

COMMUNICATION

International Biodiversity Day 2022: "Building a shared future for all life"

Dear Madam/Sir,

As we approach this year's International Biodiversity Day, I would like to invite all of you to join the global efforts to address the rampant loss of global biodiversity and support the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury to minimize the negative impacts of mercury on nature.

Mercury is detrimental to all life on Earth. It pushes many wildlife species that are already under serious threat by other stressors even closer to extinction.

The single biggest source of mercury entering the environment is artisanal and small-scale gold mining, which often takes place in biodiverse and sensitive ecosystems around the world. Ecosystems distant from mercury's original source are also impacted, such as in the Arctic, where mercury is a serious threat to many species of marine mammals and birds. Mercury also disproportionately impacts the health and livelihoods of indigenous peoples who are the major guardians of biodiversity and natural resources.

As you are aware, in its decision MC-4/12, the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention took its first step in recognizing the importance of addressing mercury pollution in connection with the global loss of biodiversity and requested the secretariat to develop a report on how the implementation of the Minamata Convention can contribute to the Global Biodiversity Framework, which will be adopted later this year during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, China. Furthermore, in decision MC-4/4, the Conference of the Parties called upon parties to engage indigenous peoples, local communities and other relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of national action plans with regard to the use of mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining, and requested the secretariat to compile views on the needs and priorities of indigenous peoples and local communities.

I am pleased to inform you that the secretariat has already started to give effect to these decisions. First, the key findings of the study "[Interlinkages between the chemicals and waste multilateral environmental agreements and biodiversity: Key Insights](#)", which was prepared jointly by the Minamata Convention secretariat and the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, has been released also in French and Spanish. Also, the secretariat is preparing additional studies to explore the impacts of mercury pollution on ecosystem services and local livelihoods. These studies and other sources of information, including input from parties and relevant stakeholders, will form a basis for the report and recommendations on how the efforts to implement the Minamata Convention can at the same time support the Global Biodiversity Framework.

As the world awaits the adoption of the Framework, and to ensure that implementation of the Minamata Convention supports future global efforts to address the drivers of biodiversity loss in a meaningful manner, I invite all parties to support the secretariat in its efforts to prepare the report pursuant to decision MC-4/12 by sharing their expertise and providing the necessary financial means to enable the process.



I would also like to re-iterate my invitation to countries, which have not yet done so, to ratify the Minamata Convention and join forces to make mercury history and help build a shared future for all life.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for your support to the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

Yours sincerely,

Monika Stankiewicz

Monika Stankiewicz
Executive Secretary

To: National Focal Points for the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Cc: Permanent missions to the United Nations Environment Programme and to the United Nations in Geneva and Nairobi