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**United Nations  
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**Eighth Meeting of the Governing Board  
Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance  
Minamata Convention on Mercury**  
Online, 30 August 2023

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**Report of the Eighth 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 Eighth Meeting of the Governing Board of the Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance (SIP) was opened at 15:00 Geneva time on Wednesday, 30 August 2023 by the Co-Chair of the Governing Board, Mr. Andrew Clark (United States of America).
2. Mr. Clark warmly welcomed all Board Members, introduced himself as current Co-Chair and informed the Board that Ms. Tiffany Van Ravenswaay (Suriname) was designated to replace Ms. Gina Griffith (Suriname) as a member of the Governing Board for the remainder of the term.
3. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark informed the Board that the Board would be invited to elect a replacement Co-Chair during the meeting in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Specific International Programme.
4. The Co-Chair then invited the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention, Ms. Monika Stankiewicz, to deliver a welcoming message.
5. Speaking from Minamata, Japan, the Executive Secretary welcomed the participants and expressed her satisfaction that the mid-term evaluation of the SIP found the Programme to be truly strengthening the capacity of Parties to meet their obligations under the Minamata Convention. She highlighted that the second review of the financial mechanism and the first three terminal evaluations of SIP projects, undertaken in parallel to the mid-term evaluation of the SIP, have also provided positive information and conclusions. She thanked the donors – 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 – who have supported the Programme thus far, and noted that the 24 SIP projects funded in the three rounds of applications have started to show notable results. She also underlined that, although the Secretariat has made progress in fundraising for the Specific Trust Fund, contributions are not yet sufficient to recommend launching the Fourth Round of applications.

**II. Organizational matters (agenda item 2)**

**a. Adoption of the agenda**

6. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark directed the Board's attention to the meeting documents relevant to the agenda item and available in the online workspace: SIP/GB.8/1 Provisional Agenda, SIP/GB.8/1/Add.1 Annotated Agenda, SIP/GB.8/INF/1 List of documents for the Eighth Meeting, SIP/GB.8/INF/2 Draft list of participants, and the Rules of Procedure of the SIP Governing Board. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.
7. Subsequently, the Co-Chair invited the Board Members to check the contact and other details in the draft list of participants and let the Secretariat know in case of any updates or corrections to be made.
8. Upon request of the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat presented in more detail the overall documents prepared for the meeting and the provisional agenda.
9. The Co-Chair invited Board Members to propose any additional agenda items under Agenda Item 6: Other matters. No additional agenda items were proposed.
10. The Co-Chair proposed the adoption of the agenda, and the Board agreed to the agenda as attached in Annex II.

#### **b. Election of Co-Chairs**

11. The current Co-Chair Mr. Clark informed that the Board would now turn to the election of the Co-Chair to replace Ms. Gina Griffith for the remainder of the term, drew the Board's attention to the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board and requested the Secretariat to present the provisions for the election of the new Co-Chair.
12. The representative of the Secretariat presented paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Rule 9 and paragraph 3 of Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedures of the Governing Board of the SIP. She recalled that, according to paragraph 1, the Board will have two Co-Chairs, elected from among the Members of the Board, reflecting the composition of the Board and the purpose of the Programme. She also recalled that two Co-Chairs were elected by the Board at its first meeting, according to paragraph 2 of Rule 9, and that the Co-Chairs' term ends when the next Co-Chairs take up the next term. She further explained that, according to paragraph 3 of Rule 12, if a Co-Chair resigns or is otherwise unable to complete his or her term, the Board shall elect a replacement from among its members to complete the original two-year term.
13. The Co-Chair informed the Board Members that the Secretariat had received the notification, from the Government of Suriname and through the Bureau members from the GRULAC region, that Ms. Tiffany van Ravenswaay from Suriname was appointed to complete the term of Ms. Gina Griffith. The Secretariat noted that new Board members would be nominated and confirmed at COP-5, therefore the Co-Chair would only preside over the present meeting. The Secretariat informed the Board that Ms. van Ravenswaay had confirmed to the Secretariat her availability to take up this office.
14. The current Co-Chair Mr. Clark asked if there was any objection to the election of Ms. van Ravenswaay as Co-Chair for the remainder of the term of the Third Governing Board, or any comments. Two Board members expressed their support to the election of Ms. van Ravenswaay as Co-Chair for the remainder of the term of the Board, and wished her well in the role. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark congratulated the newly elected Co-Chair on her election and invited her to make initial remarks.
15. As elected Co-Chair, Ms. van Ravenswaay thanked the Board for the support and trust, noted that she had been briefed by the Secretariat and had reviewed key documents on the SIP, and that this meeting would consider a number of important issues, notably the annual report of the Secretariat on the operations of the Specific International Programme, the status of the Specific Trust Fund, the new dashboard of financial mechanism projects, and the Mid-Term Evaluation of the SIP.

#### **c. Request for disclosure of any possible personal and/or financial conflict of interest**

16. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay recalled that, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure for the Governing Board, Members have an obligation to promptly disclose to the Board, at the commencement of the meeting, any potential personal or financial interest in any aspect of a project presented for discussion and approval by the Board. The Co-Chair requested the Secretariat to present Rule 23.
17. After the presentation by the representative of the Secretariat, the Co-Chair further noted that at this meeting no projects were being presented for discussion or approval, yet as this matter had been decided to be a standing agenda item of all Board meetings for overall transparency and accountability purposes, it was raised formally to be noted. The Co-Chair opened the floor for questions or comments.

18. No questions or comments were raised.

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

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

19. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark invited the Board to consider the meeting document SIP/GB.8/2, on operations of the Specific International Programme, including the status of the Specific Trust Fund, 2023 annual report.

20. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat updated the Board on the implementation status of the first five projects receiving support from the Specific International Programme. She informed that the five projects approved in the First Round of applications to the SIP, namely Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Iran and Lesotho, had all been completed. They were approved in late 2018 and began implementation in 2019. One project closed on schedule and completed its terminal review by May 2021. Mainly due to COVID-19, other projects experienced delays and disruptions. As a result, in 2021 two projects requested six month no-cost extensions within the 36-month time frame, and were successfully completed in 2021. The other two projects requested in 2022 exceptional six month no-cost extensions beyond the 36-month time frame for SIP projects, which was provided with formal agreement of the Co-Chairs of the Governing Board. Both projects were completed in November 2022. For a full overview of the status of the five projects, as of 30 August 2023, see Annex III.

