



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

Geneva, 3–7 November 2025

Item 4 (e) (i) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference
of the Parties: financial resources and mechanism:
Global Environment Facility**

Update on matters related to the Global Environment Facility

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present note provides information on the implementation of decision MC-5/11 on the review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In particular, the information provided is relevant to the first component of the financial mechanism,¹ namely the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and is to be considered in conjunction with document UNEP/MC/COP.6/10/Add.1 setting out the executive summary of the 2022–2025 report of the GEF Council to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The full report of the GEF Council is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/13.

2. A draft decision related to both components of the financial mechanism is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/9 for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.

II. Global Environment Facility programming on mercury

3. In paragraph 3 of decision MC-5/11, the Conference of the Parties noted the importance of relevant parties working through their operational focal points to make prompt and full use of the programming directions and resource allocation for the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund (GEF-8), including with respect to undertaking mercury reduction activities in the integrated programmes and within, in particular, the biodiversity and climate change focal areas, and requested the GEF secretariat to facilitate the exchange of information to enable that use.

4. The report of the GEF Council to the Conference of the Parties contains an account of support provided by GEF for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury during the reporting period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025.

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

¹ Documents UNEP/MC/COP.6/11 and UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/40 set out information relevant to the second component of the financial mechanism, namely the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance.

5. During the reporting period, GEF committed \$155.5 million for programming to support the implementation of the Convention. In addition, project preparation grants amounted to \$4.0 million and agency fees amounted to \$14.5 million, bringing the total GEF financing programmed in the reporting period to \$174.0 million, which represents 65 per cent of the \$269 million allocated by the replenishment.
6. Funding for the Convention during the GEF-8 period, in line with the chemicals and waste focal area programming strategy, comprises support both for enabling activities, including Minamata initial assessments and national action plans on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, and for the implementation of projects and programmes.
7. By June 2025, including programming from the fifth to the eighth replenishments, GEF had provided support to enable a total of 120 countries to develop Minamata initial assessments, 82 of which had been submitted to the secretariat. The secretariat expects GEF agencies to submit finalized and validated Minamata initial assessments to the secretariat, for which country approval is required. During the same period, GEF support enabled 50 countries to prepare their artisanal and small-scale gold mining national action plans. As at 1 June 2025, 37 such action plans had been completed and submitted to the secretariat.
8. In its work programmes, approved in February 2024 and covering the period until the end of June 2025, GEF increased programming under the Minamata Convention allocation and provided funding for various projects and programmes. In particular, GEF:
- (a) Expanded the number of countries participating in the planetGOLD programme to 27, further broadening the reach of transformational artisanal and small-scale gold mining approaches in response to the requirements of article 7 of the Convention;
 - (b) Approved a global chemicals monitoring programme addressing persistent organic pollutants and mercury, to be implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
 - (c) Approved three full-sized projects and one global programme addressing multiple chemicals, including mercury, as follows:
 - (i) A global programme on electronics management covering 16 countries, implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
 - (ii) A chemicals and wastes financing partnership facility to support investments in chemicals and wastes pollution reduction in key polluting sectors, including electronics, textile, and pharmaceuticals, implemented by the Asian Development Bank;
 - (iii) Electrical and electronics sector in India, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
 - (iv) Hazardous waste streams in Ukraine, implemented by the World Bank;
9. Under the three most recent work programmes, GEF has also approved several initiatives that focus on mercury-specific sectors and involve substantial estimated mercury reductions, including:
- (a) A global programme on mercury emissions from the non-ferrous metals production sector in six countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean (implemented by UNIDO) that will provide support to parties in their efforts to meet the requirements under article 8 of the Convention, on mercury emissions;
 - (b) A regional project addressing mercury-added skin-lightening cosmetics in 13 countries in Africa (implemented by UNEP);
 - (c) Three full-sized national projects aimed at tackling mercury: (a) in the healthcare sector supply chain in Indonesia (implemented by UNDP); (b) across industrial sectors in Argentina (implemented by UNDP); and (c) in the chlor-alkali sector, including excess metal mercury and waste, in Brazil (implemented by UNEP);
 - (d) Two full-sized projects addressing mercury emissions from the cement and construction industries in Brazil and the Philippines (implemented by UNIDO), aimed at strengthening national capacity for management, monitoring and reduction of mercury;
 - (e) An enabling activity for the development of a national action plan for the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in the Philippines.

10. About 35 per cent of the Minamata Convention allocation in GEF-8 remains. The full allocation is expected to be programmed by June 2026.

11. In line with decision MC-1/5, GEF has promoted synergies with other focal areas, including the biodiversity focal area, further advancing work under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Programme, including through five programme framework documents that cover the globally significant biomes of the Amazon, Congo, Mesoamerican and Indo-Malayan regions and the Guinean Forests of West Africa. The programme supports 25 countries through various means, including by providing assistance in the implementation of the Convention in matters pertaining to artisanal and small-scale gold mining, mercury use reduction and the restoration of former mining sites.

III. Ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility trust fund

12. The ninth replenishment of the GEF trust fund (GEF-9) is expected to begin in July 2026 and to continue for four years, until June 2030. The replenishment process is already under way, and the secretariat participated in the initial discussions held at the meetings of the technical advisory groups in February 2025 and at the first GEF-9 replenishment meeting in May 2025. Three more replenishment meetings are scheduled between October 2025 and March 2026.

13. Further information is available in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/14, on the draft strategic positioning and programming directions for the ninth replenishment of the GEF trust fund.

IV. Responsiveness to guidance

14. In response to the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties in paragraph 3 of decision MC-5/7, the GEF Council, at its sixty-seventh meeting, in June 2024, approved a new enabling activity on the review of the implementation of article 7 of the Convention. The activity is expected to be included in the upcoming work programmes under the GEF-8 Minamata Convention allocation.

V. Monitoring and evaluation

15. In November 2024, the GEF Independent Evaluation Office issued an evaluation report on GEF interventions in the chemicals and waste focal area for the period 2010–2024, covering GEF-5 to GEF-8. Presented at the sixty-eighth meeting of the GEF Council, in December 2024, the report (GEF/E/C.68/01) addressed various persistent organic pollutants and mercury, with a focus on closed projects and on ongoing projects that had undergone midterm reviews. The evaluation included a review of 72 completed and financially closed projects and an examination of the quality at entry of 219 projects.

16. Mercury-related interventions covered by the review were limited to enabling activities, including the development of Minamata initial assessments and national action plans on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, as well as a few projects related to the healthcare sector, dental amalgam and skin-lightening products. Nevertheless, the evaluation demonstrated an increased emphasis on activities related to the early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury since its entry into force, confirming the importance of support provided by GEF to countries.

17. More mercury-specific recommendations by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office can be expected in the future, as mercury-specific programmes and projects launched under the seventh and eighth GEF replenishments come to a close.

VI. Cooperation between the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility

18. The secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the GEF secretariat continued their cooperation during the reporting period. The Executive Secretary actively engaged with the GEF Council, participating in its sixty-sixth to sixty-ninth meetings, held in 2024 and 2025. Throughout those engagements, she consistently underscored the need for strengthened and timely support for mercury-related activities under GEF-8 and GEF-9, considering the implementation timelines of the Convention, related decisions of the Conference of the Parties, and the growing number of parties. She

highlighted the importance of synergies with other focal areas, particularly biodiversity, and called for programming that reflected the urgency of parties' meeting their obligations. In her interventions, she emphasized the need for transformational change in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector, support for new and amended obligations under the Convention, and the approval of targeted mercury-specific projects and monitoring initiatives.

19. Furthermore, the Executive Secretary participated in the first GEF-MEA Exchange event, held on the margins of the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in Geneva in 2025. That high-level dialogue brought together the heads of seven multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and the Chief Executive Officer of GEF. The Executive Secretary emphasized the progress achieved under the Minamata Convention on Mercury with GEF support and underscored the importance of continued collaboration.

20. The secretariat has been engaged in the GEF-9 replenishment discussions and has provided comments on initial drafts of the documents on GEF strategic positioning and programming directions. The Executive Secretary has highlighted the importance of the replenishment being aimed at timely support for parties that are required to meet their obligations under the Convention by 2030, while ensuring impact in terms of mercury reductions across focal areas. She also called for support in engaging Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth in the work under the Convention.

21. The secretariat participated actively in the GEF chemicals and waste task force meetings held in March and May 2025. Such meetings provide valuable insights on GEF programming and implementation planning by agencies and are an opportunity for the secretariat to share information on existing priorities and needs of parties to the Convention.

22. In the biennium 2024–2025, the secretariat continued to engage with the GEF secretariat on knowledge management and the visualization of project results, as well as on the further development of online tools for sharing GEF official documentation and information on project activities in the projects database on the Convention website. On that site, the data can be sorted and used for data visualization and graphics, and are periodically updated on the dashboard and accessible from the parties' profiles. The key performance indicators are visualized in dynamic graphs on a dashboard. This initiative has attracted significant interest from other multilateral environmental agreements. The secretariat is currently working with the GEF secretariat to improve the filtering of projects by agreement, a function that will facilitate data harvesting for different conventions.

23. The secretariat also regularly collaborates with the GEF secretariat in communications in order to raise public awareness and share project results, ultimately generating greater impact. These activities include regular contributions to the GEF newsletter, coordinated news releases and cross-secretariat posting of communications to amplify key messages across platforms. The secretariat also provided communications coverage of the meetings of the GEF-9 technical advisory groups and the first GEF-9 replenishment meeting, helping to highlight the importance of continued financial support to address mercury pollution.
