



Distr.: General
13 August 2021

English only



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

**Sixth Meeting of the Governing Board
Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Online, 9-13 August 2021**

Report of the sixth meeting of the Governing Board of the Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance

I. Opening of the meeting (agenda item 1)

1. The sixth meeting of the Governing Board of the Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance was opened at 13:00 p.m. Geneva time on Monday, 9 August 2021, by the Co-Chair of the Governing Board, Mr. Reggie Hernaus (The Netherlands) and Mr. Prasert Tapaneeyangkul (Thailand).
2. Speaking on behalf of both Co-Chairs, Mr. Hernaus warmly welcomed all Board members to the meeting, thanking the Board for their understanding and flexibility in the timing and format of the meeting given the continuing global COVID-19 situation.
3. The Co-Chair remarked that the meeting will be considering several important issues, including:
 - The twenty-four applications received to the Third Round;
 - The annual report of the Secretariat on the operations of the Specific International Programme, and the status of the Specific Trust Fund; and
 - Two items upcoming at the forthcoming meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the Programme, namely: the terms of reference for the review of the financial mechanism, and the role and strengthening of the Specific International Programme.
4. The Co-Chair then invited the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention, Monika Stankiewicz, to deliver a welcoming message, also on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.
5. The Executive Secretary welcomed the participants, noting that it was a pleasure for the Secretariat to prepare and organize the Sixth meeting of the Governing Board to the Specific International Programme. In her remarks, the Executive Secretary highlighted the importance of the work the Programme in providing much needed capacity strengthening to Parties and in its overall contribution to both development and implementation of the Convention. She specifically thanked the donors who have supported the Programme, and made this Third Round possible, acknowledging also that there is great need expressed by the applicants. She further noted that for sound administration and support to the Programme there will need to be at its mid-term to assess the Programme; and a way to allow the Secretariat to augment its capacity of Secretariat especially for peak workload times and specific required tasks.

6. The Co-Chair noted that unfortunately Mr. Atle Fretheim (Norway) was not able to join the Sixth Meeting for health reasons and expressed the Board's sincere wishes to him for a speedy and full recovery.
7. Noting Rule 3 paragraph 4 according to which a Board member, as necessary, may designate an alternative representative for a particular meeting, the Co-Chair on behalf of the Board welcomed Mr. Joel Ormala of Norway to represent Mr. Atle Fretheim at the meeting.
8. After the introduction of Mr. Ormala, the Co-Chair invited each Board member to a brief tour de table to reflect on the Third Round of applications.
9. The Co-Chair then directed the Board's attention to the schedule of work for the meeting as outlined in the annotated agenda in document UNEP/MC/SIP.GB.6/1/Add.1. He thanked the Secretariat for the well-prepared documents submitted well in advance of the meeting.
10. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

II. Organizational matters (agenda item 2)

a. Adoption of the agenda

11. Upon request of the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat presented the provisional agenda and proposed organization of work. She drew attention to Agenda Item 8: Adoption of the Report and the proposed way forward in this regard.
12. The Co-Chair thanked the representative on the proposal on how the Secretariat would prepare the meeting report so as to be ready to be adopted by the Board, and thereafter forwarded as part of official documentation for the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
13. The Board adopted the agenda, as attached in Annex II.

b. Request for disclosure of any possible personal and/or financial conflict of interest

14. The Co-Chair recalled Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure for the Governing Board, which states that in cases where a member of the Board is from a country that has submitted a project to the Board for its consideration, that member shall be excused from participating during the deliberations of and decision-making by the Board in relation to the project in question. He further noted that the Rule also states that members and possible observers at the meeting have an obligation to promptly disclose to the Board, at the commencement of the meeting, any potential personal and/or financial interest in any aspect of a project presented for discussion and approval by the Board.
15. Three members of the Board (Iran, Senegal, and Suriname) indicated that their countries had submitted applications.
16. The Co-Chair thanked the three Board Members for their declarations of disclosure and further noted that Rule 23 paragraph 1 stated that in cases where a member of the Board is from a country that has submitted a project to the Board for its consideration, that member shall be excused from participating during the deliberations of and decision-making by the Board in relation to the project in question.
17. Based on the past practices of the Governing Board that has enabled two successful and transparent rounds of decision making of the Governing Board, the Co-Chair further outlined that to be "excused" from participating during the deliberations of and decision-making by the Board shall mean in practice for Iran, Senegal and Suriname, that:
 - i. The Board Member may be present in the room to hear and observe the deliberations on the project but does not speak to the application and does not participate at all in deliberations affecting the application.
 - ii. The Board Member may request the other Board Member representing the region (or a Board Member from a different region) to speak, if necessary, to the application during the deliberations.
 - iii. At the time of decision-making of the Board on that project, the Board Member would not be present in the room.

