



Open-ended Scientific Group
Minamata Convention on Mercury
2nd Meeting, Minamata, 17-21 March 2025

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to Article 22 of the Minamata Convention, the Conference of the Parties (COP), in its decision MC-4/11 at its second meeting, decided to begin the first effectiveness evaluation of the Convention, adopted a framework for the first effectiveness evaluation and established the Open-Ended Scientific Group (OESG). The terms of reference of the OESG, set out in Annex II of that decision, provide that the OESG will develop a scientific report for the consideration of the Effectiveness Evaluation Group. The OESG consists of members nominated by Parties (one for each Party) and supported by experts in the roster nominated by Parties and other stakeholders.
2. The terms of reference for the OESG also provide that the group will meet face-to-face no more than twice and work by electronic means. At its first online meeting, the OESG elected Mr. Dominique Bally Kpokro (Cote d'Ivoire) and Mr. Terry Keating (the United States of America). The first face-to-face meeting of the OESG was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 27 to 31 March 2023. The group met online 16 times by February 2025. Smaller team meetings on air monitoring, other abiotic monitoring, biota monitoring, human biomonitoring, emissions and releases, integrated analysis and future vision also had online meetings.
3. The work of the OESG before the fifth meeting of the COP (COP-5), including the development of plans for monitoring data summary and emission and release data summary, was reported in documents UNEP/MC/COP.5/16/Add.2, UNEP/MC/COP/5/INF/24 and 37.
4. The COP, in its decision MC-5/14, established the Effectiveness Evaluation Group, and agreed to consider the outcome of the first effectiveness evaluation at its seventh meeting to be held in 2027.
5. After COP-5, the OESG collected mercury monitoring data and mercury emission and release data in line with the plans submitted to COP-5 (UNEP/MC/COP/5/INF/24), and reviewed the submitted data stored in the data repository hosted by the Biodiversity Research Institute, as well as other existing data, and prepared for the development of a scientific report through online meetings. An overview of submitted data is provided in document UNEP/MC/OESG.2/2.
6. The OESG is to hold its second face-to-face meeting in Minamata, Japan, from 17 to 21 March 2025. The remaining sections of this document provide further information on the expected deliberations under each item of the provisional addenda for the meeting.
7. The expected outputs of the meeting are as follows:
 - (i) Overview of available monitoring, emission and release data and key messages of data analysis addressing the guiding questions outlined in the monitoring guidance;
 - (ii) Key elements of the analysis of data gaps, including the identification of existing gaps as well as potential scientific actions to address identified gaps in information and knowledge related to monitoring, and lessons learned;

(iii) Plan for developing the draft scientific report to be made available for review by Parties and the Effectiveness Evaluation Group;

(iv) The structure the progress report to be submitted to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is agreed upon;

(v) The meeting report is adopted, if time allows.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

8. The meeting will be opened by Mr. Dominique Bally Kpokro and Mr. Terry Keating, co-chairs of the OESG, at 9 a.m. on 17 March 2025.

9. The opening of the meeting will be followed by welcoming remarks by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan.

10. The Secretariat will provide an overview of the progress of the work of OESG. Mr. Linroy Christian and Ms. Itsuki Kuroda, co-chairs of the Effectiveness Evaluation Group (EEG), will provide an update on EEG.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

(a) Adoption of the agenda

11. OESG will be invited to consider and adopt the provisional agenda for the meeting, as prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the co-Chairs (UNEP/MC/OESG.2/1).

(b) Organization of work

12. The meeting will start at 9:00am and end at approximately 17:00 from Monday, 17 March, to Friday, 21 March 2025. The meeting will break for approximately one hour for lunch. Coffee/tea breaks will be offered at the appropriate time each day in the morning and afternoon.

13. It is proposed that the meeting be conducted in plenary and in breakout groups. The following five teams will have breakout discussion to review existing data and consider storylines for the data analysis. Adjustments may be made as needed.

- 1) Air monitoring team
- 2) Other abiotic media monitoring team
- 3) Biota monitoring team
- 4) Human biomonitoring team
- 5) Emissions and releases team

14. The following two teams will lead the sessions on integrated data analysis, future vision and lessons learned:

- 1) Integrated analysis team
- 2) Future vision team

15. The initial plan for the meeting timetable is as follows. This may be adjusted as appropriate.

	Morning: 9h00-12h30	Afternoon: 13h30-17h00
Mon 17 March	Plenary: Overview of available data and storylines for data report	Media-specific breakouts: Air, Other abiotic, Biota, Human and Emission/Release
Tue 18 March	Media-specific breakouts	Visit to Municipal Museum on Minamata Disease and dialogue with Minamata Disease victim.
Wed 19 March	Plenary: Future vision	Breakouts: Future vision
Thu 20 March	Plenary: Integrated analysis	Breakouts: Integrated analysis
Fri 21 March	Plenary review and breakouts as appropriate	Plenary: Plan for next steps

16. The meeting will take place in person. To accommodate those who were not able to attend in person, a WebEx connection will be available during the plenary sessions. Each team may convene online consultation, using the WebEx breakout function or other online platform. The plan for online participation in breakout groups will be communicated to the team members.

