for personnel operating the equipment. The estimated date for submission of proposals is January 18, 2011.

Costa Rica's ICE Bids \$ 10.4 Million in Vehicles (Source: Mer-Link) In three different bidding processes the Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad will purchase a total of 178 vehicles. The vehicles must meet the following specifications: (47) medium size double cabin Pickup 4x4, (26) Large Single Cab Pickup 4x4, (29) 4x4 single cab small trucks, (2) 4x2 double cab small trucks, (2) large station 4x4, (1) large rural 4x4, (1) medium van 4x2. Bidding process 2010LA-000226-PROV: 61 vehicles of different types, including; Station Wagon 4x2, Grand Station-Vehicle 4x4, Rural 4x4, 4x4 Diesel Pick-Up, Single cab 4x2 small truck. Bidding process 2010LA-000224-PROV: (5) 34-passenger Van, (3) 15-passenger Van, (1) bus for 54 passengers. Estimated date for submission of proposals is January 27, 2011.



Work on Courtyard Marriott Hotel begins (Source: elfinancierocr.com) With a \$ 14 million investment, the Courtyard by Marriott hotel in Alajuela began construction. In a property of nearly 7 thousand square meters, with seven floors, the hotel will have 127 rooms. It will also be built to achieve LEED certification (leader in energy and environmental design), awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council for buildings meeting certain environmentally friendly criteria, thus presenting **opportunities for Dutch energy efficiency suppliers**.

Two Bids for Cellular Market (Source: Nacion.com) Finally just America Movil (Claro) and Telefonica (Movistar) were the only ones to submit their cell phone service offerings. By January 19th, 2011, the Evaluating Commission will open the bids and report to the Superintendence of Telecommunications (Sutel), after analyzing technical issues. Now that the bidding process is complete, it is clear that the Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad (ICE) is among the big winners. Unable to keep its monopoly, the institution started delaying the process and messing things up. In the end, it managed to prolong the life of its unique business and reduce the number of new competitors. There were only two bids for two of the three frequencies auctioned, which in principle means a loss of \$ 70 million for the state and new operators will effectively enter the market only in late 2011, four years after Costa Rica decided to end the telecommunications monopoly.

Volcano to Invest \$ 35 Million in Costa Rica (Source: Nacion.com) The medical devices company will build a 25.000 square meters plant in Coyol, Alajuela. Volcano's manufacturing facility will produce intravascular ultrasound catheters and precision cables, and the company expects to begin construction on January 2011. Volcano Corp. joins 37 other companies already operating in the country in the field of medical devices and biotechnology. Authorities from the Ministry of Commerce also announced the arrival of two other companies, General Microcircuits (advanced manufacturing sector and clean technologies) and Acerca (services).

Costa Rica Eliminates Tariffs on Raw Materials (Source: Nacion.com) The benefit will affect 32 items of raw materials used mainly in the food industry. The elimination of the tariffs, which range between 10% and 15%, was done through an executive decree and it was made possible after several agreements with other Central American countries which promoting progress toward trade integration. The country made the decision to issue a decree to reduce tariffs on raw materials not produced in industrial processes used in food industry in order to improve competitiveness of the productive sectors, in relation to raw materials like: species (cinnamon, cloves, anise seed, etc.), grain mill products (flour, barley flour, semola corn, oats) and cereal grains.



Guatemala Invites Bids for Water Projects (Source: GuateCompras.gob.gt) The Municipal Development Agency is putting out to tender the implementation of drinking water in several communities. Works will be conducted in the municipalities of Comitancillo, of Concepcion Tutuapa, El Quetzal, San Jose Ojetenam, Sibinal and Tejutla. These projects are financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The date for reception of bids is February 7th, 2011.

Guatemala Expects Record Exports (Source: elperiodico.com.gt) In October, exports exceed \$ 6.936 million, 15% higher than the \$ 6.036 million of the same period in 2009. According to calculations by Banco de Guatemala (Banguat) the total amount of exports in 2009 closed at \$ 7.2 billion. The recovery in trade will allow a growth of 11.4% at the end of 2010. The proceeds from the sale of traditional products (sugar, bananas, coffee, cardamom and oil) exceeded \$ 1.900 million, an increase of 28% versus 2009. This improvement is driven by increased exports of sugar, which reported \$ 602.5 million, coffee with \$ 637.2 million and \$ 209.2 million in petroleum.



Tomato Exports Up 150% in Guatemala (Source: prensalibre.com) The projected increase for 2011 is due to a greater crop area and the establishment of two new packing plants. The President of the Federation of Agricultural Associations of Guatemala (Fasagua), Eddie Mendoza, noted that new packing facilities are Fresh Del Monte and Guatemalan company Central American Greenhouse, which add to existing Semillas de Campo, Hidroponica de Guatemala and Panorama. In 2006 the crop area was four acres, but now it reaches one hundred.