18. The Co-Chair further outlined, that as Co-Chairs they will seek to arrive at the list of applications to approve for funding in the Third Round in the full spirit of cooperation and transparency, noting that it remains the prerogative of the Co-Chairs at the time of deliberation to decide if at any point a Board Member with a potential conflict of interest may be allowed to be present in the room or not in light of the overall deliberations.

III. Operations of the Specific International Programme (agenda item 3)

a. Operations of the Programme, including status of implementation of the First and Second Round projects

19. The Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to present its annual report on the operations of the Programme, including the status of implementation of the First and Second Round projects.

20. The representative of the Secretariat provided the information contained in the annual report in two parts. First, she updated on the implementation status of Specific International Programme projects and the secretariat support in this regard. She recalled that the five projects approved at the First Round were from Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Iran and Lesotho, and the ten projects approved in the Second Round were from Antigua and Barbuda, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Moldova, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka and Zambia. She noted that as of 31 July 2021, all legal agreements to support implementation of all the projects were in place, but that it had taken considerable effort by the Secretariat to get all agreements for the Second Round in place, due to numerous COVID-context related delays. She also noted that reporting had been received as required from projects advanced in implementation, with more reporting expected in the coming months. For a full overview of the status of the projects, as of 12 July 2021, see Annex III.

21. The representative also drew attention to the overviews of all First Round projects that were available on the website, and that the overviews of the projects of the Second Round would be uploaded shortly. Each of the overviews give details on each of the projects, including budget, duration, and project management information such as the contact persons at the national level. Furthermore, she informed the Board of the launch of the online newsletter, Focus, for which three editions have been published to date. The newsletter is to inform Parties, stakeholders and particularly donors of the progress of work undertaken by the Programme.

22. The representative then turned to update the Board on the secretariat functions provided to manage the Third Round of applications. Referencing the instructions by the Board from the Fifth Meeting (see timetable in Annex III in the fifth meeting report), she outlined that Secretariat fully implemented the activities according to the timeline. During the application phase she noted that the Secretariat organised webinars in English, French and Spanish in four separate sessions to accommodate different time zones. Thereafter, the Secretariat also made itself available for one-on-one clinics with applicants working on their draft application. Following the receipt of twenty-four applications, the Secretariat did the technical review of applications, involving the Cross-Secretariat Task Team (which includes staff from the secretariats of the Global Environment Facility, the Special Programme, and the Global Mercury Partnership) to prepare comments for the applicants. All applicants were invited to resubmit their applications. This additional phase was newly introduced in the Third Round by the Board, and from the Secretariat's perspective was very useful to having strong applications coming forward. It also allowed, in two cases, applicants to be informed of the suitability of their applications for support from the Global Environment Facility.

23. A Board member complimented the work of the Secretariat in managing the First and Second Round projects, its efforts to conclude all the project documents and legal arrangements even amidst the challenges due to COVID, the new efforts to share information on the Programme through the newsletter, and for the overall excellent support to the Third Round.

b. Status of the Specific Trust Fund and c. Support to the Secretariat's functions

24. The Co-Chair then invited the Secretariat to present its annual report on the status and administration of the Specific Trust Fund, as well as the Secretariat functions to the Programme.