21. The representative of the Secretariat highlighted that one project (Benin) was expected to have an unspent balance. She explained that the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed in May 2019 for an initial duration of 36 months. The Secretariat disbursed the first instalment of funding (USD 65,000) upon signature. Before the expiration of the three-year agreement, Benin requested to extend the project by an additional period of six months, until November 2022, which was approved by the Co-Chairs of the Governing Board, as this arrangement would extend the maximum time frame for SIP projects, as per SIP application guidelines. An amendment to the PCA was signed in May 2022 to extend the project at no cost until 19 November 2022. The last interim report submitted by Benin, in October 2022, showed expenditures of USD 78,168. Following completion of the project, no final reporting or financial audit was received by the Secretariat such that, as of 30 August 2023, the Secretariat was unaware of the status of implementation of the project activities and the total project spending. The representative explained that a final instalment of funds would be disbursed after acceptance of complete reporting, for the expenditures that exceeded the disbursed budget, pending provision in final reporting of sufficient evidence of actual spending in accordance with the project legal agreement. However, because the agreement had expired and the Secretariat was under fiduciary responsibilities to close the project and the First Round of the SIP as a whole, any further reports from Benin would have to be submitted at the earliest possible date. The Secretariat anticipated that a sizeable sum of funding would remain after project closure, as the balance might be up to USD 160,945, depending on any additional actual spending verified in the final expenditure report, excluding USD 10,000 for terminal evaluation.

22. The Secretariat further recalled that, at the Board's Seventh Meeting, the Board agreed to discuss the option of entering into a second agreement with Benin for the remaining project funding, following the Secretariat's assessment of the situation based on the final reports and in dialogue with the partners. She clarified that no new agreement was concluded with Benin for the remaining project funding after the expiry of the first PCA, as no final reporting that would allow the Secretariat to determine the balance was received after the expiry of the first legal agreement. The representative sought the Board's guidance on whether, if there was any unspent balance based on reporting received and verified by the time of the next Board meeting, the unspent balance could be retained by the Specific Trust Fund and be made available for the Fourth Round of applications.

23. The Co-Chair noted the progress made on the implementation of the First Round, asked the Board members if they had any questions or comments related to the status of implementation of First Round projects and sought Board Members' views on whether the Board would agree to the Secretariat's proposal regarding the Benin project balance.

24. A Board member, noting that many Parties are in great need of support and that SIP resources are limited, suggested that the Secretariat officially write to Benin, giving a two-month deadline for the submission of the final report (including indication of total spending and of the expenditures not covered by the first instalment of funding) and clearly outlining that the consequence of not receiving the report by the deadline would be the closure of the project and the retention of the remaining unreported funding to the Trust Fund to be available for the Fourth Round. The Board supported the proposal.

25. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the Secretariat then presented the ten projects approved in the Second Round, namely the projects in Antigua and Barbuda, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Moldova, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Zambia. She noted that two projects were completed, and the other eight projects were in full implementation mode since late 2020 or early 2021. Based on project reporting, the Secretariat deemed the numerous COVID-19-related delays and disruptions to be manageable and that despite some projects' slowness in reporting, most of the twice-yearly reports had been received as per the agreed deadlines. However, some Parties missed reporting rounds, despite the numerous Secretariat reminders. A three-year project (Iran), the implementation of which started in February 2021, had only reported once, in April 2022. She highlighted that some partners had formally requested minor shifts in budget categories and budget years, all of which were considered reasonable and were approved by the Secretariat. Lastly, she explained that five projects had requested no-cost extensions within the 36-month timeframe to complete their work. For a full overview of the status of these ten projects, as of 30 August 2023, see Annex III.

26. The Secretariat explained that one Second Round project closed on schedule and timely submitted the final reporting, audit report, project outputs, equipment inventory and all relevant equipment documentation. The other completed project (Indonesia), with total budget of USD 143,340, closed in March 2023. Since only one of four instalments of funds for this project had been disbursed (USD 80,000), in line with reported spending, and an initial review of the report seemed to indicate a total expenditure of USD 92,909, the Secretariat anticipated the possibility that part of the project budget would remain undisbursed after project closure. The representative explained that another part of the project budget could be disbursed after verification of actual spending, but it was expected that up to USD 50,000 of the budget would remain undisbursed. The exact amount would have to be confirmed by a thorough examination of the final report and terminal review. The Secretariat sought the Board's guidance on whether the unspent balance could be retained by the Specific Trust Fund and be made available for the Fourth Round of applications.

27. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark applauded the progress made on the implementation of the Second Round and opened the floor for questions or comments. He also sought Board Members' views on whether the unspent balance of the Indonesia project could be retained by the Specific Trust Fund and be made available for the Fourth Round.

28. One Board member agreed that it would be appropriate to reallocate the unspent project balance to the Fourth Round. Another member requested that the Board be updated on the progress of this project at its next meeting. The Board supported the proposal to reallocate the unspent balance to the Fourth Round and to receive an update on this project from the Secretariat at the next Board meeting.

29. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the Secretariat then updated the Board on the implementation status of the nine Third Round projects. She noted that, of the nine projects approved, namely Burundi, Cuba, Gabon, India, Iran, Jordan, North Macedonia, Rwanda and Senegal, eight legal agreements were in place by 30 August 2023. She outlined that one project had not yet started implementation due to unforeseen technical issues in transferring the first instalment of project funding, which the Secretariat was working closely with the partner to rectify. The representative also explained that the tripartite legal agreement for another project, signed in October 2022, was terminated in June 2023 due to unforeseen factors that prevented the implementing partner from undertaking its financial management role under the agreement. Another implementing partner was subsequently identified and a new tripartite Project Cooperation Agreement was concluded in August 2023, allowing the project implementation to begin. For a full overview of the status of the nine projects, as of 30 August 2023, see Annex III.

