

TERMINAL EVALUATION OF
THE CAPACITY BUILDING
PROGRAMME FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MINAMATA CONVENTION IN
ARGENTINA

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCRC	Basel Convention Regional Centre for the South American Region in Argentina
COFEMA	Federal Council for the Environment
CNEA	National Atomic Energy Commission.
DNSyPQ	National Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products
FARN	Natural Resources Foundation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
INTI	National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina
MAP	Mercury Added Products
MAYDS	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIA	Minamata Initial Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPDS	Provisional Directorate of Special Waste
PRF	Project results framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIP	Specific International Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Bound
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

1.0 Key Project Information

Table 1. Project Identification Table

Project ID:	2018/01/LAC/ARG
Implementing Agencies:	National Institute of Industrial Technology in Argentina (Argentina)
Project Focal Point: Functional Title, Address, Telephone, E-mail	Ms. Leila Devia, Director, Basel Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South America (Argentina), +541145155022/45155500, lumiere@inti.gob.ar
Project Title as per PCA:	Capacity Building Programme for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention
Budget USD Specific Trust Fund;	USD 250.000
In-Kind Contribution	USD 201,111
Trust Fund	SIP
Expected start date:	August 1, 2019
Planned completion date:	July 31, 2021
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 451,111
Cost to the SIP:	USD 250.000
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	December 15, 2022– May 1, 2023

2.0 Summary of Key Achievements

- i) This project was designed to build capacity for the implementation of the Minamata convention. To achieve this objective, the project focused on strengthening human, institutional and technical capacities within government institutions, universities, and the public. This involved training programs, awareness campaigns, promulgating laws and regulations, and developing research and mercury surveillance capacities. The aim was to switch from mercury added products to the use of mercury-free products. A key outcome of the effort to strengthen national capacity was the elaboration of a National Strategy to implement the Minamata Convention, in particular, the obligations established in Article 4.
- ii) At the end of project implementation, this evaluation has determined that the planned project outputs had been produced and significant progress has been made towards strengthening Institutional and technical frameworks to support the phase down and phase-out of mercury added products. Progress seems to have been made in developing the capacity for research and surveillance and to investigate, albeit on a limited basis, mercury contaminated sites. In addition, international and regional cooperation has been enhanced through South-South and North-South Cooperation by sharing knowledge. By successfully mobilizing support and gaining buy-in from key stakeholders such as governments and multilateral organizations, a key assumption made by the project at design held.

- iii) The project has made progress in increasing stakeholder and the general public's knowledge of the risks posed by using mercury-added products. Through knowledge and awareness, progress, albeit limited at this point, is being made towards the stated impact of protecting human health and the environment from emissions and the release of mercury and enable Argentina to transition to a mercury-free economy.
- iv) The evaluation also concludes that collaboration among partners was relatively efficient and effective in delivering training activities and, in general, the SIP project. Effective communication within the project team facilitated the sharing of knowledge and expertise between project partners. The knowledge and expertise were subsequently provided to participating institutions and at workshops and awareness raising campaign events.
- v) The project has contributed to strengthening institutional and technical capacity. Yet, those contributions do not eliminate the need for additional national actions, support and capacity building activities in Argentina. Indeed, in the foreseeable future, additional external inputs will be required before the country can effectively eliminate the mercury containing products and switch to mercury-free alternatives.
- vi) The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in the implementation of many activities. Activities related to training, workshops and seminars had to be conducted remotely and through the use of videos online instead of face-to-face events. Unexpectedly though, the switch to remote modalities allowed the project to reach a larger number of participants than if face-to-face events had been undertaken.
- vii) There is evidence that in-kind contributions have constituted an important part of the resources used to implement this project. No reporting had been done on how the in-kind resources have contributed to the implementation of the project. Following a request from this evaluation, however, a break down of how the in-kind contributions were expended was provided as indicated in Annex G. Through interviews for this evaluation, there is further indication that the government is ready to fund future training, research and awareness raising activities. Yet, the evaluation has not seen any evidence and, for that reason, is unable to ascertain the extent to which country ownership has been demonstrated through the allocation of national resources to support the mercury phase out processes.
- viii) Effective collaboration among government agencies, organizations, and universities who participated in this project was viewed as critical to successful implementation of the project. In particular, collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and the National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina (INTI) seemed to have been remarkably effective. Good communication and shared mission were considered the main contributing factors to effective collaboration. That, this evaluation argues, represents a model for future collaboration on other projects.
- ix) The evaluation has determined that efficiencies were either built into project design or have been realized through the use of proven models which allowed the project to roll-out activities to a wider stakeholder

group, mostly through remote workshops, online videos, and training programmes. The use of partnerships contributed to both effectiveness and efficiency. The role of partnerships in project implementation was discussed in some detail in Sections 5.4 and 5.5 of this report. The close involvement of the relevant Ministries and multilateral agencies increased efficiency as project implementation benefited from better institutional knowledge and memory, contacts, and experience.

- x) Gender considerations were factored into project design. For example, gender-disaggregated indicators and targets were included in the results framework of the project. A project report (Mercury and Gender Issues: Exposure to mercury, the importance of the sound management of mercury and mercury-containing products) concluded that there exist differential impacts on men, women and children on exposure to chemicals with particular reference to mercury in products. The report concluded that women are disproportionately affected. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and address such differences with the aim of protecting human health and welfare. This conclusion was based on the finding of a survey that it is still women who play the role of caregivers and use these products more frequently and, for that matter, are more susceptible to exposure to these dangerous substances. The output-level indicator for output 2.2 proposed at least 30% female technician participation in training activities. The final project report notes that more than half (57.5%) were female and 31% male. The rest were trans woman, trans man, and one was not sure.

3.0. Introduction

1. This report presents the findings of the terminal evaluation of a project “Capacity Building Programme for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention”. The project was initiated on August 1, 2019 for a period of 2 years. The project under review was funded under the Specific International Programme (SIP) to develop national capacity for the implementation of the Convention. The Specific International Programme (SIP) is part of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and aims to assist developing countries and those with economies in transition to develop projects to improve their capacity to implement their obligations under the Convention. This project was preceded by an earlier “Initial Assessment of National Capacity for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Argentina (MIA)”, a UNDP ARG/17G25 Project which identified challenges to the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Argentina and national priorities.
2. The overall objective of the project was “to strengthen the capacity of the country to implement article 4 and develop information generation mechanisms in order to fulfil the Minamata Convention”¹. The project budget included a total of USD 451,111 of which SIP funding amounted to USD 250,000 and the remaining USD 201,111 was proposed in-kind contribution from the Government of Argentina.
3. This project was executed by the former Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development), through the Basel Convention Regional Centre for the South American Region in Argentina (BCRC) based at National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina (INTI). The project sought to contribute to the fulfillment of the 2030 agenda on Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, to achieve sustainable human development, in particular, with regards to human health and welfare, gender equality, sustainable industries and environmental protection.
4. This Terminal Evaluation was conducted by one evaluation consultant between December 15 2022 and May 1, 2023. The timeline and schedule of the evaluation are provided in Annex A. The evaluation has two purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results that meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among the Convention Secretariat, UNEP, and project partners and other participating agencies. Therefore, the evaluation identified lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation especially for any follow-up interventions that may be anticipated.

