



**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Sixth meeting**
Geneva, 3–7 November 2025
Item 4 (f) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of the
Parties: capacity-building, technical assistance and
technology transfer**

Implementation of activities pursuant to decision MC-5/12 and article 14 on capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present note provides information on the status of implementation of the mandates given to the secretariat in decision MC-5/12, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury at its fifth meeting.
2. The mandates in decision MC-5/12 essentially relate to the requirements set out in paragraphs 4 and 5 of article 14 of the Convention, on capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer. In paragraph 4 of article 14, the Conference of the Parties is called on, by its second meeting and thereafter on a regular basis, to consider information on existing initiatives and progress made in relation to alternative technologies; consider the needs of parties, particularly developing-country parties, for alternative technologies; and identify challenges experienced by parties, particularly developing-country parties, in technology transfer. In doing so, the Conference of the Parties is to take into account submissions and reports from parties, including those as provided for in article 21, on reporting, and information provided by other stakeholders. Paragraph 5 of article 14 calls on the Conference of the Parties to make recommendations on how capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer could be further enhanced under article 14.

II. Implementation

A. Desk study on alternative technologies, related challenges and needs of parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

3. In response to decision MC-5/12, the secretariat developed a desk study and case studies for consideration by the Conference of the Parties pursuant to article 14, paragraph 4. A summary of the

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

desk study is presented below and the full study, including the case studies, is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/18.

4. The study provides a general overview of initiatives related to alternative technologies rather than an exhaustive analysis of all available technologies. Recognizing that a comprehensive evaluation of every alternative technology was beyond the scope of the study, the secretariat has highlighted key examples and trends. The work was carried out under a cooperation agreement with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research with funding from the contribution of Japan to the special trust fund for the Minamata Convention on Mercury in the biennium 2024–2025.

5. Analysis of national reports revealed that many parties are experiencing the following challenges in relation to alternative technologies:

(a) Insufficient funding, reflecting the gap between the needed resources and the resources that are available and accessible;

(b) A lack of technical capacity at the national level, including a lack of trained personnel, preventing the deployment of alternative technologies;

(c) Insufficient institutional capacity and regulatory frameworks, hindering technology assessment and approval and creating barriers for investment in new technologies due to concerns over compliance, effectiveness and long-term sustainability;

(d) Inadequate capacity and capability for data collection and monitoring, leading to gaps in the mercury inventories that inform decisions on policy and mitigation strategy;

(e) Limited access to alternative technologies, both because of financial constraints and because of domestic unavailability of suitable technologies.

6. Key insights into how parties' uptake of alternative technologies could be enhanced include the following:

(a) *Feasible alternative technologies are available for many of the major mercury source categories covered by the Convention.* Projects under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance,¹ as well as initiatives such as the Global Mercury Partnership,² provide evidence of progress in transitioning from pilot projects to nationwide adoption of respective technologies, delivering measurable reductions in mercury use, emissions and releases. The case studies in the report provide several examples of this.

(b) *National reports submitted by parties pursuant to article 21 are a key source of information for assessing challenges and progress under the Convention, including alternative technology and technical transfer issues.* Analysis of national reports submitted by parties and recent project funding trends reported by GEF³ highlight the fact that demand for alternative technologies exists in specific sectors, including artisanal and small-scale gold mining; mercury-added products, including in the lighting and health care (transition to mercury-free medical devices and dental amalgam) sectors; non-ferrous metals production; the cement industry; mercury waste management; and the chlor-alkali industry. In many cases information is limited, however, as parties formulate their national report responses in general terms, often noting a lack of “resources” or “capacity” without naming a specific need such as equipment, skills, funding or infrastructure.

(c) *Effective technology transfer requires supportive policies, institutional readiness, training and monitoring of progress.* Technology transfer also requires financing and collaboration between the various stakeholders, including the donor and beneficiary parties, on mutually agreed terms. Overall, a lack of technical and institutional capacity, insufficient funding and limited access to alternative technologies are key challenges identified by parties in their national reports with respect to technology transfer under the Convention. Such barriers in turn affect parties' ability to conduct inventories, acquire alternative technologies, build the necessary infrastructure, develop regulatory frameworks and enhance their national institutional absorptive capacity. Lessons from case studies further underscore the importance of an enabling environment for technology adoption.

(d) *Collaboration with related multilateral environmental agreements and frameworks contributes to technology transfer and thus to overall progress in achieving the objective of the*

¹ Additional information related to GEF and the Specific International Programme is available in documents UNEP/MC/COP.6/10 and UNEP/MC/COP.6/11, respectively.

² <https://www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/>.

³ Report of the Global Environment Facility to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (GEF, 2025) (UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/13).