30. For the remaining unsigned agreement (Iran), the representative of the Secretariat outlined that, while the draft agreement was at an advanced stage, over a year had passed since the expiration of the deadline of 30 June 2022, set by the Board for signature of the Third Round legal agreements. She recalled that, at its Seventh Meeting, the Board instructed the Secretariat to work with the project manager of Iran to complete the remaining banking details and proceed to signature as soon as possible and ideally by the end of 2022, and in any case before the launch of the Fourth Round was to be discussed.

31. The Board was pleased to note the progress made since the previous Board meeting, as eight of the nine legal agreements were in place as of 30 August 2023. The Co-Chair then opened the floor for questions and comments related to the status of implementation of Third Round projects, invited Board Members to further revise the deadline for finalization of the Iran agreement and to advise on whether, if by the time of the next Board meeting the Iran agreement were not signed, the project budget could be retained by the Specific Trust Fund and be allocated to the Fourth Round of applications.

32. The Board carefully considered this issue. One Board Member, noting that it would be important to further investigate the difficulties preventing the partner from signing the legal agreement, but that the protraction of this situation could be unfair to other Parties competing for access to the limited SIP funding, suggested that a timeframe be set for the conclusion of this agreement before the launch of the Fourth Round of applications. Another Board Member suggested that, before deciding whether to withhold the project budget for reallocation to the Fourth Round, the Secretariat engage in consultations with Iran to understand and attempt to address the partner's challenges. He suggested that if the consultations did not result in the signing of the agreement, the Board would consider the possibility of retaining the funds for the Fourth Round at its next meeting. With the intent to be as supportive as possible of the project, the Board agreed that the Secretariat consult with Iran with a view towards signing the agreement, failing which the next Board would consider reallocating the funds.

33. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the Secretariat continued its presentation of the annual report on the operations of the Programme, illustrating the various communication and outreach activities conducted to raise the profile of the SIP: firstly, the representative explained that the webpage of the SIP is regularly updated and improved through the posting of approved SIP project final reports, as well as terminal review and terminal evaluation reports, and that the full report on the mid-term evaluation of the SIP had also been made public. Secondly, she explained that the Secretariat had worked closely with the project partners to produce fact sheets for each of the First, Second and Third Round projects, providing an overview of their projects, including their objectives, results, budgets, duration, and project management. She highlighted that all fact sheets for the First and Second Rounds were available on the Convention website, as well as five fact sheets of the Third Round projects. Thirdly, she updated the Board that two "SIP Coffee" online sessions were conducted in December 2022 and August 2023. Fourthly, she informed the Board that the Secretariat would soon release the fifth edition of the SIP Matters newsletter, which would include, among other items, the first two "SIP stories" released in 2023, one about how approved SIP projects had incorporated gender considerations, and the other about the Secretariat's participation in the regional workshop in Burkina Faso, organized as part of the SIP joint project by Senegal, Burkina Faso and Togo.

34. The Co-Chair opened the floor for questions and comments about the communication and outreach activities carried out by the Secretariat.

35. No questions or comments were raised.

36. Lastly, the Co-Chair turned to the last part of the annual report to the Governing Board on the operations of the Programme as contained in SIP/GB.8/2, namely the Work programme for 2023-2024.

37. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat informed the Board of the overall work programme of the SIP for 2023-2024, which included: first, supporting the projects starting and under implementation on a daily basis, including through one-on-one sessions, in English, French and Spanish when needed. Second, fully closing the five projects from the First Round and the two projects from the Second Round that had been completed, as well as the additional Second Round projects to be completed in the second half of 2023 and in 2024. Third, supporting the terminal reviews and evaluations of completed projects. Fourth, launching the Power BI dashboard on the SIP and making it available on the Convention website. Fifth, conducting COP-5 preparatory work, including a deep-dive information session on the financial mechanism in September 2023, as part of Season 3 of Minamata Online, and an online side event on the SIP in October 2023. Sixth, supporting the Governing Board in addressing findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, and undertaking any action required of the Secretariat by the COP-5 decision on the second review of the financial mechanism.

38. The Co-Chair invited the Board members to reflect and comment on the work programme for 2023 and 2024.

39. No questions or comments were raised.

## **b. Status of the Specific Trust Fund**

40. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay turned to the matter of the status and administration of the Specific Trust Fund.

41. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat recalled that the Programme is open to receive contributions for a period of ten years from the establishment of the Specific Trust Fund, and that the Conference of the Parties may decide to extend this period, not exceeding an additional seven years, taking into account the regular review process of the financial mechanism. As part of its annual report on income

and expenditure, the representative of the Secretariat outlined that the total amount of contributions to the First and Second Rounds of the SIP, as of 28 July 2023, was USD 3,701,909. She explained that the projected balance under the Specific Trust Fund after the conclusion of the First and Second Rounds (inclusive of programmatic support costs – PSC – of 13%), the projects' respective terminal reviews or evaluations, the mid-term evaluation of the SIP, the co-funding of the Junior Professional Officer post, and addressing a slight shortfall of USD 5,130 for the Third Round as of 28 July 2023, was USD 35,294. The representative highlighted that the projected balance for the First Round was estimated to be USD 28,104, which the Secretariat proposed to move to the Fourth Round in order to fully close the First Round, taking into consideration the outstanding work to close the Benin project.

42. Regarding the Third Round, she highlighted that the total amount of contributions available to the Governing Board at the time of decision-making for the Third Round and the operations of the Programme (excluding PSC) was USD 2,248,085.02. She recalled that, at its Sixth Meeting, the Board approved nine projects for the Third Round amounting to USD 2,193,842 (excluding PSC) and that, subsequent to the meeting, an additional USD 225,826.85 was received (from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States of America) bringing the total for the Third Round to USD 2,473,911.86 (inclusive of PSC).

