

The SARGADOM Thermal Dome Project invites the International Shipping Industry to

Towards the First High-Seas IMO Particularly Sensitive Sea Area:
A consultation on vessel activity in the Central American Thermal Dome.

Date: 26th August 2025 Time: 9am-4pm Local (GMT-7) Location: Panama City

Salón de Actos del Edificio 6 de la Autoridad Marítima de Panamá, Diablo Heights, Calle Demetrio Porras.

Balboa Ancón-Panamá, República de Panamá – and ONLINE

The Concept: This invitation-only consultation brings together key International Shipping Industry representatives and stakeholders to engage with the SARGADOM Thermal Dome Project and its mission to protect the biodiversity of a high-seas area, the Central American Thermal Dome in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. This event will be an environment for open discussion, where the Project will share its latest insights on the potential impacts of shipping on Thermal Dome biodiversity and seek shipping industry perspectives on already established best practices, economic and technological opportunities, and risks that may result from inadequately tailored measures misaligned with operational realities. Your views will provide critical input to inform the Project's journey towards the designation of the Thermal Dome as the first high-seas IMO Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, a potential multisectoral model for future BBNJ (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Treaty implementation.



The What: The Thermal Dome Project is focused on studying and conserving the *Dome*, a unique oceanic feature, located in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. This area is characterised by the upwelling of nutrient-rich cold water, creating a highly productive and valuable ecosystem that supports diverse marine life, including endangered species such as blue whales and sea turtles. The Dome is crucial for marine biodiversity and local fisheries, essential to coastal livelihoods and ecological stability, whilst spanning critical national and international shipping routes. International cooperation is needed to help protect and manage this significant marine space.

The Why: Shipping is amongst the most significant potential stressors on the Dome's ecosystem, making the industry an essential stakeholder in its future, and in the Thermal Dome Project. Early engagement offers an opportunity to build a collaborative approach to protecting the biodiversity and economic prosperity of this area. The Project is finalising its analysis of the positive and negative impacts of human activity, including shipping, on the *Dome's* environment and ecosystem. These results will be presented for discussion.



The How: By introducing the SARGADOM Thermal Dome Project and presenting draft conclusions from the recent socio-ecosystem diagnostic analysis, this consultation will create space for informed and constructive dialogue. Discussions will consider the applicability and effectiveness of current good practices widely adopted by the shipping industry, such as speed reductions and seasonal routing, in this unique context. Looking ahead, we will explore potential additional future measures and their implication in the context of the soon-to-enter into force BBNJ Agreement. Throughout this event, the focus will be on identifying practical, collaborative actions that sustain prosperous human activity and trade, while safeguarding the biodiversity and enduring ecological value of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Thermal Dome.

Continue making a difference – have a voice – participate!

Please contact: Kevin Fleming at Kevin.Fleming@nlai.blue to confirm your attendance



Agenda

Arrivals from 0830 onwards, 0900 start (*all times Panama: GMT-7*)

Session 1 – Scene Setting:

- Welcome & Administration / Aims of the Day
 - Individual Introductions
- Shipping Industry Engagement & Consultation: Methodology & Importance in IMO PSSA Process
 - Overview: MarViva & the SARGADOM Thermal Dome Project

Break (1015-1030)

Session 2 – Analysis: Impacts of Human Activity

- Summary of Project Socio-Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (SEDA)
 - Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA)
 - Vessel Traffic in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Thermal Dome

Session 3 – Discussion of Shipping Best Practices in Impact Reduction

- Discussion 1: What measures might mitigate SEDA identified impacts
- Discussion 2: Existing good practice measures and IMO guidance

Light Lunch & Networking (1230-1330)

Session 4 – Discussion of Potential Future Measures in the Dome & Beyond

- Discussion 3: Using the Thermal Dome to understand and exemplify BBNJ best practice
- Discussion 4: Enabling Port Infrastructure & the Role of Port Authorities
- Discussion 5: Connectivity – between areas beyond & areas within national jurisdiction – ABNJs & EEZs

Break (1445-1500)

Session 5 – Reflections & Next Steps

- Reflections from International Shipping Industry participants
 - Reflections from MarViva & the journey to PSSA status
 - Event précis, next steps & wrap-up

Finish by 1600

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