Economic Outlook for 2011 (Source: sigloxxi.com) The recovery of the economy is inevitably tied to the U.S. and Guatemala's will only be as slow as the U.S. recovery. Analysts at Central America Business Intelligence (CABI) noted that there are steps which the government could implement in order to improve the picture. Miguel Gutierrez, a CABI economist, who recommends "... a substantial reduction of the monetary policy rate, which for now is at 4.5% ... in about 2 points, and we could also suggest implementing an effective policy to improve security in the country.

Bio-fuel Crop Areas in Guatemala (Source: prensalibre.com) According to a study by the OAS, the country has at least one million hectares suitable for cultivation of bio-fuel. The report was commissioned by the Organization of American States (OAS) to the firm Hart Energy and was delivered this week the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM). Guatemala has capacity to be a major producer of sugar cane, which is used to produce ethanol, said Francisco Burgos, an analyst at the OAS. The OAS report also recommended the use of bio-fuels within the country, for which he proposes to start in 2012 a progressive plan to mix up to 10% ethanol to the fuels used by motor vehicles in Guatemala, and by 2014 start using biodiesel mixed in a ratio of up to 5%

Guatemala to Increase Oil Production (Source: prensalibre.com) The four new areas part of a bidding process would increase production by 40 thousand barrels per day. The Minister of Energy and Mines spoke of aspects of the bid: regarding the exploration period, it shall be for 6 years with the possibility of an extension of one year and an operating period of 25 years, with a 15 year extension. The type of contract is a production sharing contract in which the contractor absorbs the risk one hundred percent, said Luis Ayala, deputy director of hydrocarbons. The expected date for reception of offers is April 8th, 2011; the contracts will be awarded between one and two months later. Executives from 15 international companies participated in the briefing of new bidding areas. Tradex, Perenco, Tenseco Energy Corporation y Odebrecht are among the companies showing interest.

Nicaragua



Nicaragua Could Concession Monkey Point Port (Source: laprensa.com.ni) The Port Authority analyzes the idea to award in concession the port at Monkey Point. The option is being analyzed due to lack of funding to capitalize the project. Negotiations conducted with Korean companies for construction of the port, established for the country to acquire a \$ 500 million debt with repayment in seven years. Virgilio Silva, chief executive of the National Port Enterprise (EPN), told reporters that negotiations with the Korean companies are continuing and the possibility "through the Government of Korea to award in concession the investment and to have a port operator be responsible for managing the infrastructure for about 25 or 50 years is ongoing."

Nicaragua Will Receive EU Support (Source: elnuevodiario.com.ni) The European block announced \$ 400 million in cooperation for energy projects and rural electrification. This was announced by the representative of the EU in Central America, Mendel Goldstein, who noted the importance of a sustainable electrification program to stimulate renewable energy investment in the country. Sustainable rural electrification and renewable energy facilitate the process and the creation of new companies and technologies which supports production and industrialization of domestic agricultural production.



Nicaragua Negotiating Lower Tariffs with China (Source: laprensa.com.ni) The two countries are negotiating a special arrangement in which tariffs will be reduced. That is reflected in the cooperation agreement signed between the World Business Council for Promoting Economic and Trade Relations with China (CEFECH) and the Association of Friends with the Peoples Republic of China (Pro-NicaChina). Although Nicaragua's ambition is to obtain a free trade agreement (FTA) with China, Bayardo Arce, coordinator of Pro-NicaChina, acknowledged that it won't be easy, so an alternative agreement is being negotiated providing preferential tariffs for Nicaraguan exports.

El Salvador



Proposal for 'Drawback' Removal (Source: elmundo.com.sv) The Minister of Economy submitted to the National Assembly a draft bill that would remove the 6% export incentive. Hector Dada Hirezi, Minister of Economy, said the country has had the obligation to eliminate this incentive since 1990. The continuity of this incentive had generated claims from some trading partners, mainly from the Dominican Republic, with whom El Salvador has had several trade disputes due to this issue. Government officials hope that with the elimination of the 6% to Salvadoran exporters, the disputes with that country can be resolved.

\$ 80 Million Salvadoran Airport Expansion (Source: elsalvador.com) Works will start in late 2011 and will double current capacity at the airport. The Autonomous Executive Port Commission (CEPA) is already working on a feasibility study. The project will add seven gates in immigration and customs. The work does not include the construction of another runway. According to CEPA estimates, the current runway is sufficient to meet demand with a length of 3.200 meters. The infrastructure will be sufficient to meet demand from airlines and passengers until 2020 or 2025.

