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Second meeting**

Geneva, 19–23 November 2018

Item 5 (k) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the
Conference of the Parties: secretariat**

**Information requested by the Bureau on possible services that
the secretariat of the Minamata Convention could purchase
from or share with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and
Stockholm conventions**

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its decision MC-1/11 on the secretariat, the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury noted that a secretariat had been established pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 24 of the Convention; recalled paragraph 3 of article 24 designating the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to perform the secretariat functions for the Convention; and welcomed the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the secretariat in Geneva and provide an annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs.
2. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Director of UNEP to perform the secretariat functions initially through a secretariat of the Minamata Convention located in Geneva; decided to review the organizational arrangements, including location and the host country contribution, at its second meeting, in accordance with the spirit of the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat; and requested that, in the interim, the secretariat continue to cooperate and coordinate, as appropriate, with other relevant actors, including the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the relevant units of UNEP in order to make full use of relevant experience and expertise.
3. In June 2018, the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury requested the members of the Bureau to consult in their regions on a proposal made by a group of countries from one of the United Nations regional groups represented in the Bureau. The aim of the proposal was to focus discussion at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the details of the arrangements for the secretariat and, if possible, to avoid reopening discussion on the three main points discussed and agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, namely a stand-alone secretariat, the location of the secretariat in Geneva, and the annual host country contribution of 1 million Swiss francs.

* UNEP/MC/COP.2/1.

4. At its meeting held in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 2018, the Bureau discussed the matter further and agreed to the proposal.
5. Following that agreement, the Bureau requested the secretariat to make available its note on the review of the organizational arrangements for the secretariat (UNEP/MC/COP.2/15/Add.1), as prepared by the President on behalf of the Bureau, with input from the secretariat as requested, including a draft decision proposed by the Bureau.
6. At its meeting held in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 2018, the Bureau agreed that the President of the Conference of the Parties would work with the secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in developing an information document setting out, as requested by the Bureau: (a) the various services provided by the Minamata Convention secretariat, (b) how different services could be purchased from, or shared with, the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, and (c) how such purchases or shared services would affect the budget of the Minamata Convention. That information is set out in the annex to the present note, without formal editing.
7. At their meetings in May 2017, in their decisions on international cooperation and coordination (BC-13/16, RC-8/10 and SC-8/20), the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions requested the secretariat to continue to enhance cooperation and coordination with the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In their decisions on programmes of work and budgets (BC-13/24, RC-8/17 and SC-8/27), the conferences of the Parties invited their Executive Secretary to continue cooperating on programmatic matters with the interim secretariat to the Minamata Convention and to provide any secretariat support that might be requested and was fully funded by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention.

Annex

Information requested by the Bureau on possible services that the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention could purchase from or share with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

I. Introduction

1. The present annex sets out in its section II the list of activities as contained in the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2018-2019 of the Minamata Convention, approved by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as shown in table 1 of Decision MC-1/15.

2. Section III provides a brief description of the activities included under each of the services, following the above list.

3. Owing to the recent entry into force of the Minamata Convention and hence recent establishment of its secretariat, approaches in the delivery of certain activities may differ with the Basel, Rotterdam or Stockholm Secretariat. It is foreseen that with an increased number of Parties, additional mandates from the Conference of the Parties, and deadlines set in the Convention for a number of provisions being reached, processes within the secretariat may need to be adjusted in the future.

4. Finally, this annex presents, in section IV, a table that indicates the costs of the services described in section III, under two different scenarios: (1) services are provided by the Minamata Convention Secretariat; and (2) services are provided through an arrangement to share services between the Minamata Convention Secretariat and the BRS Secretariat. The two different scenarios are presented in two columns. Column 1 is presented as developed by the Minamata Secretariat (hereinafter “scenario 1”), and column 2, is presented as developed by the BRS Secretariat, without any editing (hereinafter “scenario 2”).

BRS Secretariat’s description of the modality of shared services envisaged for scenario 2 (paragraphs 5 to 9 are reproduced as received from the BRS Secretariat, without any editing)

5. Shared services would be located within the management hierarchy of BRS. Minamata would provide the funding to BRS to cover the cost of the services to the Minamata Convention as per the Minamata Convention COP approved programme of work and delivered at BRS standards of delivery. The BRS Executive Secretary has authority to establish such arrangements provided they are fully funded.¹ Such services would be provided directly to the Minamata Secretariat who would determine the required deliverables within available resources. To guide delivery of services, a service level agreement would be agreed to between the MC and BRS secretariats which would include quality assurance and quality control measures. Any issues related to delivery that cannot be resolved at the working level, could be raised by MC Executive Secretary with the BRS Executive Secretary. Reports on the effectiveness of shared services would be reported to the respective COPs of MC and BRS.