25. The representative of the Secretariat recalled that the Specific Trust Fund is open for ten years to receive contributions to support the Programme, and that the financial resources are to be used for the approved projects, the meetings of the Governing Board, and the operations of the Programme. All contributions to the Specific Trust Fund are subject to 13% programmatic support costs. She also noted that the Specific Trust Fund does not cover any portion of the salaries of officers of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention that provide

secretariat services to the operation and administration of the Programme. In total, for the First and Second Round, USD 3,701,909 was raised. Against this, the total projected expenditure is USD 3,526,500 and the projected cash balance amounts to USD 175,409. Given that the Programme is about to enter its fourth year of operation, Secretariat highlighted the need for provision to be made for a mid-term evaluation of the Specific International Programme by the UNEP Evaluation Office, and recommended that the cost of the evaluation be taken from the savings available from the First and Second Rounds of the Programme. Furthermore, to augment operational and administrative capacity with fifteen projects already under implementation and more being added in the Third Round, and to be supported during peak workloads and for other related services required for the sound operation and administration of the Programme, the representative of the Secretariat recommended the Board to allow the Secretariat to draw against the savings in case of upcoming pertinent capacity needs, and then report thereon.

26. The Board expressed support for the provisions for a mid-term evaluation and agreed with the recommendation of the Secretariat to utilise savings for services to support the operations and administration of the Programme, including at times of peak workloads, and to report thereon to the donors, noting also that for now this is a better approach than requesting an additional staff post from the Conference of the Parties for the Specific International Programme.

27. Noting that at this Sixth Meeting the Board is to approve applications to the Third Round against the funding envelope available, the Co-Chair then called on the Secretariat to give an update on the contributions and pledges to the Third Round.

28. The representative of the Secretariat outlined that, as of 30 June 2021, USD 2,248,085 had been received from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America. In the meantime, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States of America made additional pledges. In light of the Third Round of funding also to need to cover the 13% programme support costs, the representative of the Secretariat explained that USD 2,2 million can be considered available to be programmed by the Board.

29. The Co-Chair thanked Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States for their support to the Third Round, noting that France was a first time contributor to the Specific Trust Fund, and that Norway had been the single largest contributor to the Programme to date, and also to this Third Round.

IV. Consideration of eligible and complete applications for the Third Round of funding under the Specific International Programme for decision by the Governing Board (agenda item 4).

30. The Co-Chair opened the agenda item, noting the substantial task ahead for the Board at its Sixth meeting, namely, to review the twenty-four applications submitted for funding in the Third Round. He requested the Secretariat to give an overview of the task ahead, in preparation for the in-depth consideration of applications.

31. The representative of the Secretariat outlined that the Third Round was launched on 15 December 2020 with the mandatory deadline of 18 March 2021. In total, twenty-four applications were received with eleven from Africa, eight from Asia and the Pacific, four from Latin America and the Caribbean and one from Central and Eastern Europe. Of the twenty-four applications, three were from Small Island Developing States and eight from Least Developed Countries. Turning to document UNEP/MC/SIP.GB.6/3/Add.1 the member of the Secretariat outlined that all the applications were appraised against the criteria set by the Board at its first meeting and contained in the appraisal framework adopted at the Second Round. The appraisal framework is set out in the Application Guidelines to the Third Round. In preparing the appraisals, Secretariat was also able to count on the review and insights from the representatives of the GEF Secretariat, the Special Programme Secretariat, and the Secretariat of the Global Mercury Partnership as part of the Cross-Secretariat Task Team. The insights from the Global Environment Facility and the Special Programme were particularly pertinent in terms of considerations of funding made available under these bodies. The complete appraisal package was made available to the members of the Governing Board on 9 July 2021. She also noted that this Round saw the submittal of applications that had built on past recommendations by the Board.

32. The Co-Chair recalled the elements of the appraisal framework adopted at its third meeting that correspond to the criteria agreed upon by the Board at its first meeting, namely to:

- a. Check for completeness;

- b. Check for eligibility;
- c. Check for coherence; and
- d. Check for prioritization.

33. The Co-Chair also recalled the specific items the Board had highlighted to applicants to the Third Round, namely that:

- a. It welcomed applications that contained targeted and specific interventions,
- b. The Programme is able to support projects to be carried out on a regional basis, in addition to national projects, and
- c. The Programme is not to duplicate funding of activities that are already funded or planned to be funded by the Global Environment Facility or the Special Programme. Following the comments from the Secretariat and the note from the Co-Chair, the Governing Board proceeded to review each application in the alphabetical order of the applicant Governments.