\$ 80 Million for Transportation System in San Salvador (Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development) The Transport Ministry announced the construction of a transportation system with articulated buses with preferential lanes. This model, known as BRT (Bus Rapid Transit), consists in the development of exclusive lanes for high capacity modern buses and has been implemented in countries such as Guatemala, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. The plan includes a network of 6 main routes, the first of which will run for 5.3 kilometers from Soyapango Integration Terminal to the transfer station in Plaza Gerardo Barrios, in front of the Cathedral. The project will have an estimated investment of \$ 80 million during the first stage; having an additional reserved line of credit from the Inter-American Development Bank for an initial \$ 50 million Dollars.

Salvadoran Hospital Invites Bids for Medical Supplies (Source: Divulcation Module for the Purchases of the Government of El Salvador) The Hospital Juan José Fernández put out to tender its medical supplies requirements for the year 2011. The bidding rules detail the required supplies and treatment products for patient care, such as cotton swabs, basins, bed pans and urinals, revenue equipment, electrotherapy, injection and suction needles, syringes and accessories, attachments and accessories, etc. The expected date for reception of proposals is January 20th, 2011

Honduras



\$ 135 Million Expansion in Honduras's Puerto Cortes (Source: Inter-American Development Bank) The IDB loan will finance the dredging of the harbor and port locations as well as the construction of a new container terminal. Honduras will expand and modernize the largest port in Central America with



funding provided by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for a total of \$ 135 million. Puerto Cortes is the main Honduran port, moving 90 percent of maritime cargo. Located on the northeast coast on the Caribbean, it is the largest and deepest port in Central America, which handles a large share of exports in containers for the region. It is the main entry point for imported grains and fertilizers into the Honduran economy, among other essential goods. The project will support the construction of a new container terminal on reclaimed land, the acquisition of specialized equipment and the construction of port storage yards as well as improving port operations preventing interference with urban traffic. This is the second project approved this week by the IDB for Puerto Cortés. Previously, the Bank loaned \$ 10 million to improve customs. The new financing consists of a fixed rate loan of \$ 94 million to 30 years with a grace period of six years, plus a second loan of U.S. \$ 40.5 million with a maturity period of 40 years and an annual interest rate of 0.25 percent. These resources will finance about 60 percent of total project cost.

Dutch coins for Honduras The Central Bank of Honduras (BCH) has placed an order with the Royal Dutch Mint in Utrecht for the minting of 162 million coins. "The Mint", will deliver the new 5 -, 10 - and 20-cent coins. The Royal Dutch Mint also strikes the Euro coins for various central banks within Europe as well as coins outside Europe, most recently for the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, Suriname, Latvia, Guatemala. Again another example that Latin America offers plenty of opportunities for Dutch business.

Dominican Republic



Economic prospects for 2011 (source: Banco Central) In its preliminary year's end report, the Central Bank forecasts that growth for 2011 will be between 5.5% and 6%, inflation from 5-6%, given constraints of the US economy, higher petroleum prices in 2011. Also forecast is an increase in exports of goods, such as ferronickel and gold, with the restart of operations of the Xstrata Nickel (former Falconbridge) and the start of export operations by Barrick Gold in the last quarter of 2011. www.bancentral.gov.do/noticias/avisos/avisos2010-12-21.pdf

Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) approves new projects US\$ 420 million (source: IHRC) The Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) reaffirmed in its December 14th meeting its goals and priorities for Haiti reconstruction and announced a new set of projects at its fourth Board meeting held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The IHRC Board approved new projects with a total value of \$429.8 million. This brings to 74 the total number of projects approved by the IHRC since its inaugural Board meeting in June 2010. One mayor new project approved during the last meeting in Santo Domingo was a \$174 million project of the United States and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for a globally-competitive 150-hectare industrial park in the northern region of the country. This project will, in Phase 1 (2012-2014), accommodate approximately 18 000 workers in the garment industry, growing to 65 000 permanent jobs once the Park is fully developed. This park will be owned by GOH and operated by a private sector management company. The IHRC group -- with a half Haitian, half foreign board -- was set up after the earthquake to oversee the massive reconstruction effort and holds the purse strings for 10 billion dollars in long-term international aid pledges. Some 2,6 billion dollars in projects has been approved, but IHRC figures show that as of December 10 only about 10 percent of that funding had been disbursed. The IHRC approves projects over \$500,000. More information and a list of aproved projects can be found on: www.cirh.ht