43. She further outlined that the SIP's support to Parties had been made possible due to the generous contributions from ten donor Parties since 2018, listing them in order of amount made to the Specific Trust Fund: Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, the United States of America, Austria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Denmark and France. The Secretariat also thanked the Government of Italy for providing a Junior Professional Officer post in the Secretariat, from November 2021 for a period of two years, and extended for a third year, until October 2024.

44. She noted that besides the 50% of the Programme Management Officer for Capacity-building and Technical Assistance post, the General Trust Fund did not make staff posts directly available for the operations of the SIP. Instead, various Secretariat staff members also serviced the SIP. She also recalled that, at its Sixth Meeting, the Governing Board approved the Secretariat's request to use up to USD 100,000 per year for support to the Secretariat in its management and administration of the SIP, to support the increased workload with the expansion of the project portfolio; and that, given the provision of a Junior Professional Officer by the Government of Italy in November 2021, the Secretariat had not needed to make full use of this allocation. The support the Government of Italy was able to give to the post was 100% for two years and 50% for the third year. The Secretariat expressed its appreciation to the Board for approving, at its Seventh Meeting, the Secretariat's request to assign USD 70,000 to have the services of the Junior Professional Officer for the third year. The representative informed the Board that the post would be co-funded by the Government of Italy contributing an equal amount.

45. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay asked the Board if they had any questions or comments related to the status and administration of the Specific Trust Fund; invited the Board to consider the Secretariat's suggestion to move the projected remaining balance from the First Round funding (in addition to any balance from the Benin project) to the Fourth Round; and expressed appreciation to the Government of Italy for its cost-sharing for the third year of the Junior Professional Officer dedicated to the SIP, acknowledging that the JPO programme was a wonderful opportunity for Governments to show their support for programmes of their choice, and to provide professional growth experiences for their nationals.

46. No questions or comments were raised, and the Board approved the proposal made by the Secretariat.

47. Thereafter, the Co-Chair turned to the matter of funding received for the Fourth Round and invited the Secretariat to inform on the contribution status.

48. The representative of the Secretariat showed that the total amount of contributions and pledges to the Fourth Round and the operations of the Programme, as of 31 July 2023, was USD 1,074,257.31, which would be augmented by any unspent balances agreed by the Board to be reprogrammed to the Fourth Round of applications.

49. The Co-Chair thanked the donors that had contributed and pledged to the Fourth Round: Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America; noted that the keystone role of the SIP is to provide direct support to eligible Parties, for which ample funds would be needed in the Specific Trust Fund, and that many Parties hope the Governing Board would be able to launch the Fourth Round of applications in the near future; and invited Board members to provide advice to the Secretariat and raise any other matters in relation to the operation and status of the Specific Trust Fund.

50. One Board member expressed disappointment at the limited funds contributed and expressed his willingness to support the Secretariat in its fundraising efforts, as needed, with a view to at least double the funding available as of 30 August 2023. Another Board member commended the Secretariat for its work on the SIP, even in the absence of a dedicated staff and in consideration of the increasing workload. Concerned about the many countries that were still in need of strengthening their capacities to implement the Convention, he stressed the urgency of doubling fundraising efforts and suggested making a strong appeal to donors at COP-5. Another Board member shared the concern that sufficient contributions had not yet been made available to launch the next round, and informed Board members that a letter from the Co-Chairs would be included in the COP-5 document on the work of the SIP Governing Board.

51. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay also expressed her regret at not yet being able to launch the Fourth Round, and supported the idea of making a statement at COP-5 to invite more contributions to the SIP.

### **c. Presentation of new dashboard of financial mechanism projects**

52. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark invited the Board to consider paragraph 30 of the meeting document SIP/GB.8/2, on the annual report on the operations of the Programme.

53. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat presented the new dashboard on the Convention website that visualizes projects funded from the GEF Minamata Convention allocation since GEF-5 through GEF-8. She explained that this is the first dashboard that automatically harvests the data from the GEF projects database on its website, with the aim of providing updated and accurate information on the GEF projects funded by the Minamata Convention allocation. The representative of the Secretariat subsequently presented the dashboard on SIP projects, developed to make key data and relevant information on the SIP projects approved in the three rounds, as well as data on donor contributions and pledges to the Specific Trust Fund, as accessible, clear and informative as possible. The representative informed the Board that the dashboard was being finalized and would be launched soon on the Minamata Convention website.

54. The Co-Chair welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat at communicating the work and impact of the projects, and the new dashboard to access information on the financial mechanism projects. He then opened the floor for questions or comments related to the dashboard.

55. The Board congratulated the Secretariat for making more information available and therefore promoting transparency in the work of the SIP. One Board member suggested reorganizing country groupings, particularly since Small Island Developing States (SIDs) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are developing countries. Another Board member proposed visualizing the need for more SIP funding by including in the dashboard a chart displaying the total number of applications received vis-à-vis the total number of projects approved in each application round, so as to show the funding gap in view of further fundraising. The Board supported both proposals.

## **IV. Items for consideration by the Governing Board (agenda item 4)**

### **a. Mid-term evaluation of the Specific International Programme of the Minamata Convention on Mercury**

56. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark invited the Board to turn to the meeting documents SIP/GB.8/3 Mid-Term Evaluation of the Specific International Programme: Select findings and recommendations and SIP/GB.8/INF/3 Report on the Mid-term Evaluation of the Specific International Programme.

57. The Co-Chair recalled the decision made by the Governing Board at its Sixth Meeting to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the SIP. He reminded that the end of the year 2022 marked five years into operation of the SIP, which was the mid-point of its initial term. He recalled that the Board determined that a mid-term evaluation would serve to provide evidence of performance and results to meet accountability requirements and the objective of the Convention; and to ensure continuous operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing. He also recalled that, at its Seventh Meeting, the Board discussed the mid-term evaluation process, and the Secretariat updated the Board on the progress made in preparing the mid-term evaluation of the SIP, including in engaging the external consultant who undertook the mid-term evaluation; and that, in addition, the Secretariat and the consultant offered a briefing for Board members on the mid-term evaluation, and the presentations from that briefing were circulated to Board members in May 2023. The Co-Chair pointed to Sections II and III of the meeting document that provide detailed information on the activities undertaken to conduct the Mid-Term Evaluation of the SIP, and the purposes and elements of the Mid-Term Evaluation, respectively.