¹ Minamata Convention on Mercury. Specific International Programme Trust Fund, Project Application Form 1B.

4.0 Evaluation Methods

5. Based on its Terms of Reference, this evaluation has been undertaken primarily as an in-depth desk study. The approach involved mostly qualitative methods to determine project achievements within the context of the outputs, outcomes and impacts expected. Both primary and secondary data were collected and analysed for the preparation of this evaluation. Secondary data were obtained mainly from the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention as well as relevant partners and other organizations. Primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews. Findings from the inception review further informed the methods used and enabled refinement of the evaluation framework by filling information gaps and helping to identify further data collection needs.
6. While discussions with the project team were informal and focused on information gaps, subsequent interviews during the data collection phase with project stakeholders were semi-structured, based on the evaluation matrix developed during the inception phase. Discussion conducted included the Convention Secretariat, project managers and key persons in the project management team, representatives from the Executive Committee, and selected representatives from beneficiary groups. As a detailed desk study, no travel was involved in conducting this evaluation.

4.1. Data collection and analysis methods

7. The Logical Framework Matrix and the ToC formed the basis for assessing the extent to which immediate and medium-term outcomes have been achieved. The assessment of effectiveness attempted to answer questions regarding whether, why and how the results have, or have not been achieved by implementing the various activities designed. The evaluation has assessed the extent to which outputs and outcomes have been achieved and the key factors, both positive and negative, that affected achievement of outcomes. This includes: internal issues of intervention design, capacity or resources required to execute certain tasks, as well as factors beyond the control of the project such as extreme events or political conditions.
8. A limited number of phone discussions were conducted with the Secretariat and project staff. Interviews conducted during the data collection phase with the project team were primarily semi-structured, based on the evaluation matrix presented in the inception report, and were conducted with project team members and other stakeholders. Interviewees included: Convention Secretariat staff, project focal points and Minamata Convention national focal points. Key staff from agencies in Table 2 below were interviewed.
9. Other sources of information for the evaluation were primarily interim project reports, project financial data including expenditure reports, reports to the project board, audit reports, end-of-project report, project cooperation agreement and the grant application, and the Minamata Convention web and related portals.

Table 2. Key agencies Consulted

Institution & Staff	Location
Minamata Convention Secretariat Team	Geneva
Argentina Project Manager, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	Buenos Aires
Representatives from project partners: INTI/BCRC	Buenos Aires

10. An inception conference call by zoom with the Convention Secretariat was conducted on January 24, 2023. The conference call provided the opportunity for the evaluator to gain a better understanding of the project and the current status of its implementation. It also allowed the evaluator to discuss the boundaries and limitations of the evaluation and the modalities for accessing project information.
11. In canvassing the views and perspectives of project beneficiaries, the evaluator was keenly aware of the poor response rate of online surveys to governments after project completion where project participants may have moved on to other assignments. Given the duration of this evaluation, the team opted for phone interviews of candidates who had participated in the project and whose phone contacts were readily available. Access to project participants has been difficult as a result of language difficulties and the lack of timely response from the project team.

4.2. Limitations to the evaluation

12. As stated, this evaluation was conducted as a desk study. The evaluator relied substantially on the project interim reports (August 2019 to December 2021), the project final report, progress reports, the grant application, and stakeholder interviews. The evaluator depended primarily on the end of project audit report for information on project expenditures. Interviews with project staff in-country were particularly difficult to arrange because key personnel could not be reached promptly as a result of ill-health.

4.3. Ethical considerations

- 13.** In reporting the findings of the interviews and discussions with project participants, care was taken to not attribute comments made by individuals to them by name in the document.

5.0. The Project

5.1. Context of the Project

14. The Minamata Convention, which entered into force on 16 August 2017, is an international agreement. The Convention was established to protect human health and the environment from emissions of mercury and mercury compounds from a variety of sources. Because mercury has human health and environmental

impacts, controlling its release from anthropogenic (man-made) sources throughout its lifecycle has been a key factor in establishing the Convention. Among the key features of the Convention is a ban on new mercury mines, the phase-out of existing ones, the phase-out and phase-down of mercury use in a number of products and processes, control measures on emissions to the environment, and the regulation of the informal sector of artisanal and small-scale gold mining. Interim storage of mercury and its disposal once it becomes waste, sites contaminated by mercury as well as health issues are also addressed by the convention.

15. Argentina ratified the Minamata Convention in September 2017. It entered into force in December of the same year. By February of 2018, Argentina had already initiated the Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA). As stated in Article 4 of the Convention “Each Party shall not allow, by undertaking to take appropriate measures, the manufacture, import or export of mercury-added products listed in Part I of Annex A after the phase-out date specified for those products, except where an exclusion is specified in Annex A or the Party has a registered exemption pursuant to Article 6.” To assist parties to fulfil their obligations under the convention, a financial mechanism was set up by Article 13 of the Convention.² The Specific International Programme (SIP) was designed to support capacity-building and technical assistance to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. The SIP is one of the components of the financial mechanism under the Convention, the second being the Global Environment Facility. The project under review was funded by the SIP.
16. Findings of the MIA concluded that domestic production of mercury added products is limited to one company which produces different types of thermometers that contain mercury. Yet, various types of mercury added products are imported and consumed in the country. These include: batteries, switches and relays, lamps, nanometers, hygrometers, and barometers. As an example, in 2017 2.6 million high pressure mercury vapour lamps and 7.7 million button cell batteries were imported into the country³.

5.2. Results Framework

17. The specific objective of the project was to strengthen the capacity of the country to implement article 4 and develop information generation mechanisms in order to fulfil the requirements of the Minamata Convention. The project, as described in the Logical Framework Matrix, had one outcome which was to switch to the use of alternatives to the products listed in Annex A Part 1 of the Minamata Convention. The project intended to achieve the stated outcome by producing 6 key outputs including feasibility studies, development of a legal framework, training workshops, strengthened technical capacity of relevant government institutions, academia and research centres, and technical capacities of relevant laboratories strengthened. Table 3 below presents a summary of project outcomes, outputs and activities. The table describing the full Results Framework including indicators, targets, and means of verification is attached as Annex B.

² Minamata Convention on Mercury: Texts and Annexes, September 2019, www.mercuryconvention.org

³ Minamata Convention on Mercury Specific International Programme Trust Fund, Project Application Form 1B

Table 3: Summary of Project Outcomes, outputs and activities

Outcomes	Outputs	Activities
Project Objective: Strengthen the capacity of the country to implement Article 4 of the convention and develop information generation mechanism in order to fulfil Minamata Convention		
1.The project outcome is to switch to the use of alternatives to the products listed in Annex A. Part 1 of the Minamata Convention	National Strategy agreed at National Level	
	1.1. Feasibility Studies	1.1.1. Analysis of feasibility for substitute products, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • barriers identification and • socio-economic impact of prohibitions.
	1.2. Legal framework	1.2.1. Design of legal framework including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • administrative regulations • incentives • enforcement schemes
	1.3. Training activities implemented	1.3.1. Awareness campaigns for local governments and other stakeholders
	2.1. Strengthened Technical Capacity of relevant government institutions, academia and research centres.	2.1.1. Strengthening technical capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government entities, laboratories, Academia and research centres.
	2.2 Technical Capacity of relevant labs strengthened.	2.2.1. Equip a local unit to support sampling, processing and other mercury surveillance activities together with the establishment of mercury laboratory network.