6. Another approach that was considered is the provision of joint services which would involve setting up an organizational unit comprised of BRS staff and staff hired by Minamata. The unit would report to both the Executive Secretary of Minamata and the Executive Secretary of BRS. Separate teams would be required to set up to deliver on the programmes of work of the four conventions. (The overall coordination of the joint services would need to be determined.) Although the cost of joint services in principle may appear to be similar to those of shared services, increased inefficiency arising from conflicting priorities, staff time spent on coordination between two autonomous secretariats, reduced flexibility in addressing unpredictable matters and slower decision-making may actually increase make such an arrangement more costly to all parties in the long-term. Based upon the experience during the synergies process of BRS, a joint service established then and which was subsequently abandoned, also led to severe staff stress especially in a scenario where they would have to report to two executive secretaries. Conflicts among programmatic staff were heightened especially given the pressure to deliver on their respective workplans resulting in competition for the support of the joint services. Financial reporting and accountability will be more complicated. These challenges

¹ BC-13/24, paragraph 13; RC-8/17, paragraph 17; SC-8/27, paragraph 15.

will not only impact on the performance of Minamata operations but significantly on the ability of the existing BRS Secretariat to deliver on its mandate.

7. A shared services framework, thus provides a clear administrative modus operandi in line with prevailing UN rules and regulations, under which support for the Minamata Secretariat can be given without serious consequences on the operations of the BRS Secretariat, noting that all these negative effects outlined above were experienced by the joint services unit established under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions which were only resolved with the establishment of a single executive secretary of the secretariat for the three conventions.

8. Given the significant reorganization of BRS needed for such an approach, the BRS Executive Secretary would also need to seek the approval of the BRS COPs should such a wish be expressed by the Minamata COP 2.

9. A brief description of the modalities for directly implementing sharing the relevant services is provided, as necessary, with the costs.

II. List of activities included in the programme of work 2018–2019 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

10. Table 1 below provides the list of activities as set out in the programme of work of the Minamata Convention for 2018-2019 approved by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Table 1 presents certain activities in square boxes to indicate that the BRS Secretariat has included in scenario 2 the services necessary to undertake those activities.

Table 1
Activities as per approved Programme of Work 2018-2019 of the Minamata Convention
(Decision MC-1/15)

<i>Activity number</i>	<i>Headings and activity description</i>
1. Conferences and meetings	
1	Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties
2	Third meeting of the Conference of the Parties
3	Bureau of the Conference of the Parties
4	Implementation and compliance committee
2. Capacity-building and technical assistance	
5	Capacity-building and technical assistance programme of the Minamata Convention
3. Scientific and technical activities	
6	Scientific support to the States parties to the Minamata Convention
7	Effectiveness evaluation and the global monitoring plan
8	National reporting under the Minamata Convention
4. Knowledge and information management, and outreach	
9	Publications
10	Communication, outreach and public awareness
5. Overall management	
11	Executive direction and management
12	International cooperation and coordination
13	Financial resources and mechanism
6. Legal and policy activities	
14	Legal and policy activities
7. Office maintenance and services	
15	Office maintenance and services
16	Information technology services

III. Brief description of the activities included under each of the services

11. Below is a description of the activities under each of the services. The description of services is common to both secretariats. In a few cases, due to the difference in the current set up of the two secretariats the description differs, and is clearly indicated.

1. Conference and meetings

12. These services encompass a large number of activities with respect to various types of meetings, i.e., COPs, regional meetings, bureau meetings, in some cases technical groups meetings.

13. Logistics management involves a wide range of services: Identification of the venue; definition of number of conference rooms, meeting rooms, relevant equipment, catering, security arrangements, preparation of information and logistics note, logistical support during the meeting, including making sure equipment and name tags are in place in meeting rooms and meeting rooms are arranged as requested, managing vendors and monitoring service delivery.

14. According to scenario 2, this work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV.

15. Participants management involves the following services: Sending out of invitation letters, creation of an online platform for registration of participants, receipt of nomination letters and preparation of lists for different categories of participants (i.e., funded, non-funded, observers, etc.), approval of participants, sending out of confirmation letters to participants, raising of Travel Requests in Umoja, request to United Nations Travel Unit for issuance of itineraries, exchange with participants regarding itineraries and ticketing, registration of participants at the meeting, i.e., badges delivery, handing in of Daily Subsistence Allowance to funded participants, preparation of list of participants.