58. Further, the Co-Chair noted that the evaluation's findings were quite positive, as the evaluation found that the SIP is serving the needs identified by the Parties to the Convention, and that the support provided by the SIP is clearly contributing to strengthening the capacity of Parties to fulfil their Convention obligations. He observed that the evaluation provides a number of recommendations for the Secretariat, the Board, and the COP to consider, and that the meeting would consider some of these, which could be put to use immediately.

59. The Co-Chair further recognized that the evaluation had been an important tool to assess the SIP and provide evidence of its performance and results, and that it came at an important time for the Programme. He acknowledged that conducting the second review of the financial mechanism and the three terminal evaluations concurrently allowed the evaluation to be complemented by related information and conclusions. He opened the floor for questions and comments related to the activities undertaken to conduct the evaluation and its purposes and elements.

60. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat briefly presented the purposes and elements of the mid-term evaluation, and the items for consideration and deliberation by the Governing Board, as developed by the evaluator, namely: a draft Theory of Change; a Stakeholder Analysis; and a draft Results Framework, including one outcome and seven outputs, together with proposed indicators at both outcome and output levels, and that might help to facilitate ongoing and objective assessment of the performance of the SIP towards achieving its outputs and outcome.

61. The Co-Chair noted that these products could be quite useful in visualizing important information about the SIP, monitoring and evaluating the progress of the SIP in meeting its objective and generating impact, and in supporting resource mobilization towards the Specific Trust Fund. He asked the Board if they had any concerns, questions, comments or suggestions for improvement and/or amendment on the draft Theory of Change, Stakeholder Analysis and draft Results Framework, and invited the Board to approve their use by the Programme as recommended by the mid-term evaluation.

62. No questions, comments or suggestions for improvement were raised. No Board members objected the approval of the use of the Theory of Change, Stakeholder Analysis and Results Framework by the SIP.

63. The Co-Chair Mr. Clark then turned specially to the last part of agenda item 4 (a), on other recommendations and the Secretariat's thoughts on possible next steps, and invited the Secretariat to complete the presentation on the items for consideration and deliberation by the Governing Board of the SIP, by providing a summary of findings and recommendations from the mid-term evaluation.

64. The representative of the Secretariat explained that the evaluation provided eleven conclusions and related recommendations, addressed to the Secretariat, the Executive Secretary and the Executive Director of UNEP, the SIP Governing Board, the Global Mercury Partnership and/or country Parties. She noted that the Secretariat, in the meeting document, had presented its thoughts on possible next steps with respect to recommendations not discussed at this meeting, which could be considered by the Board following COP-5.

65. The Co-Chair acknowledged that the mid-term evaluation provided a number of recommendations addressed to the Governing Board and highlighted that some of the recommendations could be addressed at future meetings of the Board. He opened the floor for questions and comments on the external consultant's recommendations and on the Secretariat's thoughts on possible next steps.

66. A Board member suggested that the Results Framework needed further consideration, especially if the intention was to make it an integral part of the process. The Co-Chair clarified that the Results Framework was developed for the SIP as a whole and would not reflect the value of each individual project. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat further clarified that a solid set of appraisal criteria was already in place in the application guidelines for individual projects, which would not be changed because of the Results Framework. She added that the Framework will therefore not have an impact on ongoing individual projects, nor on future projects. The indicators may, however, be useful to Parties developing future applications.

67. The Board approved the use of the Theory of Change, Stakeholder Analysis, and Results Framework of the Programme.

## **b. COP-5 agenda item on Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury**

68. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay invited the Board to turn to agenda item 4 (b), on the COP-5 agenda item on Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.



69. The Co-Chair noted that COP-5 will consider the Second Review of the Financial Mechanism covering the period from August 2019 to July 2022, including the report of the Second Review, available on the Minamata Convention website in the COP-5 document section. She thanked Board members and others from Parties for being so responsive to the consultant in survey and interviews used to develop the report, and invited the Secretariat to provide an update on how this issue is planned to be taken up by COP-5.

70. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat recalled the mandate given by COP-4 to prepare a second review of the financial mechanism, and that COP-5 would consider the review. The representative also explained that the consultant considered both GEF and SIP projects completed during that period, and that the decision in COP-5 Document 12 reflected the different situations and needs vis-à-vis the two components of the financial mechanism, namely the GEF (which saw a healthy increase of almost 30 per cent in GEF-8) and the SIP (which is experiencing a shortfall in contributions for the Fourth Round). COP-5 will have the opportunity to influence GEF programming and the discussions and resource envelope for the 9th replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, as well as the opportunity to discuss needs, resources, results frameworks and the ability of the financial mechanism to play an important role in integrating environmental work between the Conventions and GEF focal areas, particularly in light of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Secretariat further noted that COP-5 might wish to provide instructions to the Secretariat, including to prepare draft terms of reference for the third review of the financial mechanism for consideration by COP-6.

71. The Co-Chair noted that regular reviews of the financial mechanism are required according to paragraph 11 of Article 13 of the Convention and are an important tool to review the (a) level of funding; (b) the guidance provided by the COP to the two components of the financial mechanism; (c) the effectiveness of the two components of the financial mechanism; and (d) the ability of the two components of the financial mechanism to address the changing need of eligible Parties. Based on such reviews the COP will take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. She also recalled that the first review of the financial mechanism was completed at COP-3, and that the second review took into account the report of the Executive Director of UNEP on strengthening the SIP which was provided to COP-4. She then opened the floor for questions or comments related to the second review of the financial mechanism, and invited the Board to consider whether it would like to make a statement in plenary at COP-5 when the agenda item on the review of the financial mechanism will be open.

72. A Board member emphasised that she had no objections regarding making a statement in plenary at COP-5, and that this will be discussed with other countries in the region. Another Board member expressed support to make a Board statement in plenary.