Source: Adapted from Specific International Programme, UNEP/PCA/Minamata/1st SIP/2019

a) 5.2.1 Theory of Change

18. The Theory of Change (ToC) used for this evaluation was developed by the project team and presented as Annex A to the project cooperation agreement. Based on the ToC construct, the evaluation assessed (see section 6.4 b, c) the likelihood that the project contributed to the desired impact, by combining evidence about project effectiveness (i.e., contribution to direct outcomes), progress on the project objective (i.e., the intermediate state towards impact), validity of assumptions, and presence of drivers. The latter also provided the basis for assessing the likelihood of sustainability and up-scaling of project achievements. In recognition of the fact that it is often impossible to measure and attribute impact (in terms of scale and long-term benefits) as a consequence of the mostly normative nature of the interventions, the assessment of project performance was framed primarily at the outcome level.

19. The Theory of Change (Annex C) of the project document shows how the project is centred on strengthening institutional and technical capacities for gradually reducing and phasing out mercury in products in order to

protect human health and the environment. The project's strategy included four (4) causal pathways that converged to strengthen the capacities in Argentina to plan for reducing and ultimately switching to alternatives to mercury in products. They include: (i) a legal framework, (ii) technical capacity-building, (iii) awareness raising and (iv) knowledge development. These dimensions were implemented through identification of barriers and the analysis of the feasibility of substitute products, awareness campaigns, creating a network of laboratories and research centres, developing new regulations, facilitating their enforcement, and equipping local units to support mercury surveillance activities.

20. This evaluation is of the opinion that the Theory of Change's depiction of the intervention logic provides a closer and more coherent and logical representation of the project and should have formed the basis for the preparation of the logical framework. However, while the ToC for the Argentina project seems to have presented correctly, the causal relationships between the various results levels, it failed to identify the key drivers and assumptions likely to facilitate movement along the causal chain from activities towards project impact.

5.4. Project Implementation Structure

21. The SIP project was implemented by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South America (Argentina). A project Unit within the Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development executed the project.
22. An Executive Committee made up of representatives from the Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products, Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South America (Argentina), and the Directorate of Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, was established as the strategic decision-making body of the project with the responsibility of reviewing work plans, supervising project progress, project financial and technical resources, and arbitrating controversies.
23. The day-to-day management of the project was the responsibility of the Project Coordinator. She was responsible for designing and implementing project activities, delivering project results based on the measurable indicators in the project document, engaging the relevant stakeholders, preparing the required reports for project monitoring, and managing the project team.
24. Local support for the project also included the National Project Director, a Financial Coordinator and consultants. The decision-making system for the project is presented below in Figure 1.0.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

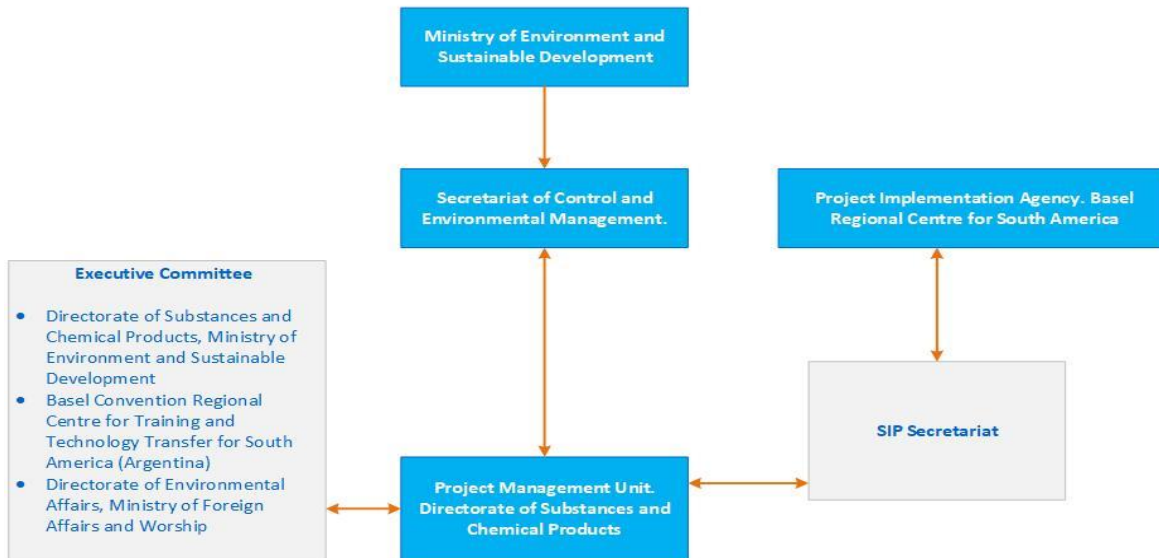


Figure 1. Decision-making and organizational chart (Source: Adapted from the Project Application)

5.5 Stakeholder Engagement

25. Stakeholders broadly defined are all those who are affected by, or who could affect (positively or negatively), the project’s results. Key stakeholders in the project are mainly the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South America (Argentina) and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as Implementing and Executing Agencies respectively. Among other organizations participating in the project as responsible parties and collaborative partners are: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, the Ministry of Health, Federal Council for the Environment, Argentine Society of Environmental Professionals and Consultants, and the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA).

26. While not considered a direct outcome of the SIP project process, existing stakeholder engagement processes created by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development were useful for discussing issues related to hazardous substance and chemical products including mercury. Among some of these processes are the Inter-ministerial Group on Environmental Management of Chemical Substances, Civil Society Working Group on Environmental Management of Chemical Substances, and the Academic Working Group on Environment and Chemical Substances. The Academic Working Group is made up of 25 institutions including the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research, the National Institute for Standardization and a variety of public and private universities.

5.6 Adaptive Management

27. The only specific modifications made to project design prior to implementation was a letter from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development in September 2018 indicating an in-kind contribution to project funds in the amount of USD 201,111. During project implementation a key amendment involving a no-cost extension to the Cooperation Agreement for Project ID 2018/01/LARC/ARG was signed in July 2021 between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina (INTI). The purpose was to extend the duration of the agreement, reschedule disbursements and allocate resources for the terminal evaluation of the project at project completion. The total cost to the SIP however remained unchanged. As a result of the disruptions caused by COVID-19, many activities related to training, workshops and seminars had to be conducted remotely and through the use of videos online. Fortuitously though, the switch to remote modalities allowed the project to reach a larger number of participants than if face-to-face events had been undertaken.