34. With this as background, the Board deliberated on the twenty-four applications received.

35. Following detailed deliberations on each of the twenty-four applications received, the Governing Board approved nine projects for funding in the Third Round, amounting to USD 2,193,842. The projects that were approved, pending finalisation of project documents as per Governing Board recommendations, were:

Projects approved for funding in the Third Round		
Party	Project Title	Amount in USD
Burundi	Capacity building support for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Burundi	250,000
Cuba	Improvement of information on inventories of mercury use and the environmental cycle in Cuba to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention.	249,210
Gabon	Facilitating capacity-building with technology assistance and technology transfer for monitoring and managing mercury in Central Africa	249,500
India	Development of Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Implementation of Minamata Convention in India	240,000
Iran	Improving capacity building program for the replacement of mercury containing lamps in order to implement Minamata Convention in Islamic Republic of Iran	238,000
Jordan	Environmentally Sound Management of Mercury-Containing Wastes and Reduce the Use of Mercury-Containing Products in Jordan.	250,000
North Macedonia	Strengthening national capacities for Minamata Convention implementation with focus on development of strategy for assessing the sites contaminated with mercury	248,500
Rwanda	Strengthening the Institutional Capacities for Rwanda to implement Minamata Convention	220,000
Senegal	Strengthening the legal framework and institutional capacities of ECOWAS countries (Senegal, Togo and Burkina Faso) for the implementation of Articles 3 and 4 of the Minamata Convention	248,632

36. Fifteen applications could not be approved for funding in the Third Round. For these applications the Board formulated recommendations that the Secretariat will transmit to each of the applications for their consideration and strengthening of applications for possible submittal to the Fourth Round or a subsequent Round. These applications were:

Applications with recommendations for possible submittal to the Fourth Round, or a subsequent Round	
Party	Project Title
Argentina	Strengthening capacities to improve the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes
Bolivia	Strengthening national capacities for the implementation of Article 4 on mercury-added products in the Plurinational State of Bolivia
Botswana	Strengthening National Capacity for Phasing Out Mercury Added Products and Environmentally Sound Mercury Containing Waste Management in Botswana
Burkina Faso	Strengthening of the legal and institutional frameworks for the sound management of mercury-added products in Burkina Faso
Central African Republic	Waste management and abandonment of mercury and mercury-containing products
Chad	Strengthening national capacities for the phasing out of the use of mercury and its compounds
Guinea	Improving the management frameworks for mercury and mercury waste containing mercury, including dental amalgams
Madagascar	Strengthen the capacity of Madagascar to manage mercury containing products and mercury containing waste in Madagascar
Mongolia	<i>No title was provided</i>
Pakistan	Development of National Action Plan (NAP) for Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector of Pakistan
Qatar	Enhancing Qatar's capabilities to implement Minamata Convention focusing on developing an inventory of emission, releases, disposal and the management of mercury waste (medical and hazardous waste)
Samoa	Strengthening the National Institutional Capacity for Environmentally Sound Management of Mercury in Samoa
Suriname	Increased Technical Capacity and Knowledge of the Environmental Sciences Department of the University of Suriname
Tanzania	Strengthening National Capacity for Sound Management of Mercury-Added Products and their Waste in Tanzania
Vietnam	Strengthening national capacity for the management of import and export of mercury and mercury-added products supporting the implementation of Minamata Convention in Vietnam

37. The Co-Chair then invited the Board members to reflect on the Third Round. The following recommendations and observations were collected:

- a. The Board expressed its sincere regret not to be able to have approved more projects for funding in the Third Round, noting that this Round yielded many persuasive and well-articulated applications, which placed the Board in the very challenging position of needing to select among a number of worthy applications.
- b. Expressing its sincere appreciation to all the donors to the Third Round, the Board called on Parties to strongly support the Fourth Round of the Programme. In this regard, the Board also expressed its hope for a broadening of the donor base, and especially invited those in a position to do so, that have not yet contributed to the Programme, to consider making funding available for the Programme.

