

Informal consultations in follow-up to the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee on a global legally binding instrument on mercury, 31 January to 1 February 2012

Meeting of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, 2 February 2012

POSSIBLE INTERSESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE THIRD AND FOURTH SESSIONS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

1. At its third session, the regional groups reiterated the importance of intersessional regional consultations to assist Governments in their preparations for further discussion of the draft text at the fourth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC).
2. The secretariat is seeking specific funding to organize such regional consultations in advance of the fourth session, as funding has not yet been secured. For planning purposes and subject to availability of funding, the following tentative schedule is proposed:
 - Asian and the Pacific region – week of 30 April to 4 May 2012;
 - Central and Eastern European region – week of 7 to 11 May 2012;
 - Latin American and the Caribbean region, week of 14 – 18 May 2012;
 - African region – week of 21-25 May 2012;
 - European Union, Brussels, to be decided.
3. In line with past practise, it is proposed that the last bureau meeting in preparation for the fourth session will be held around three weeks in advance of the session, which would be the week of 4 to 8 June 2012.
4. These meetings are very close together, with very limited flexibility in dates. The timings have been chosen to ensure that the revised draft text and the outcome of the expert meeting on financial resources and technical and implementation assistance is available in the languages needed for each consultation, while also allowing sufficient time after the regional meetings for follow-up and national consultations as required.
5. The specific locations for the regional meetings are yet to be decided, however, the secretariat proposes, in line with previous practice, that the meetings as far as possible be organized in cities where UNEP has representation, as this greatly reduces the administrative burden for the secretariat.
6. Programmes have not been developed for the regional consultations at this stage, however, it is anticipated that, contrary to previous regional consultations, beyond presentation of the requested meeting documents there would be limited need for presentations by the secretariat at this stage of the negotiations and that the maximum time possible would be allocated for regional discussion. It could also be anticipated that the outcome of the expert meeting on financial resources and technical and implementation assistance would be presented by one of the co-chairs of the expert meeting or regionally nominated experts that attended the meeting. It is therefore expected that there would thus be limited secretariat presence at each of the regional consultations and the agendas for each consultation would need to be developed and finalized by the bureau members and regional coordinators for each region, as appropriate.
7. Guidance from the bureau members and regional coordinators on their expectations with regard to the possible organization of the next round of regional consultations, including location and dates would greatly assist the secretariat in preparing for the consultations, should the necessary funding be secured. The guidance might include issues such as expected role of the secretariat,

participation of various stakeholders, desired duration of each consultation, including the need for sub-regional side meetings, etc.

8. The chair of the negotiating committee will, as was done before previous sessions, undertake additional bilateral or group consultations as opportunities arise.

9. As background information for the tentative scheduling of the regional consultations, other meetings relevant to the negotiations scheduled so far in 2012 include:

25-27 January 2012	Initial discussions on the zero draft of outcome document for Rio+20, New York;
31 January - 3 February 2012	Latin America and Caribbean Ministerial Environment Forum for Rio+20, Quito;
20-22 February 2012	12 th special session of the UNEP Governing Council/GMEF, Nairobi;
19-23 March 2012	8th meeting of the Chemical Review Committee under the Rotterdam Convention, Geneva;
19-23 March 2012	First round of 'informal-informal' negotiations on the zero draft of outcome document for Rio+20, New York;
26-27 March 2012	3rd intersessional meeting of UNCSD, UN Secretariat New York;
11-13 April 2012	Expert meeting on financial resources and technical and implementation assistance (to be confirmed)
13-15 June 2012	Third UNCSD PrepCom, Rio de Janeiro;
20-22 June 2012	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro;
26 June - 2 July 2012	4 th session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on mercury, Punta del Este, Uruguay (duration to be confirmed);
17-21 September 2012	3rd session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, Nairobi;
15-19 October 2012	8th meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee under the Stockholm Convention, Geneva.

10. In addition to the above listed meetings, additional meetings in the field of chemicals and wastes could be envisaged as a result of decisions take at the 12th special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.