High-speed bandwidth submarine cable in the Caribbean (source: CWC) Cable & Wireless Communications (CWC) has announced the start of construction of a new submarine cable in the Caribbean this month. The cable will be operated by LIME, the CWC Caribbean business. LIME is in 13 Caribbean countries and the new east-west cable will mean that it is able to develop a range of new fixed high-speed broadband and mobile data services for its customers. The east-west cable also is intended to enhance CWC's ability to provide customers with increasingly innovative services, like TV delivered over broadband (IPTV) and mobile. The cable is expected to be operational by 2011. The company sees the DR as "one of the fastest growing markets in the region." In a statement, the



company says that they are increasing their level of investment in the Caribbean with the investment in the new subsea cable, the "east-west" cable linking Jamaica and the Cayman Islands in the west of the Caribbean, to the British Virgin Islands in the east via Dominican Republic, thereby providing additional capacity to service their growing pipeline of transit carrier opportunities in the Pan-American market. CWC says it is positioning itself "as the leading wholesale capacity provider through the Caribbean Sea offering primary and secondary routes to New York and Miami".
www.cwc.com/nearfar/our-stories/east-west.html

Dominican Republic economy grew by 7% in 2010 (source: Diario Libre) Despite the fact that this has been a very difficult and complicated year, with a lot of talk about the foreign debt and living in the post-crisis period, the growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will close the year at 7%. Inflation from January-November 2010 was 5.27%. President of the Central Bank said that economic growth has been achieved with a strong push from the credit in the private sector. Domestic demand was significant, and commerce was up 12.1%, construction 10.1%, local manufacturing 8.6%, banking and finance 11.3%, communications 8.4%, tourism 7%, farming 5.6%, water and energy 6.4%, transport and warehousing 6.7%, education 5.9%, health 4.6%, other services 4.3% and housing rentals 3.1%. The Gross Domestic Product per capita was US\$5,282.2 at the close of 2010, up 9.7% compared to 2009, and double that of 2004, when it was US\$2,548.

Trade Events

No events

More information



Pioneers in international business

website www.doingtradeincentralamerica.com provides information sources for Dutch companies interested in doing trade with Central American companies, and groups them together on this website. On the 1st of November 2009 the Embassy of the Netherlands has launched a trade platform, which can be found at www.centralamericab2b.com. This service is provided free of charge. The services of this trade platform include the possibility to promote your company, to publish your trade leads, to search for potential contacts or partners in the different countries and sectors, and to contact the companies that you are interested in. In addition, notifications of events that could be of interest to Dutch or Central American companies will be published on this platform. To maximize the accessibility for all parties, the website is in English. Furthermore, a short manual is provided to make the usage of the website as easy as possible.

To benefit from all these services, please register your company at http://www.centralamericab2b.com/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=registers.

TRADEPLATFORM:

In 2009 the Departments of Commerce of the Dutch Embassies Guatemala-City, Managua and San José developed a trade platform. This Business to Business (B2B) tool helps Central American and Dutch companies to get in touch with the aim of exchanging information and doing business. The



The NL EVD Internationaal provides Central American country web pages where you can find up-to-date information, such as: business news, economical developments, tenders, country information (incl. fact sheet and laws), interesting sectors, activities, important documents and the business country guide from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. For more information visit the website: www.evd.nl/landen. More information can also be obtained from Judith Brussee, e-mail: centraal-amerika@info.agentschapnl.nl telephone: +0031 (088) - 602 80 97.



Ambassade van het
Koninkrijk der Nederlanden

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as information source

On the website of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in San José (for the countries Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador) you can not only find general information about these countries in our resort, but also specific commercial information. Our 'handelswijzers' business trade guides entail broad and up-to-date information on how to do business in each of the four countries, they are meant as a tool/guide for Dutch exporters and investors. For more information visit: www.holanda.cr, www.handelswijzer.com, www.doingtradeincentralamerica.com or www.centralamericab2b.com.

For more information you can contact our commercial department at the Dutch Embassy in San José thru email sanjose@trade-minbuza.nl or by phone (00506) 2296 1490 (Carel Richter or Hans Buhrs).

You can also contact our Consulaat-Generaal in Panama (Debby van der Schuit), Phone: (00507) 263 6494 or (00507) 264 7257. Email: consuladonl@cwpanama.net

For more information about Guatemala you can contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Guatemala City by email; gua-ez@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00502) 2381 4300 (Susana Azurdia). More information can be found on the website: www.mfa.nl/gua

For more information about Nicaragua you can contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Managua by email mng@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00505) 2276 8630 (Jan Bauer, Luis Bravo) For more information visit the following website: www.embajadaholanda-nic.com .

For more information about the Dominican Republic contact the commercial department of the Dutch Embassy in Santo Domingo by email std-ea@minbuza.nl or by telephone (00 1 809) 262 0320 (Reinier Davina) More information is available on the following website: www.holanda.org.do