WebEx link: <https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php?MTID=m195de91d1cb4c321d465f11bf1bb263e>

17. The meeting documents will be posted on the OESG's online workspace

<https://owncloud.unog.ch/s/OUAcbMwiq8vIG6Q>

Password: MCOESG2025

Under subfolder "2025_meeting".

ITEM 3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCIENTIFIC REPORT

(a) Monitoring data compilation and summary – air

(b) Monitoring data compilation and summary – other abiotic media

(c) Monitoring data compilation and summary – biota

(d) Monitoring data compilation and summary – human biomonitoring

(e) Summary of available emissions and releases data

18. The breakout teams will work online to prepare for the meeting, reviewing the available data and considering the storylines for the data analysis, based on the draft outline of the OESG report as presented in document UNEP/MC/OESG.2/3. The outcome of the preparatory work will be shared through the online workspace.

19. At the first plenary on Monday 17 March in the morning, the team leads will present the preparatory work and their plan for the work in breakout format to develop the draft chapters of the report. The plenary will consider overarching matters including the special units for analysis (e.g. Parties, UN regions, grid, regions used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

20. Breakout groups will continue the work to develop the draft chapters on Monday in the afternoon and Tuesday in the morning and after the visit to the Municipal Museum for Minamata Disease. Plenary sessions may be convened to share the outcome of breakout work. The work may continue also on Friday 21 March.

(f) Data analysis addressing the guiding questions outlined in the monitoring guidance.

21. This item will be discussed on Thursday 20 March, building on the work under subitems (a)-(e). The plenary session in the morning will be convened by the Integrated Analysis team lead, and will include online presentations by invited experts and the discussion on the work of the Multi-Compartment Mercury Modelling and Analysis Project. Discussion may continue in the afternoon in breakout group format, the arrangement for which will be decided at the plenary. Further discussion may continue on Friday 21 March.

ITEM 4. ANALYSIS OF DATA GAPS AND LESSONS LEARNED

22. This item will be discussed on Wednesday 19 March, building on the preparatory work of the Future Vision team. The plenary session in the morning will be convened by the Future Vision team lead. Discussion may continue in the afternoon in breakout group format, the arrangement for which will be decided at the plenary. Further discussion may continue on Friday 21 March.

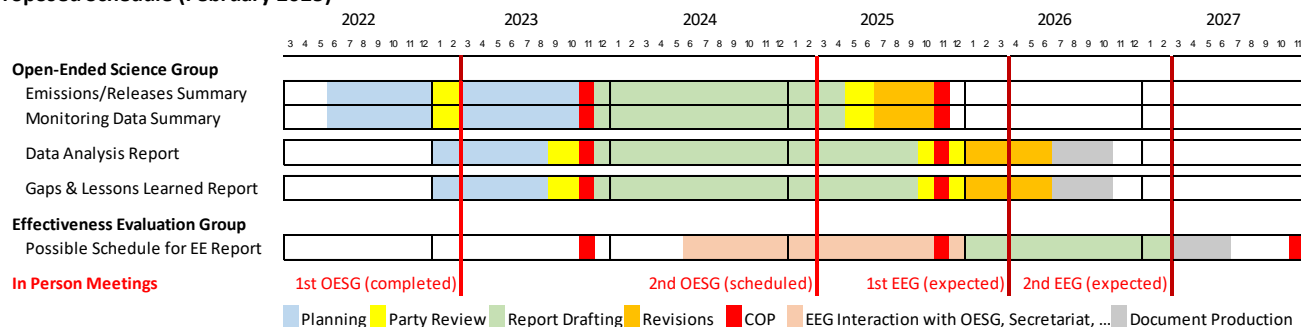
ITEM 5. WAY FORWARD

(a) Development of the reports

23. The OESG will consider the timeline for the development of the scientific report on available data and analysis and the report on data gaps and lessons learned, noting that the terms of reference of the OESG requires

the OESG to make the reports available for review by Parties and the Effectiveness Evaluation Group. A draft schedule presented at the 16th online meeting of the OESG in February 2025 is reproduced below.

Proposed Schedule (February 2025)



(b) Progress report to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

24. The OESG will consider the development of a progress report to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which will take place in Geneva, Switzerland from 3 to 7 November 2025, noting that the working document needs to be finalized by May 2025 for processing and translation into UN languages. The working document may be a brief explanation of the progress, and the substantive reports may be circulated as an English-only information documents.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

25. Under this item, the OESG and experts in the roster may raise and discuss any other matters relevant to the OESG mandate.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE GROUP

26. The Group will be invited to consider and adopt the draft report of its meeting on the basis of a draft to be prepared and submitted by the Secretariat. Part of the report may be circulated to the members later for adoption in written procedure.

ITEM 8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

27. The meeting is expected to close at 17:00 on Friday, 21 March 2025.