73. The Co-Chair noted the interventions and confirmed that a Board statement will be delivered in plenary at COP-5.

### **c. Factors for consideration on the Fourth Round of applications to the Specific International Programme**

74. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay invited the Board to turn to agenda item 4 (c), on factors for consideration on the Fourth Round of applications to the Specific International Programme.

75. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat recalled the total amount of contributions and pledges available for the Fourth Round of applications. She presented a visual comparison of previous rounds and pointed out that almost all funding received to the Specific Trust Fund was directly provided to projects.

76. The Co-Chair recalled that, at its Seventh Meeting, the Board noted the urgency to launch the Fourth Round and suggested to set a mid-2023 target date for launching the round, with the hope that more funding would be available. Noting that the funding available as of 30 August 2023 had not yet allowed the Board to launch the round, she invited the Board to discuss preliminary views on the possible launching time, including in light of the resource mobilization findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and the report provided for the second review of the financial mechanism.

77. A Board member acknowledged that the resources available as at 30 August 2023 did not allow the Board to launch the Fourth Round. He added that COP-5 will bring the issue to the attention of the Parties and that the next Board members would decide whether to launch the round, hoping that more funding will be received by the next Board meeting. Another Board member suggested that at least USD 2 million be contributed to the Trust Fund before the Board launches the Fourth Round, as USD 1 million is not sufficient to avoid frustration among non-awarded Parties that have prepared sound proposals. He also suggested that the next

Board would take a decision on the launch, based on the contributions available by the time of the next meeting. Another Board member agreed that the amount of funding was not sufficient, and supported the proposals made by the other members.

78. The Co-Chair thanked the Board members for sharing their views and suggested to postpone this item for discussion at the next Board meeting.

## **V. Dates and venue of the next meeting (agenda item 5)**

79. The Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay turned to agenda item 5, on dates and venue of the next meeting. Recalling that this is a standing item of any meeting, she invited the Secretariat to present on this item.

80. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair, the representative of the Secretariat expressed her hope that, at its next meeting, the Governing Board would be able to launch the Fourth Round of Applications. Noting that COP-5 is to meet from 30 October to 3 November 2023 in Geneva, she concluded that the Fourth Round will not be launched before COP-5.

81. The Co-Chair opened the floor for questions and comments. No questions or comments were raised.

82. The Co-Chair thanked the Secretariat and noted that the Secretariat will be in close contact with the Co-Chairs on the earliest timing for the Ninth Meeting of the Governing Board, with a view to that meeting being an opportunity to launch the Fourth Round.

## **VI. Other matters (agenda item 6)**

83. Since no other matters were raised, the Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay turned to the following agenda item.

## **VII. Adoption of the meeting report (agenda item 7)**

84. Upon invitation by the Co-Chair Ms. van Ravenswaay, the representative of the Secretariat informed the Board that the Secretariat would complete the draft meeting report, which would be first reviewed by the Co-Chairs and subsequently shared with all Board Members for their final review prior to adoption by electronic means. The representative added that the finalized report of the Eighth Meeting will be posted on the website, and thereby made available to COP-5.

85. The Board supported the proposal.

## **VIII. Closure of the meeting (agenda item 8)**

86. To conclude, the Co-Chair Mr. Clark reiterated that the SIP had been fully evaluated and found to be meeting its mission and providing effective implementation support through its 24 projects. Emphasizing that the mid-term evaluation of the SIP and the second review of the financial mechanism are important milestones for the financial mechanism, he restated that the Board found it to be extremely important that the Fourth Round of applications is launched as soon as possible, and that resource mobilization would remain a key imperative for the success of the programme.

87. Lastly, the Co-Chair thanked the Board Members for their work and the Secretariat for the preparation of and support to the meeting.

88. The Co-Chair declared the meeting closed at 18:00 on Wednesday, 30 August 2023.

## Annex I: List of participants

### GOVERNING BOARD (2022-2023)

<p><b>AFRICA</b> <b>NIGERIA</b> Mr. Olubunmi Olusanya Director Rotterdam and Minamata Convention / Pollution Control and Environmental Health Federal Ministry of Environment 14 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama 900271 Abuja Nigeria Tel: +234 802 304 0724 Email: olusanyao@yahoo.co.uk</p> <p><b>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC</b> <b>INDIA</b> Dr. Satyendra Kumar Director Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Jal Wing, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road New Delhi-110003 India Tel: +91 11 2081 9291 / Mobile: +91 94 1402 2080 Email: satyendra.kumar07@ips.gov.in</p> <p><b>EASTERN EUROPE</b> <b>CROATIA</b> Mr. Mario Vujic Senior Expert Adviser-Specialist Division for Prevention and Reduction measures of Air, Soil and from Light pollution Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development Radnička cesta 80 10 000 Zagreb Croatia Tel: +385 1 3717 911 Email: mario.vujic@mingor.hr</p> <p><b>LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN</b> <b>BRAZIL</b> Mr. Helges Samuel Bandeira Diplomat in charge of environmental affairs 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><b>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC</b> <b>SRI LANKA</b> Mr. Wasantha Dissanayake Additional Secretary Environment Policy &amp; Planning Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment "Sobadam Piyasa", 416/C/1 Robert Gunawardana Mawatha Battaramulla Sri Lanka Tel: +94 11 2034127 / Mobile: +94 71 8014998 Email: dissaforest@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>EASTERN EUROPE</b> <b>NORTH MACEDONIA</b> Ms. Suzana Andonova Project Advisor POPs Unit Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Plostad Presveta Bogorodica 3 1000 Skopje Republic of North Macedonia Tel: +389 2 3251 563 Email: s.andonova@pops.org.mk; suzana_andonova@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN</b> <b>SURINAME</b> Ms. Tiffany van Ravenswaay, MSc. Environmental Policy Advisor Ministry of Spetial Planning and Environment Prins Hendrikstraat 22 Paramaribo, Suriname Tel: +597 52 2022 / Mobile: +597 88 29707 Email: tiffany.vanravenswaay@gov.sr</p> <p><b>WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS</b> <b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b> Mr. Andrew Clark Division Chief for Chemicals, Air Quality, and Waste Office of Environmental Quality U.S. Department of State 2201 C St NW 20520 Washington, DC Tel: +1 202 64 7 2252 Email: clarkad@state.gov</p>
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<p><b>WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS</b>  <b>GERMANY</b>  Mr. Rafael Zubrzycki  Desk Officer  International Chemical Safety, Sustainable  Chemistry  Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation  and Nuclear Safety  Köthener Str. 2 - 3  10963 Berlin  Germany  Tel: +49 30 18 305 2746  Email: rafael.zubrzycki@bmu.bund.de</p>	
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**SECRETARIAT**

