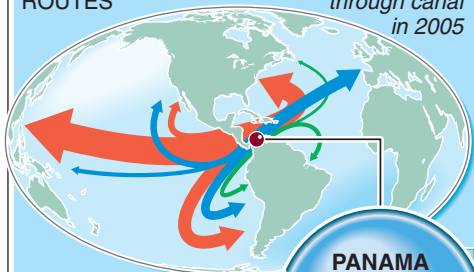


Panama Canal set for major expansion

Panama's government is to unveil a plan to widen the Panama Canal, now operating at near full capacity, to cope with the surge in shipping worldwide. The project, which is to make way for large container ships, will cost at least \$5 billion, take about seven years and employ up to 10,000 people

MAIN TRADE ROUTES

14,011 ships passed through canal in 2005



Canal traffic (2005)

Trade route	Tons, millions
U.S. east coast – Asia	110.90
U.S. east coast – South America west coast	24.32
Europe – South America west coast	19.55
Europe – West coast of U.S. and Canada	10.08
U.S. Intercoastal	9.50
U.S. east coast – Central America west coast	9.39
Other routes	94.54
Total	278.28 million tons

ATLANTIC OCEAN



Expansion: New locks to be built at each end of canal, creating third lane of traffic



Largest container vessels now up to 50% wider than 32.3m limit of older "Panamax" ships

