

# **GUIDANCE TO THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY BY CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE MINAMATA CONVENTION**

**Compilation by the Secretariat as of 1 April 2026**

## **DECISION MC-1/5: GUIDANCE TO THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**

### **Guidance to the Global Environment Facility on overall strategies, policies, programme priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources and on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund**

1. Pursuant to article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the present guidance is intended to assist the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in fulfilling its role as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention.

#### **I. Eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources**

2. To be eligible for funding from GEF as one of the entities comprising the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, a country must be a Party to the Convention and must be a developing country or a country with an economy in transition.

3. Activities that are eligible for funding from the GEF Trust Fund are those that seek to meet the objectives of the Convention and are consistent with the present guidance.

4. Signatories to the Convention are eligible for funding from GEF for enabling activities, provided that any such signatory is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party as evidenced by a letter from the relevant minister to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and to the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility.

#### **II. Overall strategies and policies**

5. In accordance with article 13, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the GEF Trust Fund shall provide new, predictable, adequate and timely financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of the Convention as agreed by the Conference of the Parties, including costs arising from activities that:

- (a) Are country-driven;
- (b) Are in conformity with programme priorities as reflected in relevant guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties;
- (c) Build capacity and promote the utilization of local and regional expertise, if applicable;
- (d) Promote synergies with other focal areas;

(e) Continue to enhance synergies and co-benefits within the chemicals and waste focal area;

(f) Promote multiple-source funding approaches, mechanisms and arrangements, including from the private sector, if applicable;

(g) Promote sustainable national socioeconomic development, poverty reduction and activities consistent with existing national sound environmental management programmes geared towards the protection of human health and the environment.

### **III. Programme priorities**

6. In accordance with article 13, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the GEF Trust Fund shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities.

7. In particular, it should give priority to the following activities when providing financial resources to developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition:

(a) Enabling activities, particularly Minamata Convention initial assessment activities and national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining;

(b) Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, affording priority to those that:

(i) Relate to legally binding obligations;

(ii) Facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party;

(iii) Allow for a reduction in mercury emissions and releases and address the health and environmental impacts of mercury.

8. In providing resources for an activity, GEF should take into account the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs in accordance with paragraph 8 of article 13 of the Convention.

### **IV. Indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support**

#### **A. Enabling activities**

##### **1. Minamata Convention initial assessments (MIAs)**

##### **2. Preparation of national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining in accordance with paragraph 3 of article 7 and Annex C**

##### **3. Other types of enabling activities as agreed by the Conference of the Parties**

#### **B. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention**

**1. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that relate to legally binding obligations**

9. When providing financial resources to eligible parties for activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, GEF should afford priority to those activities that relate to legally binding obligations of parties under the Convention and should take into account the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs. Such activities could include those related to the following areas, listed in no particular order:

- Mercury supply sources and trade;
- Mercury-added products;
- Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used;
- Artisanal and small-scale gold mining;
- Emissions;
- Releases;
- Environmentally sound interim storage of mercury, other than waste mercury;
- Mercury wastes;
- Reporting;
- Relevant capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer in relation to the above.

**2. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party**

10. When considering activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that facilitate early implementation on entry into force, GEF should also consider providing support for activities that, although they are not the subject of a legal obligation under the Convention, may significantly contribute to a Party's preparedness to implement the Convention upon its entry into force for that country.

11. Within the context of the GEF mandate, such activities could include, inter alia, support for:

(a) With regard to emissions, the development by parties with relevant sources of emissions of national plans setting out the measures to be taken to control emissions and their expected targets, goals and outcomes;

(b) With regard to releases, the development by parties with relevant sources of releases of national plans setting out the measures to be taken to control releases and their expected targets, goals and outcomes;

- (c) With regard to contaminated sites, capacity-building for the development of strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury or mercury compounds and, as appropriate, the remediation of those sites;
- (d) Information exchange;
- (e) Public information, awareness and education;
- (f) Cooperation in the development and improvement of research, development and monitoring;
- (g) Development of implementation plans following initial assessments.

**3. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that allow for the reduction of mercury emissions and releases and address both the health and environmental impacts of mercury**

Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that allow for the reduction of mercury emissions and releases and address both the health and environmental impacts of mercury may encompass activities relating to both binding and non-binding provisions, with priority accorded to the legally binding provisions discussed above, that accord with the GEF mandate to deliver global environmental benefits and reflect the GEF chemicals and waste focal area strategy.

## **DECISION MC-5/7: ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING**

3. Invites the Global Environment Facility to include support to parties undertaking their first such reviews as part of the Facility's enabling activity support available to parties, and, within that activity, to support the development and piloting of review guidance, supplementing the information in the guidance document on developing a national action plan to reduce and, where feasible, eliminate mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining,<sup>1</sup> and of an online tool for parties to use when undertaking their reviews;
4. Calls on parties and the Global Environment Facility to make further efforts to seek opportunities to advance implementation of article 7 in the context of projects relating to biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, and trade, and to continue to advance implementation of national action plans through projects and programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Guidance Document: Developing a National Action Plan to Reduce and, Where Feasible, Eliminate Mercury Use in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining" as adopted in decision MC-4/4 and updated in document UNEP/MC/COP.4/29.

**DECISION MC-5/11: REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY**

4. Provides additional details to supplement the guidance of the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility, as follows:

(a) The Global Environment Facility, in planning for its ninth replenishment period, should promote synergies with other focal areas in line with decision MC-1/5, including the biodiversity focal area, as it advances work under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

(b) In developing its programming directions and resource allocations for the ninth replenishment period, and in further developing projects and programmes under the programming directions for the eighth replenishment, the Global Environment Facility should take into account the time frames that parties must meet for implementation of mandatory obligations.

## **DECISION MC-6/10: FINANCIAL MECHANISM**

2. Recalls decision MC-1/5, in which it provided guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
3. Provides additional guidance to the Global Environment Facility, to supplement the guidance set out in the annex to decision MC-1/5, by adding the updating of the Minamata Initial Assessments and the monitoring of human exposure to mercury and environmental concentrations of mercury to the list of activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, contained in section IV.B of the annex to decision MC-1/5, and recalls the importance of providing support to address challenges arising from the obligations related to dental amalgam;
4. Recalls its guidance to the Global Environment Facility, in decision MC-5/11, to take into account the time frames to which parties must adhere for the implementation of mandatory obligations in developing its programming directions and resource allocations for the ninth replenishment period, and in further developing projects and programmes under the programming directions for the eighth replenishment, as a supplement to the guidance of the Conference of the Parties, and requests the secretariat of the Convention to transmit the information as outlined in the compilation of obligations and deadlines under the Convention and the extent to which such obligations and deadlines are being met by parties<sup>2</sup> to the Global Environment Facility.

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<sup>2</sup> UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/39.