- c. Reflecting on the introduction of a two-step approach in the review of the applications for the Third Round, the Board observed that while this represents an additional task for the Secretariat, the value of the extra step could be seen in the well-articulated applications. Moreover, the Board noted that the two-step approach also enabled the Secretariat to identify at least two applications better suited for funding by the Global Environment Facility. (By the time the Board convened these two applicants were in direct contact with officials from the Global Environment Facility and from implementing agencies to advance on their respective applications to the GEF Trust Fund.)
 - d. The Board underlined that selecting which among many well-articulated applications to fund in the context of a limited funding envelope requires a robust decision-making matrix. The Board expressed its appreciation of the appraisal framework to guide the work of the Secretariat in the preparation of the appraisals, as well as the usefulness of the appraisals prepared for the deliberation of the Board, but it also noted that in the future the Board may again face the challenge of the number of worthy applications exceeding the funding envelope available. The Board therefore recommended that some more work on the prioritisation criteria and/or selection methodology may be helpful to assist the Board in the future if/when faced with the challenge to select among applications deemed of comparable high calibre.
 - e. Notwithstanding the many efforts by the Secretariat to support applicants in this round¹, the Board noted that some of the neediest Parties still appeared not be in a position to prepare sufficiently convincing project proposals. In this regard, language appeared to be a significant barrier.
 - f. The Board was happy to be able to approve applications for funding from all UN regions in this round, noting though that in past rounds it was established that for the Specific International Programme there is no practice of binding regional balance for decision-making.
 - g. The Board noted that relative to eligible Parties in UN regions, some regions submitted more applications than others. It expressed its hope to be of support to as many eligible Parties as possible, and to all UN regions, and therefore recommended that for the Fourth Round the Secretariat continue specific regional and language outreach to support a broad applicant base.
 - h. Noting that cumulative allocation is not a reason to decide against an application in a subsequent application round *per se*, the Board recognised that the Programme would need to be of support to as many eligible Parties as possible so as to soundly support the Convention in its limited time span.
 - i. The importance of Parties' completing their Minamata Initial Assessment and (if applicable) their ASGM National Action Plans and making their outcomes available to the Secretariat, was also stressed by the Board, as these provide important information to strengthen the evidence-base of need for funding to support specific activities.
38. The Board was pleased that it could support applications for funding in the Third Round that:
- a. Were targeted and specific in areas demonstrating highest need and national priority by the applicant to fulfil the Party's obligations under the Convention,
 - b. Included two projects conceptualised to build capacity at the regional level for specific areas of common concern,
 - c. Were based on well-conceptualised theories of change and with that well-conceptualised results-based activities,
 - d. Clearly articulated how the project was separate from other work already funded or planned to be funded by the Global Environment Facility and/of the Special Programme at their national level,

¹ Note: The Secretariat made the Application Guidelines available in English, French and Spanish. The Secretariat also hosted webinars and one-on-one clinics in English, French and Spanish. As the Governing Board operates in English, all applications are to be submitted in English.

- e. Were innovative in approach and also of interest to the Programme to support in terms of possible replicability by other Parties in future rounds, and
- f. Responded to needs expressed, including to support one Small Island Developing State and three Least Developed Countries.

39. The limited funding envelope meant the Board was faced with the challenging task to make a choice among a number of well-articulated and worthy applications. Following detailed deliberations, and an iterative approach, the Board succeeded to reach consensus on the projects to fund in the Third Round. In this regard, the Board noted for the record that at this time it faced an extraordinary circumstance of needs expressed for Convention implementation, and that the discussion by which consensus was reached on decision for the Third Round, does not set a precedent for decision-making in any future round of the Programme.

40. In light of the consensus reached, both Co-Chairs thanked the Board members for their constructive, patient and flexible approach to enable the Board to arrive at a decision on the projects to approve for funding by the Third Round.

41. To conclude, the Co-Chair requested the Secretariat to describe the next steps on the applications. The representative of the Secretariat outlined that all successful applicants would receive a letter in September detailing the next steps required to complete the project documents, and conclude the legal agreement to begin implementation, against a timeline to support a timely start of the project. All applicants whose projects were not approved for funding in the Third Round, will also receive a letter in September with recommendations from the Board for the applicant's consideration to strengthen their application for possible submittal to the Fourth or subsequent rounds.