5.7 Gender

28. The issue of gender was addressed quite comprehensively in the project application. Section 5.6 of the project application discussed in some detail gender considerations in project design. Activity 1.3 in the logframe related to awareness raising, for example, specifically reflects gender disaggregation. The output-level indicator for output 2.2 proposed at least 30% female technician participation in training activities. This was the only gender-disaggregated indicator found in the PRF. While the indicator was not SMART, it was sufficient for output level reporting.

29. A project report (Mercury and Gender Issues: Exposure to mercury, the importance of the sound management of mercury and mercury-containing products) concluded that there exist differential impacts on men, women and children of exposure to chemicals with particular reference to mercury in products. The report noted that women are disproportionately affected. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and address such differences with the aim of protecting human health and welfare. This conclusion was based on the finding of a survey that, it is still women who play the role of caregivers and use these products more frequently and, for that matter, are more susceptible to exposure to these dangerous substances. The final project report notes that more than half (57.5%) of survey respondents were female and 31% male. The rest have preferred to answer trans woman, trans man, and one was not sure.

6.0 Evaluation Findings

6.1 Strategic Relevance/Coherence

30. The project explicitly addressed Article 4 of the Convention which states: "Each Party shall not allow, by taking appropriate measures, the manufacture, import or export of mercury-added products listed in Part I of Annex

A after the phase-out date specified for those products, except where an exclusion is specified in Annex A or the Party has a registered exemption pursuant to Article 6.”⁴ In line with article 19 paragraphs 1g and 1f of the Convention, the project financed activities to develop information on trade in mercury added products and undertook socio-economic studies in order to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of alternatives to products targeted by article 4 of the Convention. In accordance with article 18 of the Convention awareness campaigns for local governments were developed and implemented. The project further developed a set of norms and regulations to enforce the requirements of the treaty. In responding to articles 12 and 19 of the treaty, the project developed activities to strengthen laboratory networks and their capacities for mercury surveillance.

31. The project is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.9 which requires a substantial reduction in deaths associated with hazardous chemicals including air, soil, and water pollution. It is also consistent with SDG 9.4 which calls for an upgrade and retrofit of industries and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes among other relevant SDGs. The project is also in line with national priorities, specifically priority No. 59 on the Protection of the Environment.

6.2 Quality of Project Design

32. An assessment of the initial design of the project was undertaken as part of the inception phase. It helped to refine the questions and issues defined in the evaluation matrix for the project by identifying causal links, assumptions and drivers. The primary information sources for project design quality assessment included the Cooperation Agreement, the project application, interim reports, and other documentation which reflected amendments to the project.

33. The project application presented a clear description of the existing situation with respect to the problem of mercury in Argentina. Opportunities and constraints to project implementation were identified and documented in the project application. In general, barriers identified include: the lack of institutional capacity and gaps in legislation and administrative regulations. Stakeholders were identified at both the national and international levels and their roles in relation to the project and potential contributions to the project described. Baselines, outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets and assumptions defined in the Project Results Framework (PRF) provided a good means by which the monitoring of project implementation would be undertaken. However, outputs and activities were mixed up in what was termed as MEASURES making it difficult to identify clearly the intervention logic in the Results Framework. Indicators, targets and assumptions were defined, providing a means by which the monitoring of project implementation could be undertaken.

34. Risks and Assumptions were clearly defined. Assumptions were often stated as mitigation measures for the Risks. While no Theory of Change was required, Argentina presented a clear Theory of Change as Annex A to the legal agreement.

⁴ Minamata Convention on Mercury: Texts and Annexes, page 19

35. The logframe matrix design combined outputs and activities and therefore, outputs for the most part, were stated as activities. The consequence is that some indicators were not SMART⁵. For example, project activity/output 2.1 “Strengthening technical capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government entities, laboratories, Academia and research centres” has for its indicator “Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development strengthened in sound mercury management” with a target of 1. The question is what constitutes a strengthened Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development? How will it be measured? Such an indicator is not enough to monitor and track progress in a meaningful way towards intermediate states and onwards towards outcomes and impact. As stated earlier in the discussion of the Theory of Change for the project under section 5.2.1, the ToC seems to better reflect the intervention logic and, therefore, a more adequate bases for constructing the Results Framework and the Logical Framework Matrix.
36. Several sections of the project application clearly described project outputs, desired outcomes, and key assumptions; however, no descriptive analysis of the ToC itself was presented. This would have included the nature and scope of the changes to which the project is expected to contribute; cause-effect relationships between outputs delivered by the project and expected higher-level changes (also called results chains or causal pathways); external factors and conditions that would allow the project to achieve the expected higher-level changes, external conditions over which the project has no influence or control.

6.3 Efficiency

37. Efficiency is a performance measure regarding the timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the implementation of planned activities and the delivery of outputs and outcomes. These could include positive contributions to performance such as: cost and time saving measures; use of existing systems to support project design/activity; and fullest use of human and financial inputs as well as negative contributions to performance such as administrative delays and management delays.
38. With regards to this project, efficiencies were either built into project design or have been realized through the use of proven models which allowed the project to roll-out activities to wider stakeholder groups, mostly through workshops and training programmes. The project organized several training courses, meetings and awareness raising activities using remote methods which resulted in substantial savings. Indeed, the bulk of the capacity building activities and networking with the project partners was conducted remotely (see section 6.4 of this report).
39. Partnerships contributed to both effectiveness and efficiency. The role of partnerships in project implementation was discussed in some detail in Sections 5.4 and 5.5 of this report. The close involvement of the relevant Ministries and multilateral agencies increased efficiency as project implementation benefited from better institutional knowledge and memory, contacts, and experience. For example, BCRC, a Basel

⁵ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Bound

Convention Centre on hazardous substances and hazardous waste was used as the Executing Agency for the project. Interested universities and laboratories that had previously worked with mercury formed the nucleus of laboratories that would work synergistically to address the problem of mercury in products and the environment. Working with an intergovernmental body such as the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres (BCRC) in organizing workshops assisted in increasing visibility of the problem of mercury and strengthened international cooperation exchanges with Uruguay. In particular, the collaboration addressed issues related mercury monitoring, harmonized system codes, dental amalgams and non-mercury-thermometers. BCRC also served as a member of the Executive Committee of the project and effectively participated in the supervision of project progress, including approving the project workplan, ensuring financial and technical resources were judiciously used and monitoring project progress. This evaluation notes that the BCRC and the Project Coordinator worked collaboratively and efficiently in delivering project results. Collaboration with scientists from the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) and the 3IA Institute of the National University of San Martín (UNSAM), resulted in a comprehensive seminar on mercury designed by an interdisciplinary team.

6.4 Effectiveness

a) Delivery of Outputs

40. The evaluation of the achievement of results at the output level is based on the Results Framework and the ToC developed for this project. The evaluation found that all activities and outputs were necessary and appropriate and, taken together, formed series of logical, sequential steps which will potentially lead to the achievement of the project outcomes.
41. At the end of project implementation, the evaluation finds that the key indicators of project performance at the output level have mostly been fulfilled. This section provides a detailed account of the outputs delivered. According to the Results framework, as depicted by the Theory of Change, the project consists of two (2) outcomes with 5 key outputs.

