



**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Sixth meeting**

Geneva, 3–7 November 2025

Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the
Parties: mercury waste**

Mercury waste

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Paragraph 3 (a) of article 11 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury provides that each party shall take appropriate measures so that mercury waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner, taking into account the guidelines developed under the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and in accordance with requirements that the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention shall adopt in an additional annex in accordance with article 27 of the Convention. Paragraph 3 (a) also provides that, in developing requirements, the Conference of the Parties shall take into account parties' waste management regulations and programmes. The Conference of the Parties has not yet adopted an additional annex relevant to paragraph 3 (a) of article 11.

2. The Conference of the Parties, in decision MC-5/10, invited parties to submit to the secretariat, by 31 October 2024, information regarding their waste management regulations and programmes as mentioned in paragraph 3 (a) of article 11, with a focus on matters not addressed by the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds.¹

3. Eight submissions were received from parties² and posted on the Convention website.³ An overview of the information submitted is set out in part II of the present note. A compilation of the submissions is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/12.

* UNEP/MC/COP.6/1/Rev.1.

¹ The guidelines are set out in the annex to document UNEP/CHW.15/6/Add.6/Rev.1.

² Argentina, Costa Rica, the European Union and its member States, Japan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Uganda.

³ <https://minamataconvention.org/en/topics/mercury-wastes/intersessional-work>.

4. The Conference of the Parties, in decision MC-5/10, also:
 - (a) Invited parties and relevant stakeholders to submit to the secretariat any scientific and regulatory data and information on the effectiveness of the threshold established in paragraph 1 of the decision in protecting human health and the environment, as well as on challenges and experiences related to its use, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (para. 5);
 - (b) Decided to consider, at its seventh meeting, whether any updates are necessary to the lists in tables 1, 2 and 3 of the annex to decision MC-3/5, recognizing the request in paragraph 9 of that decision (para. 8);⁴
 - (c) Invited the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to consider illegal traffic of mercury waste, as appropriate, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to ensure the protection of human health and the environment (para. 12);
 - (d) Requested the secretariat to transmit decision MC-5/10 to the appropriate bodies of the Basel Convention and invite them to take it into account as appropriate (para. 13).

II. Overview of the information submitted pursuant to decision MC-5/10

5. This part provides an overview of the information submitted by parties for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting. Information on the effectiveness of the thresholds is to be considered at the seventh meeting.
6. Regarding waste management regulations and programmes:
 - (a) Argentina submitted information on laws and regulatory decrees under which mercury wastes, as defined under the Convention, are considered hazardous wastes and on government resolutions that classify wastes according to their hazardousness and provide technical requirements for their management;
 - (b) Costa Rica provided information on laws and regulations on integrated waste management, classification and management of hazardous waste, and management of electronic waste;
 - (c) The European Union and its member States provided information on regulation (EU) 2017/852 on mercury, directive 2008/98/EC on waste, regulation (EC) 1013/2006 on the shipment of waste, directive 2006/21/EC on extractive waste, directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, and directive 86/278/EEC on the protection of the environment;
 - (d) Japan provided information on the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Act and the Order for Enforcement of the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Act;
 - (e) Saudi Arabia provided information on the Waste Management Law and its implementing regulations;
 - (f) Thailand provided information on the notification of its Ministry of Industry on the management of waste and unused materials (with an unofficial English translation of the notification attached to the submission);
 - (g) Uganda provided information on the National Environment (Waste Management) Regulations.
7. Regarding mercury waste management approaches, the European Union and its member States provided the following information:
 - (a) Member States are to ensure that the production, collection, transportation, and storage and treatment of hazardous waste are carried out under conditions that provide protection for the environment and human health, including action to ensure traceability from production to final destination and control of hazardous waste;
 - (b) Amalgam waste, including amalgam residues, particles and fillings, and teeth or parts thereof contaminated by dental amalgam, is to be handled and collected by an authorized waste management establishment or undertaking;

⁴ In paragraph 9 of decision MC-3/5, the Conference of the Parties decided that the group of technical experts would make any necessary updates to the lists in tables 1, 2 and 3 of the annex to that decision. The group reported to the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting that it had been unable to work on the lists of mercury wastes (see UNEP/MC/COP.4/8, annex II, para. 35).