16. According to scenario 2, this work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV.

17. According to scenario 2, the preparation of documents is the responsibility of the lead programme office for issue covered in the document. Managing the document preparation and clearance process, including policy editing, is the responsibility of the overall coordinator of a particular meeting. The overall coordinator would also be responsible for preparation of Presidents/Chair's' notes, organization of work at contact groups, i.e., identification of technical and administrative staff to support with the various tasks of the groups, definition of work flow for contact groups documents and outcome, etc. According to scenario 2, none of these functions would be part of a shared services from BRS, as they are part of core responsibilities of the Minamata secretariat.

18. According to scenario 1, the preparation of documents is the responsibility of the secretariat as a whole. Managing the document preparation and relevant clearance process, including editing from the technical and policy perspectives, in consultation with colleagues concerned, is the responsibility of the officer responsible for the subject matter covered in the document, under the overall oversight and responsibility of the Executive Secretary. The same applies to President's/Chair's' notes and relevant briefing notes. As within the Minamata Secretariat there are no Units specialized in the various processes involved, there is no overall coordinator of particular meetings. The team, as a whole, brainstorms and comes up with proposals to be submitted by the Secretariat to the Bureau on the organization of work at meetings and the establishment of contact groups, etc. including the identification of technical and administrative staff to support the various tasks of the groups, definition of work flow for contact groups, relevant documents and outcome, etc.

19. According to scenario 2, document management, on the other hand, involves taking completed documents (that have completed programmatic, legal, policy review), completing formatting, obtaining Executive Secretary clearance, submitting to UNON for formal processing, editing and translation, checking translations with staff with appropriate language abilities, checking edits proposed by UNON with the author(s) of the specific document and the Executive Secretary, tracking progress of the documents processing done by Conference Services, and uploading the final versions of the documents on the convention's website. The work takes place pre-session, in-session and post-session of all applicable meetings, in particular those of the COP.

20. According to scenario 2, this work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV.

2. Capacity building and technical assistance

21. According to scenario 2, this is a part of core responsibilities of the secretariat, so it was not considered an area for shared services. However, the Minamata Secretariat can engage in joint programmatic activities with the BRS Secretariat on which implementation of both are advanced and resources are available to undertaken them.

3. Science and technical activities

22. According to scenario 2, this is a part of core responsibilities of the Minamata secretariat, so it is not considered an area for shared services. However, the Minamata Secretariat can and does engage in programmatic collaboration/cooperation with the BRS Secretariat on scientific and technical work of mutual benefit the conventions involved and for which resources are available to undertake them.

4. Knowledge and information management, and outreach

23. Communications, outreach and public awareness include design, management and implementation of a communications strategy and relevant activities, to guide outreach activities including media engagement and press releases, development of website content, photographic and social media coverage, graphics design support, promotional materials, including exhibitions at COP and other relevant meetings, and communications campaigns. According to scenario 1, this work also foresees a campaign to include strong visual identity with related branding to promote the Minamata Convention.

24. Knowledge and information management includes compiling information exchange needs in accordance with Article 17 of the Convention, identify potential sources of information, develop and implement an information exchange strategy for the Convention. Design and implementation of a knowledge management system (interactive databases, which includes management of Parties' reports under Article 21 of the Convention, documents of meetings, correspondence, status of ratifications and accessions, focal points and country contacts, meetings database, publications database, etc.), records keeping, website development and maintenance.

25. According to scenario 2, this work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV, and this activity would include ensuring inter-operability with the BRS Secretariat systems.

5. Overall Management

26. According to scenario 2, this is a part of the core responsibilities of the Minamata Secretariat, so it was not considered an area for shared services. The BRS Secretariat stated that if shared services are agreed to, however, the day to day staff management will remain under BRS responsibility.