V. **Items for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting (agenda item 5)**

42. The representative of the Secretariat provided an overview of the COP-4 agenda, particularly the schedule of work and the specific agenda items considered during the online segment convening from 1-5 November 2021 and the in-person meeting convening in Bali, tentatively in the first quarter of 2022. She explained that all matters on the Specific International Programme are set to be considered only at the in-person meeting in 2022, but that all documentation for COP-4 is being prepared for distribution in September 2021.

a. Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: Specific International Programme considerations as per MC-3/7, paragraph 2, on the terms of reference for the second review

43. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat proceeded to inform the Board on the preparations of the terms of reference proposed for the second review of the financial mechanism of which the Specific International Programme is one component. The comments made by the Board members in this regard at the fifth meeting have been taken into account in the preparation of the document. Furthermore, she pointed out that the terms of reference also make reference to the Special Programme, as the Specific International Programme is to be distinct from the Special Programme.

b. The Executive Director's report to assess the possible options for enhancing the Specific International Programme and its operations: Reflections from the Governing Board

44. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat proceeded to inform the Board on the preparations of the Executive Director's report on enhancing the Specific International Programme and its operations. She highlighted the comments made in this regard at the fifth meeting and asked if there were any further comments or reflections the Board would wish to share for transmittal to the Executive Director.

45. A Board member thanked the Secretariat for the two updates provided. He also noted that the Programme is an integral part of the Convention, and of singular importance is to underline the need to mobilise more resources for the Programme. He noted with some frustration that at a recent high-level event on chemicals donors were pledging large amounts to another fund, in an apparent disconnect from the equally valid need to robustly support the Specific International Programme.

VI. **Date and venue of the next meeting (agenda item 6)**

46. The Co-Chair then turned to the standing item on the meeting agenda, namely the date and venue for the next meeting of the Governing Board and invited the Secretariat to reflect on this item.

47. The representative of the Secretariat recalled that at its meetings the Board would convene to oversee the operations and administration (including implementation of projects) of the Programme, the launch of Rounds of the Programme, and decision-making on applications to Rounds of the Programme. She added that the term of the current Board members extends to the end of COP-4. At COP-4 the Board members for the next Board will be confirmed following nomination by the UN regions. Following COP-4, the Secretariat will work with the current Co-Chairs to set and prepare the next meeting. The tasks of the current Co-Chairs conclude at the time of election of the next Co-Chairs of the subsequent Board.

VII. Other matters (agenda item 7)

48. The Co-Chair invited the Board to consider any other matters.

49. A Board member proposed that the subsequent Board would need to address the following four items:

- a. Firstly, to find ways to help improve the accessibility of French-speaking Parties to apply to the Programme;
- b. Secondly, noting the usefulness of the “Master Class” the Secretariat ran for Board members in November 2020, to utilise these and related methods to increase the engagement of potential applicants to the Programme, including to ensure the Programme is seen to support all UN regions well;
- c. Thirdly, to consider requesting the Secretariat to work further on specific guidelines on how to prioritise among and/or rank applications of high calibre in the context of a limited funding envelope,
- d. Fourthly, to revisit the Board earlier considerations on resource mobilisation and to elaborate on how the Governing Board can help make the case for robust support to the Programme, both in the form of contributions and in-kind support.

50. The Board supported the proposal.

VIII. Adoption of the report (agenda item 8)

51. The Board agreed to adopt the report of the meeting provisionally, pending finalization by the Secretariat with the Co-Chairs, and requested the Secretariat to transmit the outcome of the meeting to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. To rapidly inform of the outcome of the deliberations on the Third Round, the Co-Chairs’ Statement is to be posted on the website of the Minamata Convention on the concluding day

52. The meeting report will also be made available subsequently on the website of the Minamata Convention.

53. A Board member requested that the results of the past rounds also be shared to provide the overview of all projects supported by the Programme thus far (see Annex VI).

IX. Closure of the meeting (agenda item 9)

54. The Co-Chairs thanked the Board members for their hard work over the past five days, and the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of and support to the meeting.

55. The Executive Secretary on her part thanked the Co-Chairs and the Governing Board for their hard work. She affirmed the views raised by the Board of the importance of the Programme to implement the Convention and noted the Programme’s ability to do much with comparatively little funding. Recognising the limited time the Programme is in place, and the strict time line of obligations upcoming for all Parties, she underlined the call for robust funding to the Programme to help make a crucial difference in the first decade of the Convention’s life.