(c) Mercury and mercury compounds from large sources (chlor-alkali industry, cleaning of natural gas, non-ferrous mining and smelting operations, extraction from cinnabar ore) are to be handled as waste and as such disposed of without endangering human health or harming the environment; specific reporting requirements have also been established;

(d) Prior to being permanently disposed of, mercury waste should undergo conversion and, where intended to be disposed of in above-ground facilities, conversion and solidification. Mercury waste that has undergone conversion and, if applicable, solidification is to be disposed of in permanent storage facilities (salt mines or above-ground facilities) licensed for disposal of hazardous waste.

8. Parties also raised the following points:

(a) Argentina said that the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds under the Basel Convention should be reviewed in order, for example, to include fact sheets or practical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of specific waste streams, such as drugs and vaccines;

(b) Argentina, the European Union and its member States, Japan and Thailand provided information on thresholds for hazardous waste differing from the thresholds under article 11 of the Convention;

(c) Japan noted that it understood that “matters not addressed by the technical guidelines” referred to “non-hazardous waste under the Basel Convention that falls under the definition of wastes contaminated with mercury under the Minamata Convention”. It attached a document entitled “Measures to ensure the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes in Japan”.

III. Information submitted in national reports pursuant to article 21 and related conclusions of the Implementation and Compliance Committee

9. Pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, parties are to report on the measures they have taken to implement the provisions of article 11, the effectiveness of such measures, and possible challenges in meeting the objectives of the Convention.

10. The reporting format⁵ under article 21 includes a question on the availability of facilities for final disposal of waste consisting of mercury or mercury compounds, which is to be reported every two years. In the case that such a facility exists, parties are to report on the amount of waste consisting of mercury or mercury compounds subject to final disposal, as well as the disposal methods. The Implementation and Compliance Committee, at its seventh meeting, held in February 2025, reviewed the second short national reports for the reporting period 2022–2023, which included information on final disposal facilities, disposal methods and amounts of waste disposed of. The Committee also reviewed information from the secretariat’s follow-up communication with certain parties to clarify final disposal methods, including whether stabilization and solidification were undertaken as part of final disposal. In its conclusions,⁶ the Committee encouraged parties to further elaborate, as appropriate, on final disposal methods in their second full national reports, to be submitted by 31 December 2025.

11. Further information submitted as part of national reports is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/20.

IV. Consideration by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention

12. The Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, at its seventeenth meeting, held in May 2025, considered the invitation of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury to take into account, as appropriate, decision MC-5/10 on establishment of mercury waste thresholds, and decided to update the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds in order to reflect adjustments consequential to the establishment of the threshold for mercury wastes falling under paragraph 2 (c) of article 11 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in accordance with

⁵ Adopted under decision MC-1/8 and amended by decisions MC-4/8 and MC-5/13. The second short national report used the format as amended by decision MC-4/8.

⁶ UNEP/MC/COP.6/14, annex.

decision MC-5/10. It also requested the secretariat of the Basel Convention to prepare, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, draft updated technical guidelines for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention at its fifteenth meeting and by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its eighteenth meeting.

V. Proposed action

13. The Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury may wish to consider adopting a decision on the matter, including the following:

- (a) A result of its consideration regarding the development of requirements for environmentally sound management of mercury waste pursuant to paragraph 3 (a) of article 11;
 - (b) A process to prepare for the review of mercury waste thresholds pursuant to paragraphs 5 and 8 of decision MC-5/10, which may include requesting the secretariat to:
 - (i) Collect from parties and relevant stakeholders scientific and regulatory data and information on the effectiveness of the mercury waste threshold established in decision MC-5/10 in protecting human health and the environment, and on challenges and experiences related to its use;
 - (ii) Collect information from parties and relevant stakeholders on any necessary updates to the lists in tables 1, 2 and 3 of the annex to decision MC-3/5;
 - (iii) Develop a report based on the information submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting;
 - (c) Actions in response to the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention to update the technical guidelines, which may include:
 - (i) Welcoming the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention;
 - (ii) Requesting the secretariat to cooperate with the secretariat of the Basel Convention in preparing draft updated technical guidelines.
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