

Ref: MC/ES/2025/56

Geneva, 28 March 2024

Subject: Progress of the intersessional work under the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Dear Madam/Sir,

This letter is to update you on the progress of the intersessional work pursuant to the decisions of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and in preparation for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

Fourth Round of applications to the Specific International Programme

The Fourth Round of applications to the Specific International Programme (SIP) was launched on 24 April 2024 with a mandatory deadline for submission by 31 July 2024, as decided by the SIP Governing Board at its ninth meeting, which took place online from 15 to 16 April 2024.

The SIP Governing Board met in-person in Geneva on 22-24 January 2025 to consider the 29 eligible applications submitted to the Fourth Round of applications. The meeting was co-chaired by Obed Meringo Baloyi (South Africa) and Andrew Clark (United States of America), the co-chairs of the Governing Board. Prior to the Board meeting, the Secretariat provided an opportunity for applicants to revise their applications based on technical review comments from the Secretariat, and then conducted a thorough appraisal of each application before submitting them all for further consideration and decision-making by the Board.

At its tenth meeting, the Governing Board approved ten projects amounting to just over USD 2 million, corresponding to the funding envelope available for the Fourth Round in the Specific Trust Fund at the time of the meeting. Approved projects, pending finalization of project documents as per Governing Board recommendations, were submitted by Brazil, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Georgia, Madagascar, Montenegro, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

The Board acknowledged that the Fourth Round resulted in the highest number of applications to the Programme to date. Further, the Board commended all of the applicants for their diligent work in preparing and submitting outstanding applications. Given the high quality of applications, the Board was faced with a challenging selection process and expressed its sincere regret for not having been able to approve a greater number of projects for funding.

The Board also expressed its sincere appreciation to all the donors to the Fourth Round, namely Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

Once finalized, the report of the tenth meeting of the Governing Board will be made available on the [Convention's website](#).

I would like to thank the donors for their generous contributions, the Governing Board for their thorough and fruitful deliberations and my colleagues in the Secretariat for their hard and diligent work to support the Fourth Round. Please do not hesitate to contact Alexander Romanov, Programme Management Officer for Capacity-building and Technical Assistance, at alexander.romanov@un.org should you need any further information on this matter.



7th meeting of the Implementation and Compliance Committee

The seventh meeting of the Implementation and Compliance Committee of the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Geneva on 18-20 February 2025. The meeting was chaired by Anik Beaudoin (Canada), Chair of the Committee, while Musa Kuzumila Ngunila (Tanzania) served as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting.

The Committee adopted a decision regarding a written submission from a Party with respect to its own compliance and agreed on conclusions and recommendations based on its consideration of the Secretariat's report on the second short national reports submitted by Parties in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention. The Committee elected Yunfang Hu (China) as Chair, and Eva Salplachtova (Czechia), as Vice-Chair and Rapporteur to serve for the period commencing at the closure of the seventh meeting until the closure of the following in-person meeting of the Committee.

The outcome of the meeting will be included in a working document to be transmitted for consideration at COP-6. I am pleased to inform you that the meeting documents are available on the Convention's [website](#).

COP-6 Bureau meetings

The Bureau of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury has held two online meetings, the first on 28 January and the second on 4 March 2025. The Bureau meetings were presided over by Osvaldo Patricio Álvarez Pérez (Chile), COP-6 President.

The Bureau considered and discussed various topics, including election of Saeed Ahmed AL-Zahrani (Saudi Arabia) as the COP-6 Rapporteur, preparatory work and timelines ahead of COP-6, tentative agenda of the COP-6. The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the intersessional work and status of contributions to the Convention trust funds.

The reports of the meetings are available on the Convention [website](#). The next meeting will take place on 26 April 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland.

First effectiveness evaluation of the Convention

The second face-to-face meeting of the Open-Ended Scientific Group (OESG) took place in Minamata, Japan, from 17 to 21 March 2025, co-chaired by Terry Keating (United States of America) and Dominique Bally Kpokro (Cote d'Ivoire).

OESG reviewed the mercury monitoring, emission and release information submitted by Parties and stakeholders, as well as information available in literature, and discussed responses to the guiding questions described in the [Guidance](#) on monitoring mercury and mercury compounds to support the effectiveness evaluation. Meeting documents are available on the Convention's [website](#). OESG agreed to complete a summary of the availability of data for review by the Parties in May 2025. OESG will further work to complete the draft scientific reports for submission to the Effectiveness Evaluation Group and for Party review by early October 2025.

I would like to express my great appreciation to Japan for hosting the meeting and providing an opportunity to the meeting participants to experience and learn about the great city of Minamata, its people and history and get inspired to make mercury history.

The Effectiveness Evaluation Group has met four times online, co-chaired by Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) and Itsuki Kuroda (Japan). The most recent meetings took place on 5 December 2024 and 24 March 2025. The members of the Group and observers have undertaken an initial individual analysis of how



effectively the provisions of the Convention are being implemented. Six thematic sub-groups were formed in March 2025, five sub-groups focused on providing a summary of the analysis against individual indicators and one sub-group focused on the development of a draft outline of the effectiveness evaluation report. The next meeting of the Effectiveness Evaluation Group will take place online on 11 June 2025.