Project Outcome 1: To switch to the use of alternatives to the products listed in Annex A. Part 1 of the Minamata Convention

Output 1.1: Analysis of the feasibility of replacing mercury-added products, including the identification of barriers and the socio-economic impact of bans.

42. Based on the project reports the project conducted research on trade in mercury-added products, and produced technical and socioeconomic studies with the objective of evaluating the viability of substitute products. Also, the studies identified barriers and socioeconomic impacts prohibitions and restrictions would have at the national level. For the analysis, the study focused on:

- (i) lamps and batteries;

- (ii) Switches and relays;
- (iii) Non-electronic measuring instruments within the health sector;
- (iv) Dental amalgams.

43. The study was carried out by a group of researchers from various research centres that belonged to the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET). Baseline information was provided by the SIP project to facilitate the work of the team of researchers. The research was undertaken within the framework of an Assistance Agreement developed by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South America (Argentina). Prior to its implementation, the agreement was evaluated by staff of the SIP Project. Following the preparation of the report, the SIP project undertook further research which allowed the report to be further developed to gain a better understanding of the feasibility of the replacement of the MAP categories stated above and potential impacts.
44. While prices are higher for mercury-free products, for all MAP products covered by nationwide bans, substitutes exist (See Annex F). However, in exception of a few cases, the technologies are not available in the country, meaning the products have to be imported. This will require the development of public policies that will facilitate the importation of mercury-free technologies with an option of instituting procedures for the production of these mercury-free items in the country. Resolutions 75/19 and 299/21 provide the regulatory framework as the stimulus for the development of such industries.
45. Unlike other MAP products, Dental Amalgams are currently not banned, although it is a measure currently under discussion at the international level within the framework of the Convention, which requires parties to implement measures listed in Annex A Part II of the Convention to phase down the use of dental amalgam. One such measure is to restrict the use of dental amalgams exclusively in the form of pre-dosed capsules with the aim of eliminating pure free mercury from the dental market.
46. The report further notes that while most of the MAPs are covered by regulations and their production and import prohibited, they can still be found on the market as a result of the residual stock that continues to exist because they had been procured prior to the coming into force of the legal regime that prohibits their use in the country. The quantity of these products still in circulation is not known. It is expected, however, that these products will be exhausted in the coming years. The challenge, lies in the proper management of these products at the end of their life cycle. These challenges relate to the treatment and disposal systems for the disused products.

Output 1.2: A Legal framework that includes administrative regulations, incentives and enforcement systems.

47. According to the final project report, several laws and regulations were developed in order to implement Article 4 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. They include: Decree 504/19; Resolution 71/19; Resolution 75/19; Resolution 335/2019; Resolution 443/2020 and Resolution 299/2021. Taken together these resolutions and the Decree constitute the legal framework for managing the problem of mercury in products and the environment in Argentina.

The Legal Framework

48. Decree 504/19 which designated the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as the agency responsible for international environmental agreements (including the Basel, Rotterdam, and Minamata Conventions) ratified by the Republic of Argentina was promulgated in 2019. The SIP Project collaborated in the drafting of this decree.

49. Resolution 71/2019, published in the Official Gazette on February 12, 2019, was developed to regulate international trade (imports and exports) in mercury. This Resolution has since been repealed by Resolution 299/2021. As of January 1, 2020, another resolution (Resolution 75/2019) was passed to prohibit the manufacture, import and export of the products listed in Part I of Annex A of the Minamata Convention. This Resolution was published in the Official Gazette on February 19, 2019. Again, this Resolution has since been amended by Resolution 299/2021 which is essentially a proposal intended to establish guidelines for the management of elemental mercury, its mixtures and compounds, as well as mercury-added products, within the framework of Law No. 27,356. According to the project report, regulation 299/2021 is one of the most significant regulations designed to implement the Minamata Convention. This Resolution, prepared by the Ministry of Environment, was designed to unify current regulations related to the Minamata Convention. First, it repealed Resolution No. 71/19 by establishing Prior Informed Consent procedures for the import and export of elemental mercury. This implements Article 3 of the Convention. The mercury products excluded from the prohibition in Annex A Part I of the Convention, as well as its restrictions, were addressed in the regulations. Guidelines and requirements to obtain an exemption included the development of plans for the reconversion or closure of the company consistent with Annex B rules. Second, Resolution No. 75/19 was amended and Annex I was replaced to include all mercury-added products listed in Annex A, Part I, of the Minamata Convention. Third, the use of mercury, its mixtures and compounds in the production processes associated with Annex B of the Convention, including all processes of Part I and II of the Convention, was prohibited. Also, article 5, paragraph 6, prohibits the establishment of new industries which use mercury technologies in their production processes. For the implementation of this regulation, two administrative procedures were developed for the issuance of import and export authorizations for Mercury Added Products (MAPs) and elemental mercury, their mixtures and compounds.

50. Resolution 443/2020 stipulates the guidelines for the importation of primary batteries and appliances or articles containing them within the framework of Law No. 26,184 on Portable Electric Energy. The Resolution covers batteries and primary materials. Secondary batteries are regulated by Resolution 299/2021. To implement these Resolutions, administrative procedures were developed and placed on the Remote Procedures website.

Output 1.3: Awareness campaigns with local governments and other stakeholders

51. The project reported results of activities designed to comply with Article 18 of the Convention. This article promotes and facilitates the provision of public information, awareness raising, and training on the health and

environmental effects of mercury and mercury compounds as well as alternatives to mercury and its compounds. The article also encourages the dissemination of monitoring activities and research results. The project has carried out (i) awareness-raising and training for specific target groups and (ii) awareness campaigns for the general public. In order to achieve this, the project first prepared a stakeholder map and conducted training activities for different stakeholder groups among which were labour organizations, NGOs, government agencies, Municipalities and Provinces.

Training for different groups of stakeholders

52. The development and implementation of this activity in 2020 and 2021 coincided with and was affected by the pandemic caused by COVID 19. The anticipated face-to-face events were changed to remote training activities. Fortuitously, this change allowed the project to reach more people around the country. The project's ability to use virtual modalities meant more activities were carried out that included: advisory meetings or exchange of experiences, training events, surveys and requests for information.
53. In order to reach the general public more effectively, the SIP project focused on local governments. Activities undertaken with the different Municipalities and Provinces involved dialogue and exchange that resulted in identifying and understanding the challenges that arise in dealing with mercury and mercury related products. Training activities implemented included: workshops in Rio Negro and Tierra del Fuego in 2019 on the management of hazardous substances which incorporated mercury and the Minamata Convention; and a webinar, carried out by the Ministry of Health in 2020 on the use of mercury in the health sector. Forty (40) people participated in the webinars and at the time of drafting the final project report it had had 106 views on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUrIfOKINUI&feature=youtu.be>
54. The webinars and training programs raised awareness of the environmental impact of mercury use, as well as the associated health risk. They also publicized the Minamata Convention and disseminated its primary objectives and promoted sustainable purchasing of mercury-free products in health facilities in the country. The webinar was shared with the Argentine Society of Environmental Professionals and Consultants (Sociedad Argentina de Profesionales, Consultores y Expertos Ambientales - SAPROCEA), with the aim of reaching various municipalities. Besides workshops and webinars, the SIP project, in collaboration with scientists from the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) and the 3IA Institute of the National University of San Martín (UNSAM), conducted a comprehensive mercury seminar which was designed by an interdisciplinary team. Details on this seminar and the results are discussed below under output 2.1.

Technical assistance

55. Several agencies including the GEF and the SIP project participated in a meeting organized by the National Directorate of Hazardous Substances and Waste (DNSYRP). The aim of the meeting was to advise the municipality of General Pico, Province of La Pampa on the management of disused luminaires containing mercury. In attendance were representatives of the Environmental Management Directorate and the Infrastructure Directorate. Also in attendance were representatives of the different units that make up the

hazardous substances and waste programme. They include: Coordination of Hazardous Waste, the Transboundary Movements Unit and the Substances and Chemicals Unit.

56. The objective of a meeting held between the SIP project and representatives of the environmental management unit of the City of Córdoba was to advise the municipality on the management of disused luminaires containing mercury.
57. On March 22, 2021, a virtual meeting was organized by the then National Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products (DNSYPQ) of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS). Among the participants were representatives of the SIP Project and the Provincial Directorate for Special Waste of the Buenos Aires Provincial Agency for Sustainable Development (OPDS). The objective of the meeting was to develop strategies for the management and final disposal of stocks of PCBs and Mercury waste held by different state agencies. Indeed, over the duration of the project, staff of the SIP project kept in contact with technical staff of the Provincial Directorate of Special Waste (OPDS) in order to exchange best practices available for the management of mercury waste.
58. The SIP project also participated in a meeting convened on April 16, 2021 by the Federal Council for the Environment (COFEMA) in order to provide advice and opinions on issues related to waste generated by products with added mercury that are obsolete, and need to be addressed from an environmental management standpoint. COFEMA is an agency that contributes to environmental policy integration between the provinces and the federal government.
59. The SIP project was involved in the development of guidelines for municipalities. The guide which was intended to assist municipalities in the design and implementation of Comprehensive Management Plans for disused public lighting luminaires that could contain mercury was promoted by the then Directorate of Waste and the Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.
60. Among other meetings the SIP project participated in was the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Chemicals. The working group comprised of representatives of different state agencies with competencies in the field of chemical substances defined under Decree 504/2019. This meeting is held every 21 days. The SIP Project organized and attended the meetings where it discussed regulatory proposals developed from the project regarding products containing mercury. The project also participated in other events such as Latin American Symposium on Safe Design of Cosmetic and Household Hygiene Products (CASIC) November 12, 13 and 14, 2019. The Project, further participated in the conference on chemical products for MERCOSUR⁶. The Conference deliberated on the state of the art and the challenges for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System for the classification and labelling of chemical products in each country and perspectives for the regional bloc were developed.

⁶ Mercosur is made up of **four** member countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

61. The SIP Project co-organized, in 2020, a webinar with the Institute of Biotechnology of the National University of Hurlingham (UNAHUR) on Chemicals and International Conventions. The event which discussed challenges at the national level was attended by advisors and staff of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and authorities of the National University. Another Webinar entitled "Multilateral Environmental Agreements on Hazardous Substances and Waste: Opportunities for Linkage with the Academic Scientific Field" was held in 2020. The target audience was the scientific-academic community and the general public. The event was broadcast on YouTube and Zoom and carried out jointly by SETAC Argentina and the National Directorate of Substances and Chemical Products (DNSyPQ).

62. In collaboration with the agency that coordinates hazardous waste programmes, the SIP project carried out a training programme for teachers and students of the Faculty of Law of the University of Buenos Aires. Participants in the training programme were professionals who practice in the Legal Clinic of the Environment and Natural Resources Foundation (FARN), a recognized NGO that carries out free legal advice to people and communities affected by environmental problems. The training focused primarily on the management of hazardous waste and, in particular, on issues, the laws and regulations related to products with added mercury. The programme was attended by 20 individuals.

Public Awareness Campaigns

63. Awareness campaigns were developed for the general public and these campaigns involved the dissemination of information material on the Minamata Convention, mercury management and public health risks of Mercury Added Products. The information materials produced were published within the different social networks (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Telegram and WhatsApp)⁷ and the website of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. They include short videos on "What is mercury?" and "Do you know what Minamata disease is?". The SIP Project collaborated with UNDP Argentina to assemble the video "Environmental impact: Heavy Metals" in order to raise awareness about heavy metals, where they are found and their impact on the environment and health. The final report of the project noted that the videos have been viewed widely.

Table 6: Number of views by medium

Medium	Number of Views
Instagram	2684
You Tube Minamata Disease	1605
You Tube What is Mercury	1369
Twitter:	2977
WhatsApp	NA

⁷ All informative videos are available at:

- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CFmseOdDjVY/> ; https://www.instagram.com/p/CFmjkP9Df_a/
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AmbienteNacion/status/1309877116515872769>
- <https://twitter.com/AmbienteNacion/status/1309857013892087810>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AmbienteNacion/videos/377853459900018/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/AmbienteNacion/videos/3478644585529675>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RciKpMW5828>

Telegram	NA
Interactive Stories	NA
YouTube: Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	780

Source: Final Project Report

64. The project generated and facilitated opportunities for South-South cooperation. In order to strengthen national capacities and promote the exchange of experiences at the regional level, The SIP project sought to strengthen national capacities through exchange of experiences by convening series of meetings with the Republic of Uruguay. The cycle of meetings which were held with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Basel Regional Centre for South America (CRBAS) were planned via videoconference to share experiences, visions and coordinate actions of both countries on different issues of mercury management.

Gender and Mercury

65. A report (Mercury and Gender Issues: Exposure to mercury, the importance of the sound management of mercury and mercury-containing products) prepared by the SIP project to understand the differential impacts on men, women and children of exposure to chemicals with particular reference to mercury in products concluded that women are disproportionately affected. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and address such differences with the aim of protecting human health and welfare. This conclusion followed the results of the "Gender and Mercury" survey, which determined that it is still women who play the role of caregivers and use these products more frequently and, for that matter, are more susceptible to exposure to these dangerous substances.

Outcome 2: Enhanced capacities for research and mercury surveillance, in accordance with article 12 and 19 of the Minamata Convention

Output 2.1. Strengthening the technical capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government agencies, laboratories, academies and research centers.

66. The Initial Assessment of National Capacities for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Argentina (MIA)" conducted under UNDP project ARG/17G25 determined that the country does not have a nationwide network of laboratories focused exclusively on the management of mercury. For that reason, a key activity implemented by the project was to create a network of laboratories that work together in a synergistic way to respond to the problem of mercury in products and the environment.