6. Legal and policy activities

27. Legal and policy activities underpin the various functions of the secretariat. These activities include legal advisory functions to convention's bodies, i.e., the COP and the Bureau, and clearance from the legal standpoint of documents and draft decisions, drafting/revision of rules of procedure and other rules, review of credentials, etc.. It also includes legal advisory services related to the convention to individual Parties and stakeholders as well as to the Executive Secretary, compliance matters, governance matters, obligations of parties, legal and policy matters with respect to the implementation and further development of the Convention. Special support is to be provided to the work of the Implementation and Compliance Committee. Services also encompass corporate legal services (i.e., legal issues related to procurement, purchasing and contracts; drafting, review, negotiation and clearance of agreements with partners, Host Country Agreements; legal advice on Human Resources matters; and settlement of disputes both informally (i.e., conciliation and arbitration) and formally (i.e. the UN justice system, which is a function undertaken by UNEP headquarters on behalf of the Organization –and is paid for by the programme support cost paid to UNEP for the administration of the Minamata Convention trust funds- but which needs legal support in the Secretariat to liaise with the UNEP headquarters staff to provide the necessary information, elements for the defense of the cases, participation in audiences, meeting for amicable resolution of the case as may be determined by the judge of the UN Tribunal, etc.).

28. According to scenario 2, such work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV.

7. Office maintenance and services (information technology services only)

29. This concerns the infrastructure and services covering Information Technology (IT), namely personal computers and mobile devices, standard software packages, network and Internet

connectivity, centralised data storage and backup, purchase of IT equipment, photocopiers and network printers, video conferencing, webinars, remote access services, wireless services, hosting of servers and websites, IT help desk, network administration and configuration, IT servicing at meetings and network security services.

30. According to scenario 2, such work could be performed under shared services with the BRS Secretariat, as reflected in the second column of Table 2 in section IV.

IV. Indicative comparative table

31. Table 2 below includes the activities shown in square boxes in Table 1, which are those included by the BRS Secretariat in scenario 2.

32. Table 2 presents in the first column scenario 1, which refers to the Minamata Convention Secretariat undertaking the relevant activities; and scenario 2 in the second column, which reflects the BRS Secretariat presentation of shared services.

33. As regards scenario 2, the BRS Secretariat has provided the inputs presented in the second column of Table 2, which are reproduced as received from the BRS Secretariat, without any editing.

34. Costs regarding staffing are based in both columns on the Geneva standard post costs, as shown in Table 3 (Indicative staffing requirements for the Minamata Convention secretariat in Geneva) of decision MC-1/15: Programme of work of the secretariat and proposed budget for the biennium 2018-2019, adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention at its first meeting.

Table 2

Indicative comparative table presenting scenario 1 and scenario 2 - Activities as per approved Programme of Work 2018-2019 of the Minamata Convention (Decision MC-1/15)

SCENARIO 1 Minamata Convention Secretariat undertakes the activities	SCENARIO 2 Minamata Convention Secretariat and BRS Secretariat share the relevant services to undertake the activities
1. CONFERENCE AND MEETINGS	
1.1 Logistics management	
P3 Programme/Legal Officer: 10% = USD 18,290 G4 Team Assistant: 20% = USD 28,780 <hr/> P3 Admin Officer: 20% G5 Admin Assistant: 10% There is no direct cost associated to these two staff members as these posts are funded from programme support costs Total cost: USD 47,070/year	Hire G staff (50%), working within a team with five BRS G staff, under the overall direction of a BRS team leader. BRS management input would be compensated by comparable amount of support from new staff to support issues related to BRS Total cost: USD 71,950/year
1.2 Participants management	
G4 Team Assistant: 40% = USD 57,560 G4 Team Assistant: 40% = USD 57,560 <hr/> P3 Admin Officer: 30% G5 Admin Assistant: 40% There is no direct cost associated to these two staff members as these posts are funded from programme support costs Total cost: USD 115,120/year	Hire one G staff, working within a team with five BRS G staff, under the overall direction of a BRS team leader. BRS management input would be compensated by comparable amount of support from new staff to support issues related to BRS Total cost: USD 143,900/year
1.3 Documents management	
G5 Public Information/Communications Assistant: 10% = 14,390 Total cost: USD 14,390/year	Hire one G staff, working within a team with two other G staff, under the overall direction of a BRS P-3. BRS management input would be compensated by comparable amount of support from new staff to support issues related to BRS Total cost: USD 143,900/year
TOTAL COST: USD 177,180/year	TOTAL COST: USD 359,750/year
<i>Overall management and oversight, as well as final clearance processes by the Minamata Convention Secretariat are not reflected in any of the scenarios. For scenario 2 such management and oversight also include definition of deliverables, appraisal of service</i>	

quality, assessment of the effectiveness of the modus operandi, potential need for raising issues with the BRS Executive Secretary, as defined in para 5 of the introduction to the Annex.

4. KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, AND OUTREACH

4.1 Knowledge and information management

<p>P3 Communications and Knowledge Management Officer: 20% = USD 36,580 G5 Public Information/Communications Assistant: 20% = USD 28,780</p> <p>Development, maintenance and tool customization of online tool for national reporting: USD 23,000 (Note: future years would mainly require maintenance of the online tool and only periodic customization as necessary)</p> <p>IT servicing and network security services (Intranet) at COP2 venue: USD 10,000</p> <p>*The Minamata Secretariat would expect that this hardware and software, identified by the BRS Secretariat in scenario 2, would have to be acquired by the Minamata Secretariat as well, at the same rate: USD 4,321/year</p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 102,681</u></p> <p>** The Minamata Convention Secretariat would expect that this client software licenses, identified by the BRS Secretariat in scenario 2, would have to be acquired by the Minamata Convention Secretariat as well, at the same rate: One-time cost of USD 17,284</p>	<p><u>Staff costs: 210'470 USD /year.</u> (This includes 70% of one G staff (100'730 USD) working within a team with two other BRS G staff; 50% of a P3 (91'450 USD), under the overall direction of BRS knowledge management team leader. 10% of BRS P3 for management (18'290 USD)</p> <p><u>Hardware and software costs: USD 4,321/year *</u></p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 214,791/year</u></p> <p>+ One-time cost of USD 17,284 for initial purchase of client software licenses**</p>
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4.2 Communication, outreach and public awareness

<p>P3 Communications and Knowledge Management Officer: 30% = USD 54,870 G5 Public Information/Communications Assistant: 15% = USD 21,585</p> <p>Other Costs: Printing, photographic, graphic design and other consumable costs: USD 10,000/year</p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 86,455/year</u></p>	<p><u>Staff costs: 210'470 USD /year</u> - 70% of one G staff (100,730 USD) working within a team with two other BRS G staff; - 50% of a P3 (91,450 USD), under the overall direction of BRS knowledge management team leader; - 10% of BRS P3 for management (18,290 USD)</p> <p><u>Other Costs: Contribution to printing, photographic, graphic design and other consumable costs: USD 10,000/year</u></p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: 220,470 USD/year</u></p>
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Overall management and oversight, as well as final clearance processes by the Minamata Convention Secretariat are not reflected in any of the scenarios. For scenario 2 such management and oversight also include definition of deliverables, appraisal of service quality, assessment of the effectiveness of the modus operandi, potential need for raising issues with the BRS Executive Secretary, as defined in para 5 of the introduction to the Annex.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY ACTIVITIES

<p>P3 Programme/Legal Officer: 50% = USD 91,450</p> <p>Corporate legal services are provided by the Legal Unit of the Corporate Services Division of UNEP. There are no direct costs associated as relevant costs are funded from programme support costs</p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 91,450/year</u></p>	<p>Hire one P-3 legal officer, working with three other lawyers within BRS. BRS management input would be compensated by comparable amount of support from new staff to support issues related to BRS.</p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 182,900/year.</u></p>
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Overall management and oversight, as well as final clearance processes by the Minamata Convention Secretariat are not reflected in any of the scenarios. For scenario 2 such management and oversight also include definition of deliverables, appraisal of service quality, assessment of the effectiveness of the modus operandi, potential need for raising issues with the BRS Executive Secretary, as defined in para 5 of the introduction to the Annex.

7. OFFICE MAINTENANCE AND SERVICES	
<p>G5 Public Information/Communications Assistant: 30% = USD 43,170</p> <p>***The Minamata Convention Secretariat would expect that this hardware and software costs, identified by the BRS Secretariat in scenario 2, would have to be borne by the Minamata Convention Secretariat as well, at the same rate: Hardware and software costs: USD 37,325 /year</p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 80,495/year</u></p>	<p>Staff costs: 43'170 USD /year (This includes 30% of one G staff (43'170 USD) for helpdesk and servicing meetings, working within a team with two other BRS G staff; under the overall direction of BRS IT team leader.</p> <p><u>Hardware and software costs: USD 37'325 /year***</u></p> <p><u>TOTAL COST: USD 80'495/year</u></p>
<p><i>Overall management and oversight, as well as final clearance processes by the Minamata Convention Secretariat are not reflected in any of the scenarios. For scenario 2 such management and oversight also include definition of deliverables, appraisal of service quality, assessment of the effectiveness of the modus operandi, potential need for raising issues with the BRS Executive Secretary, as defined in para 5 of the introduction to the Annex.</i></p>	