National reporting

The Online Reporting Tool for the second full national report (ORT) was launched on 6 March 2025 and the personalized credentials for National Focal Points (NFP) to log-in to the ORT were sent out on 3 March 2025. We are still awaiting the confirmation of the respective National Focal Points (NFP) from some Parties.

Kindly send your NFP confirmation, if you have multiple NFPs, or designate your NFP if you have not yet done so, to the Secretariat at mea-minamatasecretariat@un.org, as soon as you are able. The Implementation and Compliance Committee encouraged Parties who have not yet submitted their second short national reports to do so by 31 May 2025, for the national report to be included in the Secretariat's report to the COP at its sixth meeting.

Requested contributions from Parties and stakeholders

Decision [MC-5/5](#) requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft report compiling and synthesizing the information submitted by Parties and relevant stakeholders on challenges in preventing the manufacture, import and export of mercury-added cosmetics, and make the draft report available to the Parties and relevant stakeholders so that they can review and comment on it. The draft report will be available on the Convention's [website](#) next week. Parties and stakeholders are invited to submit comments by 28 April 2025.

Decision [MC-5/7](#) requested the Secretariat to prepare a supplemental section of the guidance document on developing a national action plan to reduce and, where feasible, eliminate mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining, on the effective engagement and participation of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of national action plans (supplemental guidance).

I am pleased to inform you that the Secretariat has developed the above-mentioned draft supplemental guidance, which is now available on the Convention's [website](#). Parties, Indigenous Peoples organization, local communities and relevant stakeholders are invited to submit inputs using this comment [form](#) and email it to the Secretariat (mea-minamatasecretariat@un.org) by Wednesday, 30 April 2025.

Please do not hesitate to contact Richard Gutierrez, Programme Management Officer, at richard.gutierrez@un.org should you need any further information on this matter.

Deadline for proposing amendments to the Convention and its annexes

Pursuant to Articles 26 and 27 of the Convention, any Party may propose amendments to the Convention and its annexes. Any amendment proposal must be made available by the Secretariat to all Parties at least six months before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties at which it is proposed for adoption. This deadline is 3 May 2025 for amendment proposals to be considered at COP-6, however Parties are invited to submit the text of any proposed amendments, as well as information required under Articles 4(7) and 5(9), to the Secretariat at least **by 18 April 2025** to allow time for processing of the documents. More information is available on the Convention's [website](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact Lara Ognibene, Legal Officer, at lara.ognibene@un.org should you need any further information on this matter.

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New "Focus areas" section on the Convention website

I am pleased to share with you the launch of a new "Focus areas" section on our website, developed to provide Parties and stakeholders with a more intuitive and dynamic way to access key areas of work under the Convention. This new section offers a structured and comprehensive view of 12 topics, integrating relevant news, events, intersessional work, and resources to present a holistic picture of each topic. It also introduces a data-driven approach to navigate content, track progress over time, and connect related information meaningfully. I invite you to explore this section at <https://minamataconvention.org/en/topics>.

Contributions to Trust Funds of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

The Financial Rules for the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and any of its subsidiary bodies, as well as financial provisions governing the functioning of the Secretariat, adopted by decision MC-1/10, state in rule 5.3 (c) that "if the contributions of any Parties have not been received by 31 December of the relevant year, the head of the Secretariat shall write to those Parties to impress upon them the importance of paying their respective outstanding contributions for prior periods and shall report to the Conference of the Parties at its next meeting on the consultations with such Parties".

In accordance with the above, you are kindly invited to consult [the status of contributions](#) to the Minamata Convention on Mercury general trust fund for previous years (2018-2024) with a reference to the contributions due for the current year 2025 as of 28 February 2025.

I would like to encourage all Parties to check the linked status and to pay your contribution, including the one pertaining to prior years, at your earliest convenience, if not yet done so. Please inform the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention accordingly.

Prompt and full payment of contributions by Parties will ensure a smooth implementation of the Convention's activities and avoid potential cash flow issues. The Secretariat has recently approached Parties with arrears of two or more years to jointly develop a payment schedule, as required in rule 5.3 (d) of the Financial Rules.

Secretariat

I am delighted to share with you that a new staff member has joined the Secretariat: Brenda Koekkoek is the new Senior Coordination Officer. We wish Marianne Bailey, who held this position previously, a joyful retirement. Brenda is coming from the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution and has a vast experience in the chemicals and waste area.

I am looking forward to further cooperating with you and to a successful COP-6.

Yours sincerely,

Monika Stankiewicz,

Executive Secretary

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To: Minamata Convention National Focal Points
Members of the Bureau of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Observers admitted to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties

Cc: Representatives of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva
Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme