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A woman with dark hair, wearing an orange hard hat and a yellow safety vest over a grey shirt, is smiling and holding a tablet. She is in a factory or industrial setting with blue machinery in the background.

Implementation of the Minamata Convention in ECOWAS and SADC

A subregional approach
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PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY WITH A SYNERGISTIC APPROACH

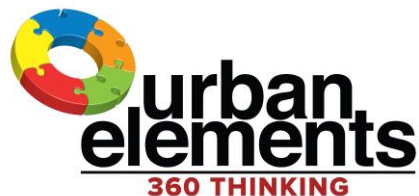
Subregional approach for environmentally sound management for mercury containing waste in ECOWAS and SADC countries



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Snapshot of the project

Objective

- Developing a sub-regional approach for the management of mercury and mercury bearing electronic waste

Expected outcomes

- To conduct a **situational analysis** of the current situation in SADC and ECOWAS countries regarding mercury and e-waste.
- To **develop elements for a sub-regional approach** for the management of mercury and e-waste, including a **roadmap**.

Partners

ECOWAS

- Côte d'Ivoire
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Liberia
- Mali
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Sénégal
- Sierra Leone

SADC

- Burkina Faso
- Botswana,
- Eswatini, Kingdom of,
- Kenya
- Lesotho Madagascar
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Zambia

Relevant stakeholders from the private sector

Areas of the situational analysis

- Policies and regulations
 - Source and volume of the waste
 - Storage, treatment capacities
 - Collection and transport
 - Costs for management, including final disposal
 - Best practices for ESM
 - Recycling potential
 - Economic instruments
 - Stakeholders involved
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Methodology

The indicative method used included:

- Questionnaire surveys,
 - Desktop research of existing information,
 - Project group meetings,
 - Telephone interviews, and
 - E-mail/Web based information sourcing.
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General outcome of the situational analysis

- General policy on Hg waste management missing (different for e-waste)
- Lack of data on the management of mercury waste
- Treatment and disposal capacity low (exception South Africa)
- No reliable data on costs for Hg waste management
- Most countries have no economic instruments
- No remarkable best practice for Hg waste management
- Potential for synergies between countries
- Very low synergies for combined management of mercury and other mercury containing e-waste (export of mercury for final disposal)

Preconditions for a sub-regional approach

ECOWAS and SADC

- **Subregional hubs for the waste management**

Willingness of the countries to take this role

Existence of a high waste volumes (less and shorter ways of transport and a faster capacity utilization of the machinery)

- **General infrastructure in the hub countries:**

Good road infrastructure and accessibility, stable power supply, which are both crucial for a regional hub.

- **Specific infrastructure:**

It is an advantage if specific infrastructure such as waste processing and treatment facilities are already existing or planned for the near future.

- **Political factors:**

They facilitate or challenge such an approach (e.g. Basel Convention or the Bamako Convention).

- **Linguistic factors (ECOWAS):**

It hence might be useful to have at least one hub in the French-speaking part of the ECOWAS region and vice-versa at least one hub in the English-speaking part of the region.

General elements for a subregional approach

- Harmonized regulatory and policy framework
 - Assessment on required technologies and related investments
 - Financing mechanism and economic instruments
 - Hub-countries for the waste management
 - Stakeholder engagement
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Opportunities

- A sub-regional ESM approach will **trigger all countries towards their obligations as signatories of the Minamata convention**, which overall will reduce the release of significant amounts of mercury. This benefits both human health and the environment.
 - Countries will be able to deal with their mercury containing waste in an environmentally sound way, without having to invest in facilities that would not be profitable. **As a whole, the ECOWAS/SADC region generates enough waste volumes for a profitable recycling industry**, provided that the ESM approach is accompanied with respective financing mechanisms.
 - The subsequent development of regional treatment hubs will lead to the creation of **manyfold job opportunities**, e.g., in the recycling sector itself as well as in the transport industry.
 - A sub-regional approach will also lead to **improved bi- and multilateral relations in the region**, which in turn could lead to further collaboration.
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Challenges

- All countries must commit to **active participation and support** the approach on both national and regional level. Depending on the political constellation, this could result **a burdensome and lengthy consensus-finding process**, which needs to be anticipated early in the development process.
- A **supra-regional financing system** will be required to be able to cross-finance the treatment. Profits stemming from valuable recycling fractions should flow into a financing system, which in turn should be financing the treatment of non-valuable fractions. **The governance of such a financing system will be challenging, demanding again for a fully transparent solution.**
- Regional treatment hubs involve the **risk of dependencies**, for example on the countries with the largest volumes of waste and the countries hosting the hubs. This is an issue that needs to be addressed through shared responsibilities and ownership.
- The proposed approach offers **synergies for the treatment of e-waste, but not, or relatively few, for medical waste**. At most, there is the possibility of preparing joint shiploads for which the transport infrastructure could be used for both waste streams mutually.



Roadmap for implementation ECOWAS - 7 areas

- **Improve regional cooperation between ECOWAS member states** with regards to the management of mercury containing waste through a well moderated approach under the leadership of ECOWAS.
- **Develop a harmonized policy** that shall specifically define the ESM approach on regional level. A multistakeholder approach will ensure ownership and subsequent implementation on national level.
- **Standardize mercury-specific normative requirements on all stages of the value chain** to enable a level playing field both on regional and national level.
- **Conduct a baseline study on the available infrastructure for the environmentally sound management of mercury containing wastes**, their treatment and final disposal and the potential for improvement of the infrastructure under question.

Roadmap for implementation ECOWAS – 7 areas

- **Define financing system.** An **EPR system** is part of the larger **ESM policy**. It needs to be defined, set up and **supported by eco-funds as financing mechanism**. Lastly, the financing system needs to be **harmonized** on regional level.
 - **Define and share responsibilities.** All ECOWAS countries must commit to active participation and support the approach on both national and regional level. Prevent negative setbacks through a transparent, inclusive and well moderated approach and shared responsibilities and ownership.
 - **Run a pilot and scale up the approach.** As a pilot the approach could be tested with few countries only, e.g., along language barriers in order to facilitate communication. Following successful piloting, the approach can then be scaled up for the whole region.
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Roadmap for implementation in SADC - 7 priority areas

1 – Governance, coordination, and regulation

- Establish a SADC governing body/steering committee for mercury and e-waste management.
- Development of specific regulations and policy for mercury waste and e-waste for each country and a regional mercury management agreement.

2 – Regional inventory database for mercury, mercury compounds, mercury waste and e-waste.

- Including a monitoring and evaluation system.

3 – Collection, storage and transport systems of mercury and e-waste.

- Facilitation of waste collection, storage and transport systems both locally and regional
- Simplify transboundary movement process at customs of mercury and e-waste.

Roadmap for implementation in SADC – 7 priority areas

4 – Improve treatment capabilities including final disposal of Hg and e-waste at local and regional level.

5 – Establish a regional economic instruments specifically for mercury and e-waste.

6– Best available techniques and Best Environmental Practices.

- Promotion of best available techniques that are both cost ES
- Protection of workers and communities and license key actors in the value chain of mercury and e-waste

7 – Regional ongoing stakeholder engagement.

- Develop a regional ongoing stakeholder engagement instrument
- Awareness raising about the adverse effects of Hg and Hg compounds and e-waste to human health and the environment



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THANK YOU!

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