56. The Co-Chair declared the meeting closed at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, 13 August 2021.

Annex I: List of participants

Governing Board (2020-2021)	
<p>AFRICA NIGERIA Mr. Olubunmi Olusanya Director II Pollution Control and Environmental Health Department Federal Ministry of Environment 14 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama 900271 Abuja Nigeria Tel: +234 802 304 0724 Email: olusanyaao@yahoo.co.uk</p> <p>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC THAILAND - <u>Co-Chair</u> Mr. Prasert Tapaneyangkul Chair, Subcommittee on the Basel Convention National Environment Board 92 Soi Phahon Yothin 7, Phahon Yothin Road Sam Sen Nai, Phayathai 10400 Bangkok Thailand Tel: +66 2298 2426 Email: ptap14011@gmail.com</p> <p>CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE ESTONIA Mr. Kaupo Heinma Deputy Secretary General Ministry of the Environment Narva mnt 7a 15172 Tallinn Estonia Tel: +372 626 2846 Email: kaupo.heinma@envir.ee</p> <p>LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BRAZIL Mr. Helges Bandeira Second Secretary Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva Chemin Louis-Dunant 15 (6th Floor) Geneva Switzerland Tel: +41 22 332 50 00 Email: helges.bandeira@itamaraty.gov.br</p>	<p>AFRICA SENEGAL Ms. Aïta Sarr Seck Conseiller technique / Point Focal Rotterdam et Minamata Direction de l'Environnement et des Etablissements Classés Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable Parc Forestier et Zoologique de Hann Route des Pères Maristes, Dakar Senegal Tel: +221 77 511 4759 Email: aitasec@yahoo.fr</p> <p>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC IRAN Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl Head / Secretary of National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention Department for Chemical and Biological Convention Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tehran Iran (Islamic Republic of) Tel: +982 161 154 336 Email: iranwcw@gmail.com naziri_a@yahoo.com</p> <p>CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE ARMENIA Ms. Anahit Aleksandryan Head / Hazardous Substances and Waste Policy Division Ministry of Environment Governmental Building 3 Republic Square, 0010 Yerevan Republic of Armenia Tel: +374 11 818 519 Email: anahit.aleksandryan@env.am anahit.aleksandryan@yahoo.com</p> <p>LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN SURINAME Ms. Gina Griffith Legal Advisor Office of Environmental Legal Services National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS) Mr. J. Lachmonstraat 100/ Hoek Bersabalaan Paramaribo Suriname Tel: +597 490 044 Email: ggriffith@nimos.org</p>

<p>WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS THE NETHERLANDS - <u>Co-Chair</u> Mr. Reginald Hernaus Lead Negotiator Chemicals and Wastes Department for International Affairs Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management Rijnstraat 8 P.O. Box 20901 2500 EX The Hague Netherlands Tel: +31 70 456 6485 Email: reggie.hernaus@minienw.nl</p>	<p>WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS NORWAY Mr. Joel Ormala (<i>alternate for Atle Fretheim</i>) Senior Adviser Minamata National Focal Point of Norway Department of Chemicals and Waste Norwegian Environment Agency Mobile: +47 464 22 499 E-mail: joel.ormala@miljodir.no https://www.environmentagency.no/</p>
--	--

Regrets

<p>WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS NORWAY Mr. Atle Fretheim Consultant Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment Kaptein Gløersensvei 24 1396 Billingstad Norway Tel: +47 95068313 Email: ar-freth@online.no</p>

Secretariat

<p>Ms. Monika Stankiewicz Executive Secretary Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury International Environment House 1 Geneva, Switzerland Email: monika.stankiewicz@un.org</p> <p>Ms. Marianne Bailey Programme Management Officer for Capacity- building and Technical Assistance Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury International Environment House 1 Geneva, Switzerland marianne.bailey@un.org</p> <p>Mr. Richard Gutierrez Programme Officer for National Reporting Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury International Environment House 1 Geneva, Switzerland richard.gutierrez@un.org</p>	<p>Dr. Claudia ten Have Senior Policy and Coordination Officer Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury International Environment House 1 Geneva, Switzerland Email: claudia.tenhave@un.org</p> <p>Ms. My Linh Doan Programme Management Assistant Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury International Environment House 1 Geneva, Switzerland linh.doan@un.org</p>
--	--