Minamata Convention. The study highlights the advantages and importance of technical cooperation with related frameworks, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, including the respective Basel and Stockholm convention regional centres, for the implementation of the Minamata Convention. In addition, the Conference of the Parties has repeatedly recognized the importance of the technical work conducted by the Global Mercury Partnership, which produces guidance, data and pilot projects through its work in support of the overall implementation effort.⁴ There is scope to extend this type of cooperation to other multilateral environmental agreements and frameworks.

(e) *Specific needs, barriers and opportunities related to technology transfer should be further assessed to support parties in implementing the Convention*. Developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition can request the secretariat to facilitate assistance to them, as provided for in paragraph 2 (b) of article 24, including with respect to matters pertaining to technology transfer. In addition, a Convention-wide survey could be conducted to gain a better understanding of specific technology needs, barriers and opportunities. This could be part of a separate exercise that builds on the information provided in the national reports.

B. Development and dissemination of tools and training materials

7. In line with the secretariat functions identified in article 24 of the Convention and as requested in paragraph 3 of decision MC-5/12, the secretariat increased the development and dissemination of tools, training and information materials for the implementation of parties' obligations under the Minamata Convention, as well as training and information materials for cross-cutting capacity-building activities on gender and trade. That included materials that respond to the recommendations, in the report of the Implementation and Compliance Committee to the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/MC/COP.5/14), regarding enhanced capacity-building for the implementation of articles 4, 7 and 11 of the Convention.

8. Since 2020, the secretariat has organized five "seasons" of online training sessions entitled "Minamata Online"⁵ with the aim of providing scientific and technical information, information relevant to implementation of the articles of the Convention, and information on issues to be considered by the Conference of the Parties. The fifth season, from March 2024 to April 2025, was aimed at supporting parties in their work on various matters under the Convention, including mercury-added products, mercury trade, supply and waste, preparations for the second full national reporting cycle, integration of considerations related to populations in vulnerable situations and implementation of the gender action plan, as well as providing further information on synergies between the Minamata Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.⁶ The session on article 4, mercury-added products, held in June and July 2024, was funded by the European Union, and the session on article 11, mercury wastes, held in November and December 2024, was funded by Switzerland. Both sessions were conducted in the six official languages of the United Nations. The secretariat is considering developing other online learning tools, subject to the provision of resources.

9. In 2024, the secretariat launched the "Minamata Tools"⁷ platform offering interactive training modules to support parties in understanding and implementing their obligations under the Convention. Developed in collaboration with the United Nations Staff College and funded by the European Union, the modules cover priority areas such as mercury supply sources and trade, mercury-added products and mercury-using processes, mercury emissions and national reporting.

10. As a third learning format, the secretariat held a number of in-person workshops and meetings, including on the margins of regional or other meetings. Such workshops and meetings included:

(a) A dedicated workshop on mercury trade funded by the European Union, held in the Philippines in June 2024 on the margins of the GEF-funded planetGOLD Global Forum on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining;

⁴ See, for instance, decision MC-5/2, paragraph 5 (e), regarding the guidance to assist parties in identifying, managing and reducing mercury trade from primary mercury mining; decision MC-4/12, paragraph 4, regarding further engagement with the Partnership; and decision MC-2/9 regarding harmonized customs codes for mercury-added products.

⁵ Available from the Minamata Convention website and YouTube channel.

⁶ https://minamataconvention.org/en/meetings/concluded-list-view?field_event_type_target_id=287.

⁷ <https://www.unssc.org/courses/minamata-tools-1>.

(b) A specialized mercury emissions inventory workshop funded by the European Union, held in South Africa in July 2024 on the margins of the sixteenth International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant;⁸

(c) Workshops held in May and June 2024, funded by the European Union and in partnership with Macquarie University, linked to enabling projects on article 8 (emissions) and aimed at supporting South Africa, Pakistan and Viet Nam in implementing article 8;

(d) A session on article 12 (contaminated sites) funded by Switzerland, held at the fifteenth meeting of the International Committee on Contaminated Land,⁹ in Bern, Switzerland, in October 2024.

11. Secretariat staff members engage in capacity-building and technical assistance as part of their primary duties. The activities carried out by the secretariat in relation to capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer, other than those of a facilitative nature and those performed through the financial mechanism, are implemented using voluntary contributions to the special trust fund. For the biennium 2026–2027, the programme of work and budget activity fact sheet on capacity-building and technical assistance provides an overview of the work that the secretariat proposes to undertake using contributions to the special trust fund as detailed in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/38. The secretariat proposes, subject to the availability of resources, to develop the Minamata Exchange Platform, as described in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/26, as a cross-cutting activity related to knowledge management (see document UNEP/MC/COP.6/19) that aims to help build the capacity of parties and stakeholders in an efficient manner by providing centralized access to scientific, technical, legal and implementation-related knowledge.