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## Annex II

### Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Organizational matters
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda
  - (b) Election of co-chair for the meeting
  - (c) Request for disclosure of any possible personal and/or financial conflict of interest
3. Operations of the Specific International Programme
  - (a) Operations of the Programme, including status of implementation of First, Second and Third Round projects
  - (b) Status of the Specific Trust Fund
  - (c) Presentation of new dashboard of financial mechanism projects
4. Items for consideration by the Governing Board
  - (a) Mid-term evaluation of the Specific International Programme of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: Select findings and recommendations
  - (b) COP-5 agenda item on Review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
  - (c) Factors for consideration on the Fourth Round of applications to the Specific International Programme
5. Dates and venue of the next meeting
6. Other matters
7. Adoption of the meeting report
8. Closure of the meeting

## Annex III

### Overview of the Implementation of projects from the First, Second and Third Round

Tables 1, 2 and 3 present the status of projects of the First, Second and Third Round, as per 30 August 2023.

**Table 1: First Round of Applications (2018)**

Party name	Agreement details	Status
<a href="#">Argentina</a> – COMPLETED		
1 August 2019 – 31 December 2021 (29 months, extended)	Project Cooperation Agreement with National Institute of Industrial Technology in cooperation with Basel Convention Regional Centre for South America	<b>The project is completed.</b> The Partner requested a five-month no-cost extension to December 2021 (for a new total duration of 29 months) to allow for additional time to finalize the project activities. Five rounds of reporting received, plus the final report. Minor amendment to the budget to shift funds to year two and away from travel requested due to COVID-19-related impacts. All four instalments of funds disbursed. Terminal evaluation completed.
250,000 USD		
<a href="#">Armenia</a> – COMPLETED		
1 June 2019 – 30 November 2021 (30 months, extended)	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with the Hydrometeorology and Monitoring Center State Non-Commercial Organization of the Ministry of Environment	<b>The project is completed.</b> 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. Five rounds of reporting received, plus the final report. All four instalments disbursed. Terminal evaluation completed.
162,000 USD		
<a href="#">Benin</a> – COMPLETED		
20 May 2019 – 19 November 2022 (42 months, extended) *	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Living Environment and Sustainable Development	<b>The project is completed, but the Secretariat awaits overdue final reporting to determine progress against milestones and total project expenditures.</b> Initial disbursement experienced delays but the project has been in implementation status since February 2020, with significant delays over the project duration time both in its initial stages, then later due to COVID-19-related impacts and national reforms in the procurement procedures. Three rounds of reporting received. Final reports due no later than January 2023 have not been submitted. One of five instalments disbursed to date. A second instalment of funds may be disbursed after acceptance of complete final reporting, but a significant part of the project budget is likely to remain unspent.
249,113 USD		
<a href="#">Iran (Islamic Republic of)</a> – COMPLETED		
5 May 2020 – 4 August 2021 (15 months)	Small Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Research Institute of Petroleum Industry	<b>The project is completed.</b> All reporting including final reports were received. All instalments were disbursed. Terminal review was undertaken, completed and submitted by the project partner and accepted by the Secretariat.
100,000 USD		
<a href="#">Lesotho</a> – COMPLETED		
10 May 2019 – 9 November 2022 (42 months, extended) *	Project Cooperation Agreement with Department of Environment of the	<b>The project is completed.</b> Project activities commenced in January 2020. The project experienced some delays including due to COVID-19, therefore a no-cost six-month extension was requested, stretching the project duration to 42 months. All

Party name	Agreement details	Status
200,550 USD	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture	agreed activities were completed by the end of the project. Five rounds of reporting received, in addition to final reports. All five instalments of funds disbursed. Terminal evaluation completed.

**\* Projects with duration exceeding the 36-month maximum time set for SIP projects, were extended exceptionally with formal agreement of the Co-Chairs of the Governing Board**

**Table 2: Second Round of Applications (2019)**

Party name	Agreement details	Status
<a href="#">Antigua and Barbuda</a>		
13 October 2020 – 12 October 2023 (36 months, extended)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Department of Analytical Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs	<b>The project is in the final stages of implementation.</b> The implementation of some in-person activities was disrupted due to COVID-19. A no-cost nine-month extension of the project duration (until October 2023) was requested to allow more time for finalization of the activities, through an amendment to the Project Cooperation Agreement signed in 2023. Four of six rounds of reporting received. Two of three instalments of funds disbursed to date.  Note: This is a regional project, also including Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.
210,000 USD		
<a href="#">Ecuador</a>		
6 July 2021 – 5 July 2024 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition jointly with Investment Fund for Sustainable Environment	<b>The project is underway.</b> Notwithstanding the legal agreement was only signed in July 2021 and the project implementation only began in January 2022 due to delays in the national contracting process, the project is largely on track. An amendment to the legal agreement was requested to undertake a number of shifts in budget categories and budget years, but it is yet to be signed. Four of five rounds of reporting received. Two of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
250,000 USD		
<a href="#">Ghana</a>		
4 December 2020 – 3 December 2023 (36 months, extended)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Health	<b>The project is in the final stages of implementation.</b> Despite some initial delays, including due to a lengthy transfer of funds process and a change in the project focal point, the project is on track and now completing the final activities. A no-cost extension of the project duration by six months (until December 2023) was requested to finalize the project activities, through an amendment to the Project Cooperation Agreement signed in 2023. Four of five rounds of reporting received. Two of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
250,000 USD		
<a href="#">Indonesia</a> – COMPLETED		
21 September 2020 – 20 March 2023 (30 months)	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Health jointly with Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Southeast Asia	<b>The project is completed.</b> All three rounds of reporting received. Final report and terminal review submitted in August 2023. One of four instalments of funds disbursed to date. A second instalment of funds, corresponding to the verified actual spending, may be disbursed after acceptance of complete final reporting.
143,340 USD		
<a href="#">Iran (Islamic Republic of)</a>		
3 February 2021 – 2 February 2024 (36 months)	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Department of Environment	<b>The project is underway.</b> The Secretariat awaits overdue interim reporting to determine progress against milestones and project spending. Significant difficulties in communicating with the project partner. Only one of four rounds of reporting received in April 2022. One of three instalments of funds disbursed to date. With only six months remaining before the end of the project, this project is at risk of non-completion.
149,800 USD		



