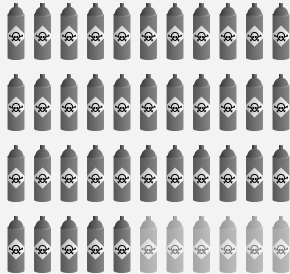


2024 Fact Sheet on

MERCURY TRADE



- ▶ As countries work to decrease the use of mercury in **products, industrial processes, and small-scale gold mining**, their efforts can be undermined by **large quantities of mercury available** on the global market.



**3,850–
4,400
tonnes**
Global Mercury
Supply (2015)

**1,400–
2,800
tonnes**
emitted and
released from
ASGM per year



- ▶ Primary mercury mining continues to take place in some countries, increasing global supply of mercury, estimated in 2015 at **3,850-4,400 tonnes per year**. **Ending primary mining of mercury**, and the supply of this mercury on the global market, **is a key element of mercury management**.
- ▶ There is a huge need to **regulate trade of mercury while reducing mercury demand**. If demand remains high, alternative supplies will emerge, and if supply remains high, it will flow towards **unregulated uses**.
- ▶ Undocumented mercury trade in some parts of the world has **increased over the last two decades**.
- ▶ Demand for mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) remains high, with between **1,400 and 2,800 metric tons being emitted and released** into the air, water and soil each year.
- ▶ The demand for mercury remains relatively robust in South and East Asian countries, **for products, vinyl chloride monomer production and ASGM**; and in African and Central and South American countries, especially for ASGM.
- ▶ The amount of mercury traded globally from 2018–2020 has been significantly less than in earlier years, but **illegal trade of mercury**, particularly for the purpose of ASGM, remains a significant concern and **has not been adequately quantified**.

WHAT THE CONVENTION SAYS

Article 3 of the Minamata Convention covers mercury supply sources and trade. It prohibits new mercury mining operations and establishes that Parties may only export mercury to other Parties or non-Parties with written consent, subject to certain prerequisites and practices.

Export and import measures are some of the main instruments to control supply and trade of mercury. The key principles include:

- mercury to be traded must not be from sources not allowed under the Convention;
- the consent of the importing country, regardless of whether it is a Party or non-Party, must be obtained before an export from a Party;
- trade with non-Parties is allowed, provided the non-Party can certify that it has certain measures in place equivalent to those required of a Party. Each trade needs to be accompanied by the pertinent consent form established by the Convention. The Minamata Convention established different forms to address various trade scenarios:
 - **Form A:** Written Consent of a Party to the Import of Mercury
 - **Form B:** Written Consent of a non-Party to the import of mercury
 - **Form C:** Non-Party certification of the source of mercury to be exported to a Party
 - **Form D:** Form for general notification of consent to Import Mercury

WHAT WE DO

- ▶ Measures to **control mercury-added products** and to **limit mercury use in industrial processes** have been taken by Parties to the Minamata Convention, and mercury use in products has decreased. This trend is expected to continue, reducing the need for mercury and its trade.

- ▶ Parties with consent to export mercury **need to provide the Secretariat with copies of the Consent Forms** used or other suitable information in their submitted national reports.
- ▶ Parties have been requested to provide further information in their national reporting, including on measures taken to prevent **exports which are not in compliance with the Convention**.
- ▶ Parties have been invited to share with the Secretariat their experiences and challenges faced, as well as information on activities undertaken in relation to the **Bali Declaration on combating illegal trade in mercury**.
- ▶ The COP will consider **guidance on trade of mercury** from primary mercury mining, and a **study of the global supply**, production, trade and use of mercury compounds.
- ▶ COP-5 has also encouraged enhanced support to strengthen both the efforts in **tackling mercury supply sources and trade**, and the collaboration among Parties and MEAs.
- ▶ Parties are tasked to promote **joint campaigns and training** to enhance the capacity of enforcement officers, including customs officers, in controlling national mercury trade.

REFERENCES

- [Minamata Convention text and annexes](#)
- [Global mercury supply, trade and demand](#)
- [Guidance in relation to mercury supply sources and trade in relation to certification](#)
- [Guidance on completing the forms required under article 3 related to trade in mercury](#)
- [Forms related to Article 3 on Mercury trade](#)

MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global treaty that helps countries to control, reduce and eliminate mercury across all its life-stages with the objective to protect human health and the environment.

It is named after the bay in Japan where, in the mid-20th century, mercury-tainted industrial wastewater poisoned thousands of people, leading to severe health damage that became known as the "Minamata disease".

Since it entered into force on 16 August 2017, Parties have been working together to control the mercury supply and trade, reduce the use, emissions and releases of mercury, raise public awareness, and build the necessary institutional capacity.

Minamata Convention website
<https://minamataconvention.org>