67. Interested universities and laboratories that had previously worked with mercury formed the nucleus of laboratories for the network. Institutions such as the 3IA Institute of the University of San Martín, the National

Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) and the National University of Avellaneda convened, and after several meetings, formed the basis of the network. The SIP project participated in the meetings. A working group was created to develop a national training plan for the Minamata Convention in Argentina and proposed recommendations for the laboratory equipment and calibration activities. An "Integral Mercury Seminar" was designed through this process by an interdisciplinary team, coordinated by the SIP Project in collaboration with scientists from the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) and the 3IA Institute of the National University of San Martín (UNSAM).

Output 2.2. Equip a local unit to support sampling, processing and other mercury surveillance activities together with the establishment of a mercury laboratory network.

68. With the aim of creating the required capacity to generate data on mercury emissions and releases, exposure and contaminated sites under Articles 12 and 19, the SIP project set out to equip a local unit to support mercury sampling, processing and other control activities and, in this way, improve the analytical capacity of at least one laboratory. The SIP project designed two laboratories with analytical capability for mercury in public universities to be equipped for the management and conservation of samples, mercury analysis, and with field equipment capable of assessing potentially contaminated sites.
69. Despite the disruptions created by the Covid-19 pandemic and the rather long and cumbersome procurement processes, the project was able to deliver the required equipment for laboratories. However, the required calibration and other activities could only be done virtually. Interviews with the project team during this evaluation revealed that following project closure, calibration activities which could not be undertaken during the project period have since been undertaken and continue.

b) Achievement of Direct Outcomes

Direct Outcome 1. Improved Capacity to implement obligations under Article 4 of the Minamata Convention.

70. As noted in the discussions above the SIP Project encountered a number of challenges mostly related to complications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic provided opportunities that were explored to good effect by the project. The project had to resort to virtual meetings and training events making it possible for free quality environmental education, with a focus on mercury, to be delivered to a large number of participants. As a result, the training events carried out by the SIP project reached approximately 15,000 participants⁸ on social networks only over a period of one year. A key outcome of the effort to strengthen national capacity was the elaboration of a National Strategy to implement the Minamata Convention, in particular, the obligations established in its Article 4.

⁸ Final Report, Capacity-building Programme for the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Argentina SIP Project 2018/01/LAC/ARG

71. The project's contributions to strengthening national capacity has been confirmed by the country representatives interviewed for this terminal evaluation. However, as expressed in the final project report and interviews for this evaluation, those contributions do not eliminate the need for additional national actions, support and capacity building activities. Indeed, the report notes "Dissemination activities should continue to be developed with respect to the use of these products with added mercury and their relationship with the risks of exposure of this metal, measures for their correct management and actions in case of accidents, for example the [short] of how to act before the rupture of a thermometer and lamps, being the products with mercury that still persists in the domestic market and in homes". Progress been made towards the strengthening of institutional and technical capacities as a result of the delivery of the project activities, the evidence from the evaluation interviews suggests that project participants have mostly found support activities useful and are indeed using some of the knowledge and tools gained from the capacity building activities. In particular, the laws and regulations developed have been in use since their promulgation. The results of the training activities are being used to develop new training modules and relaunch the "comprehensive mercury seminar" developed pursuant to the National Training Plan. Regarding gender issues the GEF UNDP ARG 20/G27 (2020-2026) project is organizing activities based on project reports including videos for the general public in the following links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-uBL10tOmE>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZlVUj8gtr8>. The administrative procedures for the control of import and export of mercury and MAP products excluded from the prohibition are in force. This procedure is coordinated with customs control⁹.

72. In order to achieve outcomes, the results of the implementation of the project activities must move beyond the support received through this project to tangible evidence of institutions and the provincial and local governments using the capacities developed. The information available to this evaluation indicates that the results of the project are being used. Whether it is sufficient to support a conclusion that such tangible actions are occurring in a critical mass of participants trained in the various seminars, workshops and awareness raising campaigns is beyond the information available at the moment.

Outcome 2. Enhanced capacity for research and mercury surveillance in accordance with Articles 12 and 19 of the Minamata Convention

73. Articles 12 and 19 of the Convention call upon Parties to endeavour to develop strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury or mercury compounds, and endeavour to cooperate on research, development and monitoring. The project endeavoured to strengthen the technical capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government agencies, laboratories, academic and research centres. As stated above, this was based on an assessment of national capacities to implement the Minamata Convention which determined that the country does not possess a nationwide network of laboratory resources that could work synergistically to respond to the problem.

⁹ Interviews with Project Team 15/03/2023

74. In response, the project developed a network of interested universities and laboratories that had previously worked with mercury to form the nucleus of laboratories that could address the problem of mercury in products and the environment.
75. A working group of the network developed a national training plan for the Minamata Convention in Argentina. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency, purchases for a laboratory equipment, calibration, and activities between laboratories were delayed and activities in the laboratories were only carried out virtually. The post-project interviews conducted for this evaluation have revealed that laboratory equipment have been installed in the universities and calibration activities are ongoing. Meetings are being held to discuss a pilot project for developing monitoring regimes of mercury.
76. Interviews conducted for this evaluation have also revealed that there was efficient and effective collaboration among partners delivering training activities. Based on the project reports and interviews conducted for this evaluation, the evaluation concludes that collaboration among partners was relatively efficient and effective in delivering training activities. Effective communication within the project team facilitated the sharing of knowledge and expertise between project partners¹⁰. The knowledge and expertise were subsequently provided to participating institutions and at workshops and awareness raising campaign events.

c) Likelihood of impact

77. At the end of project implementation, the evaluation finds that the key indicators of project performance at the output level have mostly been fulfilled. In spite of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has successfully developed a national strategy for the management of mercury and mercury added products. There was effective participation in the national training activities albeit, mostly through remote modalities.
78. The evidence shows that the project was able to mobilize government agencies, multilateral agencies and NGOs to support the process of developing capacity among government agencies, universities and other related departments to manage the problem of mercury in products and in the environment. For example, the SIP Project collaborated on the drafting of Decree 504/19 which designated the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development as the agency responsible for international environmental agreements (the Basel, Rotterdam, and Minamata Conventions) ratified by the Republic of Argentina. This Decree was promulgated in 2019. The project report confirms that regulation 299/21 which was prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development pursuant to the promulgation of Decree 504/19 is one of the most significant regulations designed to implement the Minamata Convention and was designed to unify current regulations related to the Convention. Several other regulations that facilitate the implementation of the requirements of the Minamata convention among which, is a regulation that provides the guidelines for the importation of primary batteries and appliances or articles containing them within the framework of Law

¹⁰ Interview with Regional Centre for Training and technology Transfer for South America (Argentina), February 28, 2023

No. 26,184 on Portable Electric Energy, together, constitute the regulatory framework that undergirds effective implementation of the convention. With a strong regulatory and institutional framework in place the project has indeed created the enabling environment for the effective management of mercury and mercury added products in Argentina.

