

Ref: MC/ES/2021/55

30 July 2021

Subject: Update on the intersessional and other work under the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am pleased to inform you that since my last communication in April 2021, two more countries, Central African Republic and Bahrain, became parties to the Convention, bringing the **total number of parties to 132**.

I am also pleased to update you on some of the work under the Convention in the intersessional period.

Update on ongoing intersessional work

Work of groups of experts

The three established intersessional expert groups have been working to finalize their reports to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-4). The co-chairs of the groups reported on their progress at the meeting of the COP-4 Bureau on 16 June 2021.

The ad hoc group of experts on the review of annexes A and B to the Convention finalized their summary report and all the compilations of information except for lamps were posted on the Convention website on 30 April.

The group of technical experts on guidance in relation to mercury releases developed a draft report, which was posted on the website on 25 June for comments until 23 July. The group finalized the report, taking the comments into consideration, at its thirteenth online meeting on 27 July.

The group of technical experts on mercury waste thresholds was encouraged by the Bureau to work towards consensus until the end of July. At its eleventh meeting on 26 July, the group reached a consensus on thresholds for mine tailings, but could not do so on the thresholds for waste contaminated with mercury and mercury compounds. The group is working by email communication to finalize a report describing the proposed alternative approaches to establish such thresholds.

Work undertaken by the Secretariat

The submissions on dental amalgam are available on the website and the Secretariat is compiling them into a document to COP-4.

A draft guidance on the use of customs codes to identify mercury-added products was posted on the website on 21 June for comments until 19 July, and the Secretariat is working with the Global Mercury Partnership to finalize the guidance.

A revision to the guidance on ASGM national action plans with regard to the management of ASGM tailings, as well as a detailed technical guidance document, is being developed in cooperation with the Global Mercury Partnership and will also be submitted to COP-4.

With regard to the guidance on monitoring to support effectiveness evaluation, a draft was developed through consultation with the experts identified by parties and stakeholders, and posted on the website on 15 April for comments by 31 May. The Secretariat is working to finalize the draft guidance in cooperation with the experts.



Other work

Implementation and Compliance Committee

The 3rd meeting of the Implementation and Compliance Committee took place on 7-8 June 2021. During the meeting, new chairs have been elected, as the terms of the previous Chair, Ms. Claudia Dumitru (Romania) and the previous Vice-chair, Mr. Mohamed Abdulai Kamara (Sierra Leone), came to the end. Ms. Paulina Riquelme (Chile) has been elected as Chair and Ms. Itsuki Kuroda (Japan) as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

Specific International Programme

As earlier informed, on 18 March 2021, the deadline for applications to the Third Round to the Specific International Programme closed with 24 applications submitted to the Secretariat. The Secretariat acknowledged and screened the applications as they were received. Following that step, the Secretariat began the technical review of the applications. On 19 April 2021, the Secretariat hosted a Cross-Secretariat Task Team online meeting with representatives from the Global Environment Facility, the Special Programme on institutional strengthening in the chemicals cluster, and the Global Mercury Partnership, along with secretariat staff, to provide input to the technical review of applications. The secretariat provided technical review comments to each applicant by 30 April 2021, with a deadline for resubmissions of applications of 31 May 2021. Almost all applicants availed themselves of the opportunity to revise their applications based on comments received, within the deadline.

Thereafter, the Secretariat prepared the appraisals, again with the involvement of the Cross-Secretariat Task Team, for the Governing Board's consideration at its meeting on 9-13 August 2021.

For more information on the Programme, the projects under implementation, and the work of the Governing Board, you may wish to consult the latest edition of the newsletter [Focus on](#) the Specific International Programme.

Minamata Online: Season 2

In the run-up to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Minamata Online returns to support government officials, scientists, NGOs and other stakeholders of the international mercury community. The sessions of Season 2 started on July 22 with a webinar on "[Global change and biogeochemical mercury cycling](#)". These digital series remain arranged according to three streams: implementation support and review, mercury science, and COP-4 preparations. The calendar of the Season 2 is available on the [website](#).

Participation of secretariat in global meetings

Executive Secretary Monika Stankiewicz attended the 60th Council Meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on 16 June, thanking Council members and the GEF Secretariat for their strong engagement in the Minamata Convention. The GEF Trust Fund is one of the two components of the financial mechanism of the Convention. More information about the meeting is available at <https://www.thegef.org/news/aligned-green-inclusive-resilient-recovery>

During the Berlin Forum on Chemicals and Sustainability, titled "Ambition and Action towards 2030", held on 7 July, at the Ministerial Dialogue, the Executive Secretary highlighted the importance of phase-out measures taken towards chemicals. Visit the website for more information on the two-day event at <https://www.bmu.de/en/berlin-forum-on-chemicals-and-sustainability/#c59730>.

New website fo the Convention

Last but not least, I am happy to inform you that the secretariat will soon be launching a new website of the Minamata Convention. The website will provide a revamped design that features data-driven information



for enhanced user experience and accessibility. As we are approaching the fourth anniversary of the Convention and COP-4, this milestone signifies importance of knowledge management under the Convention. The secretariat will present the new website at the Minamata Online session on 16 August. I hope you can joint it.

I thank you for your work on the implementation of the Minamata Convention and your commitment to [#MakeMercuryHistory](#).

Yours sincerely,

Monika Stankiewicz

Monika Stankiewicz

Executive Secretary

To: Governments through their official channels of communication to the UN Environment Programme

Cc: National Focal Points for the Minamata Convention on Mercury
Permanent Missions to the UN Environment Programme and to the UN in Geneva