Annex II: Agenda

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

Agenda Item 2: Organizational matters

- a. Adoption of the agenda
- b. Request for disclosure of any possible personal and/or financial conflict of interest

Agenda Item 3: Operations of the Specific International Programme

- a. Operations of the Programme, including status of implementation of the First and Second Round projects
- b. Status of the Specific Trust Fund
- c. Support to the Secretariat's functions

Agenda Item 4: Considerations of eligible and complete applications for the Third Round of funding under the Specific International Programme for decision by the Governing Board

Agenda Item 5: Items for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting

- a. Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: Specific International Programme considerations as per MC-3/7, paragraph 2, on the terms of reference for the second review
- b. The Executive Director's report to assess the possible options for enhancing the Specific International Programme and its operations: Reflections from the Governing Board

Agenda Item 6: Date and venue of the next meeting

Agenda Item 7: Other matters

Agenda Item 8: Adoption of the report

Agenda Item 9: Closure of the meeting

Annex III: Overview of the Implementation of projects from the First and Second Round

Tables 1 and 2 present the status of projects of the First and Second Round, as per 12 July 2021.

Table 1: First Round of Applications (2018)

Party name	Agreement details	Status
Argentina	Project Cooperation Agreement with National Institute of Industrial Technology in cooperation with Basel Convention Regional Centre for South America	The project is well underway. Two rounds of reporting received. Minor amendment to the budget to shift funds to year two and away from travel requested due to COVID-19 -related impacts. The Partner requested a six-month no-cost extension to December 2021 (for a new total duration of 30 months). Three rounds of reporting received.
Armenia	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with the Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center State Non-Commercial Organization of the Ministry of Environment	The project is well underway. Three rounds of reporting received. The project has experienced some limited delays in implementation due to COVID-19. The Partner requested a six-month no-cost extension to November 2021 (for a new total duration of 30 months) to allow for additional time to finalize the project activities. Four rounds of reporting received.
Benin	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Living Environment and Sustainable Development	Initial disbursement experienced delays but the project has been in implementation status since February 2020, with significant delays throughout 2020 and 2021. One round of reporting received.
Iran (Islamic Republic)	Small Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Research Institute of Petroleum Industry	Finalization of legal agreement delayed due to time required to finalize banking details, as well as delays due to COVID-19. Legal agreement signed in May 2020; project activities well underway and nearing completion. One round of reporting received.
Lesotho	Project Cooperation Agreement with Department of Environment of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture	Project activities commenced in January 2020. The project experienced some delays including due to COVID-19 and is moving forward in implementation. Three rounds of reporting received.

Table 2: Second Round of Applications (2019)

Party name	Agreement details	Status
Antigua and Barbuda	Project Cooperation Agreement with Department of Analytical Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun. One round of reporting received.
Ecuador	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment and Water	Following extensive communications delays, first redraft to respond to Governing Board comments was provided by Ecuador in October 2020. The legal agreement was finally signed in July 2021.
Ghana	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Health	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun, following a delay (due to new UNEP banking form requirements) first instalment was processed.
Indonesia	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Health jointly with Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Southeast Asia	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun. One round of reporting received.
Iran (Islamic Republic)	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Department of Environment	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun.

Party name	Agreement details	Status
Moldova	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun, following a delay (due to new UNEP banking form requirements) first instalment was processed. One round of reporting received.
Nigeria	Project Cooperation Agreement with Federal Ministry of Environment	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun.
Peru	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Environment	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun.
Sri Lanka	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun.
Zambia	Project Cooperation Agreement with Zambia Environmental Management Agency	Legal agreement signed and implementation has begun.

Annex IV: Overview of projects supported in the three rounds of applications to the Programme to date

	First Round	Second Round	Third Round
1.	Argentina	Antigua and Barbuda	Burundi
2.	Armenia	Ecuador	Cuba
3.	Benin	Ghana	Gabon
4.	Iran	Indonesia	India
5.	Lesotho	Iran	Iran
6.		Moldova	Jordan
7.		Nigeria	North Macedonia
8.		Peru	Rwanda
9.		Sri Lanka	Senegal
10.		Zambia	