C. Continued and enhanced cooperation with the Global Mercury Partnership

12. In paragraph 9 of decision MC-5/12, the Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat to continue and enhance cooperation with the Global Mercury Partnership, and to engage with the Partnership in the consideration of options for strengthening the secretariat's capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer programme and for enhancing support to parties as they cooperate to provide capacity-building and technical assistance pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 14.

13. The secretariat cooperated with the Partnership in a number of ways, including:

(a) By participating, along with representatives of the Partnership, in meetings for the development and implementation of GEF-funded projects, many of which the Partnership is involved in through targeted technical support;¹⁰

(b) By engaging the Partnership in the review of the applications submitted under the fourth round of applications to the Specific International Programme, as well as in the implementation of a number of projects funded by the Specific International Programme;

(c) By engaging the Partnership in the secretariat's capacity-building projects, such as the workshops referred to in paragraph 10 above;

(d) By delivering on capacity-building and awareness-raising projects and events organized by the Partnership, such as training of customs officers implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme and funded by Japan, side events at meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and webinars on dental amalgam and mercury-free lighting.

14. In addition to the above activities aimed at capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer, the secretariat also cooperated in the Partnership's programmatic activities. For example, the secretariat engaged the Partnership in developing draft supplemental guidance on the review of the implementation of article 7 of the Convention, preparing updates to the guidance on stocks and sources, adopted in decision MC-1/2, and developing the report on mercury-added cosmetics and the study on the trade in mercury compounds. Experts nominated by the Partnership

⁸ <https://www.mercurycapetown.com/>.

⁹ <https://minamataconvention.org/en/news/mercury-and-contaminated-sites-15th-iccl-meeting>.

¹⁰ For instance, the "assessment of existing and future emissions reduction from the coal sector toward the implementation of the Minamata and Stockholm conventions" project; the "Global Chemicals Monitoring Programme to support implementation of Stockholm and Minamata conventions" project; the "eliminating mercury skin lightening products" project; and several national projects under the planetGOLD programme.

also contribute to the work of the Effectiveness Evaluation Group and the Open-ended Scientific Group. Finally, the secretariat participates in an advisory capacity in Partnership Advisory Group meetings, meetings of the partnership area leads and meetings of individual partnership areas.

15. Further information on the activities undertaken in the context of the Partnership since the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/32.

III. Suggested action by the Conference of the Parties

16. The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider the information contained in the present note and in document UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/18 and to adopt a decision along the lines of the text contained in the annex to the present note.

Annex

Draft decision MC-6/[--]: Implementation of article 14 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, on capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 14 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, on capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer,

Having considered the information on initiatives and progress made in relation to alternative technologies, and appreciating the lessons learned from case studies on the successful development, transfer and diffusion of alternative technologies, as presented at its sixth meeting,¹

Noting the limited availability of information on the needs of parties, particularly developing-country parties, with respect to alternative technologies while at the same time acknowledging current efforts as a step towards closing the information gap and narrowing the focus of further specific interventions to support parties,

Noting also the challenges reported by parties, particularly developing-country parties, in their national reports pursuant to article 21, with respect to alternative technologies,

Appreciating the strong foundation for collaboration on technology transfer between the secretariat and the Global Mercury Partnership, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, including the regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm conventions,

1. *Invites* developed-country parties and other parties to take into account the challenges identified with regard to the uptake of alternative technologies, specifically in promoting and facilitating the development, transfer and diffusion of up-to-date environmentally sound alternative technologies to developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition;

2. *Encourages* parties, in their national reports pursuant to article 21, including their second full national reports, to include specific information on the development, transfer and diffusion of, and access to, alternative technologies, as well as on the challenges they have experienced in accessing and transferring technology, to assist in a future review of challenges and progress;

3. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, pursuant to paragraph 4 of article 14, to further collect and analyse, in collaboration with the Global Mercury Partnership, information on existing initiatives and progress made in relation to alternative technologies, as well as related needs and challenges, utilizing:

- (a) Information in future national reports under article 21;
- (b) Additional information collected through a survey of technology needs and challenges;
- (c) Other available information, including reports on and evaluations of projects funded by the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme;

4. *Decides* to consider the matter of alternative technologies pursuant to paragraph 4 of article 14 again at its eighth meeting;

5. *Calls on* parties, and invites non-parties to the Convention and others in a position to do so, to contribute to the special trust fund for the Minamata Convention, to enable the implementation of the capacity-building activities described in the 2026–2027 programme of work and budget activity fact sheet for capacity-building and technical assistance (activity 4);

6. *Acknowledges with appreciation* the work of the secretariat in developing and disseminating tools and training materials related to the implementation of parties' obligations under the Minamata Convention;

¹ UNEP/MC/COP.6/INF/18.

7. *Requests* the secretariat to continue to provide capacity-building and technical assistance support to parties pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 14, including through active and sustained engagement with the Global Mercury Partnership.