Party name	Agreement details	Status
<a href="#">Moldova</a>		
3 September 2020 – 2 September 2023 (36 months, extended)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment	<b>The project is in the final stages of implementation.</b> A first amendment to the Project Cooperation Agreement was concluded in September 2022 to undertake minor changes to the project logical framework and budget table, including by planning additional activities to be implemented within the project period with savings resulting from COVID-19 impacts. A second amendment to the Project Cooperation Agreement was concluded in May 2023 to extend the project duration by three months to complete final items, at no cost, until September 2023, and to undertake minor shifts in budget categories. All five rounds of reporting received. Audit report of the first year of implementation of the project accepted by the Secretariat. Three of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
219,765 USD		
<a href="#">Nigeria</a> – COMPLETED		
6 April 2021 – 5 July 2023 (27 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Federal Ministry of Environment	<b>The project is completed.</b> All project activities have been completed according to the agreed logical framework, budget and workplan. All reporting including final reports and audit reports were timely received. Three of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
250,000 USD		
<a href="#">Peru</a>		
27 January 2021 – 26 January 2024 (36 months, extended)	Small-Scale Funding Agreement with Ministry of Environment	<b>The project is underway.</b> The project only began implementation in September 2021 due to national procedures to access the project funding. A no-cost amendment to the Small Scale Funding Agreement was concluded in July 2023 to extend the ending date for implementation of the project activities until January 2024, update the details of the project partners, revise the workplan and undertake minor shifts in budget years. All three rounds of reporting received. Two of three instalments of funds disbursed to date.
126,000 USD		
<a href="#">Sri Lanka</a>		
24 March 2021 – 23 September 2023 (30 months, extension requested)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment	<b>The project is underway.</b> Due to internal reforms and extensive procedures, the beginning of the project was delayed, and implementation of the activities only began in September 2021. To make up for lost time, several activities are being implemented simultaneously. A six-month no-cost extension of the duration of the project was requested in July 2023, to complete the rest of the activities by March 2024. Three of four rounds of reporting received. One of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
178,659 USD		
<a href="#">Zambia</a>		
23 February 2021 – 22 February 2024 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Zambia Environmental Management Agency	<b>The project is underway.</b> The implementation of the project has experienced delays, initially due to COVID-19-related restrictions and impacts and then to delays in consultant procurement. Several activities are being implemented simultaneously to allow for completion of all activities by the end date. Three of five rounds of reporting received. One of four instalments of funds disbursed to date.
200,000 USD		

**Table 3: Third Round of Applications (2021)**

Party name	Agreement details	Status
<a href="#">Burundi</a>		
7 June 2022 – 6 June 2025 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Burundian Office for the Environment Protection, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock of Burundi	<b>The project is underway.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022 and implementation of project activities has begun. One of four instalments of funds has been disbursed to date. Two of five rounds of reporting received by the Secretariat.
250,000 USD		
<b>Cuba</b>		
17 August 2023 – 16 August 2026 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Center for Environmental Studies of Cienfuegos, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment jointly with Basel Convention Coordinating Centre and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean Region	<b>The implementation of the project has started.</b> A tripartite legal agreement was signed in 2022 between the Secretariat, the Center for Environmental Studies of Cienfuegos of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba (CEAC) and an implementing partner which was subsequently terminated due to unforeseen factors. A new tripartite legal agreement between the Secretariat, CEAC and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre and Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean Region was signed in August 2023.
249,210 USD		
<a href="#">Gabon</a>		
4 July 2022 – 3 July 2024 (24 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Forests, Oceans, Environment and Climate Change	<b>The implementation of the project has not yet started.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022, however implementation has not begun due to unforeseen issues in transferring funding.  Note: This is a regional project, also including Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of the Congo, and Sao Tome and Principe.
249,500 USD		
<b>India</b>		
29 August 2023 – 28 February 2026 (30 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	<b>The legal agreement was signed in August 2023.</b>
240,000 USD		
<b>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</b>		
TBC (30 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade	<b>Legal agreement has not been signed yet.</b>
238,000 USD		
<b>Jordan</b>		
20 October 2022 – 19 April 2025 (30 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment	<b>The project is underway.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022 and implementation has begun. The Secretariat has not yet received the first project reporting, which is delayed due to a change in the project focal point. One of four instalments of funds disbursed.
250,000 USD		
<a href="#">North Macedonia</a>		

Party name	Agreement details	Status
8 June 2022 – 7 June 2025 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	<b>The project is underway.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022 and implementation has begun. One of four instalments of funds has been disbursed. One of four rounds of reporting received.
248,500 USD		
<a href="#">Rwanda</a>		
5 September 2022 – 4 September 2025 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Rwanda Environment Management Authority	<b>The project is underway.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022 and implementation has begun. One of four instalments of funds has been disbursed. One of four rounds of reporting received.
220,000 USD		
<a href="#">Senegal</a>		
14 July 2022 – 13 July 2025 (36 months)	Project Cooperation Agreement with Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development jointly with Regional Center of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions for French-speaking Countries of Africa	<b>The project is underway.</b> The legal agreement was signed in 2022 and implementation has begun. One of four instalments of funds has been disbursed. Two of five rounds of reporting received.  Note: This is a regional project with Burkina Faso and Togo.
248,632 USD		