79. Beside a strong regulatory framework, the project has created awareness among various institutions and the public through the dissemination of information material on the Minamata Convention, public health risks of mercury added products, and mercury management. Technical advisory support was also provided to selected municipalities e.g., municipality of General Pico, Province of La Pampa on the management of disused luminaires containing mercury. Guidelines were developed to assist municipalities in the design and implementation of Comprehensive Management Plans for disused public lighting luminaires that could contain mercury.
80. In order to enhance national capacity for research and mercury surveillance in accordance with Articles 12 and 19 of the Convention, the project developed a network of interested universities and laboratories that had previously worked with mercury to form the nucleus of laboratories that could address the problem of mercury in products and the environment. Taken together, the implementation of these activities assisted in improving national capacity to implement obligations under Article 4 of the Minamata Convention.
81. The two direct outcomes discussed above must combine under the assumption that the government of Argentina will continue to support the Minamata process including implementation of the legislation, training initiatives, as well as research and mercury surveillance activities with internal resources and/or are able to gain access to external resources to support implementation of the convention processes. The key driver is that the government of Argentina is committed to sustaining the technical and institutional capacity developed and will engage around the issue of mercury phase-out. While the project has been confirmed in the end-of-project report and in interviews during this terminal evaluation as having effectively supported and facilitated access to resources from the SIP for capacity building activities, this evaluation has not been able to determine to what extent the national government will continue to support the Minamata process including training, awareness raising and mercury research and surveillance activities with internal resources. However, project staff have indicated that the government continues to support activities that are still in progress.

d) Sustainability of Project Outcomes

82. Sustainability is understood to mean the extent to which outcomes and impacts derived from project implementation are likely to continue after external funding and assistance ends. Factors and conditions affecting sustainability have been considered in three areas: (i) socio-political factors, (ii) financial conditions, and (iii) institutional conditions.
83. The SIP project presented explicit strategies to sustain project outcomes in the project document through institutional strengthening, training, awareness raising, research, monitoring and surveillance. Indeed, the

capacity building effort has in-built sustainability elements. The project was designed with an explicit end-date and responsibilities for executing various activities given to specific institutions.

Socio-political sustainability

84. The creation of awareness, knowledge, skills, research capacity and surveillance, and a legal framework necessary for Argentina to meet its obligations under the convention beyond the duration of the project are the principal means by which the project attempted to ensure sustainability. The evidence of government commitment is the readiness of the various government institutions and universities to participate in the various aspects of the project and shows its willingness to transition to a mercury-free economy. By creating partnerships with high level support and the participation of appropriate government agencies, the project has ensured that implementation and monitoring of activities can continue into the future.

Financial sustainability

85. The project reports did not discuss the availability of resources from national budgets for the continuation of the capacity building efforts after project completion. The positive indication from the project team though is that some of the project activities are continuing even after the project came to an end. At the time of this evaluation, there was no evidence that future funding for additional support to further develop capacity to implement Article 4 of the Minamata Convention is evident.

Institutional sustainability

86. The dimension of institutional sustainability addresses the issue of the sustainability of results and progress towards impact as it relates to factors associated with processes, policies, legal and regulatory frameworks and governance structures. All two direct outcomes discussed above in Section 6.4b of this report have a direct bearing on institutional sustainability.

87. As discussed in greater detail in the assessment of effectiveness (section 6), the building of partnerships and the capacity building activities were instrumental in developing institutional capacity which would enable Argentina to transition to a relatively mercury-free economy. The creation of a cadre of knowledgeable staff in the various ministries and government departments armed with the tools and guidelines developed during this project will ensure that the necessary capacity exists within these institutions to monitor, regulate and manage mercury control activities also the policy processes within governments. Through workshops and information materials, technical capacity was built in these government agencies and even among other stakeholders. Such capacities will likely remain in the various agencies and institutions into the future. The evaluation recognizes that staff turnover in the various institutions at the national level represents a major risk to sustainability. However, this evaluation has not undertaken a study, this soon after project completion, to determine if the built capacity still exists. This could be a subject matter of an impact study a few years into the future. The development of web-based information materials was expected to promote their use beyond the lifespan of this project.

6.5 Factors Affecting Performance

a) Financial Management

88. The project was funded by the Specific International Programme (SIP) to support Capacity Building and Technical Assistance for the management of mercury in Argentina in the amount of \$250,000. Co-financing in the amount of \$201,111 was pledged during project design, but the expenditure of these resources during project implementation was not reported. As shown in Table 4, the total amount of co-financing in form of in-kind contributions pledged, was 44.5% of the total project budget. As stated above, following a request by this evaluation, a reporting of how in-kind contributions were used to support project implementation was provided (see Annex G).
89. The budget planning and expenditure sheets look adequate. Project revisions are well documented and fully transparent. Table 4 presents financial costs of the project by “measures” undertaken including proposed in-kind contributions by the Government of Argentina. Table 5 represents costs and expenditures by project output as presented in the final report by the Project Team.

Table 5: SIP Project Costs – Argentina

Measures	SIP Funding (\$)	In-Kind Contribution (\$)	Total (\$)
Improve the capacity to implement obligations under Article 14 of the Minamata Convention	123,000	97,556	215,556
Enhance capacities for research and mercury surveillance, in accordance with article 12 and 19 of the Minamata Convention.	115,000	94,001	206,501
Monitoring Evaluation and Financial Audit	12,000	9,544	21,544
Subtotal	250,000	201,111	451,111
Total Budget	250,000	201,111	451,111

Source: Project Cooperation Agreement, Annex A

Table 5: Project Expenditure by output Category (Source: Final Progress Report 31/03/2022)

Measures	Staff and Other Personnel Costs (FT30_010)		Contract Services (FT30_120)		Equipment (FT30_135)		Travel (FT30_160)		Total USD	
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Total Budget	Reported Expenditure
Output 1: Improve the capacity to implement obligation under Article 4 of the Minamata Convention										
1.1 Analysis of feasibility for substitute products, including barriers identification and socio-economic impact of prohibitions	28,000.00	28,025.00	24,000.00	23,950.00					52,000.00	51,975.00
1.2 Design of legal framework including administrative regulations, incentives and enforcement schemes	44,000.00	44,081.00							44,000.00	44,081.00
1.3 Awareness campaigns for local governments and other stakeholders			14,000.00	15,218.00			13,000.00	105,539.00	27,000.00	120,757.00
Output 2: Strengthening the national capacity to enhance mercury research and surveillance in accordance with articles 12 and 19										
2.1 Strengthening technical capacity of the Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government entities, Laboratories, Academia and research centres.	39,000.00	39,102.00	9,000.00	9,260.00					48,000.00	48,362.00
2.2 Equip a local unit to support sampling processing and other mercury surveillance activities.			4,500.00	4,489.00	62,500.00	63,335.11			67,000.00	67,824.11
Output 3: Monitoring, evaluation and financial audit.										
3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation										
3.2 Financial Audit			2,000.00	2,000.00					2,000.00	2,000.00
3.3 Terminal Review										
Total Cost	111,000.00	111,208.00	53,500.00	54,917.00	62,500.00	63,335.11	13,000.00	105,539.00	240,000.00	334,999.11

b) Monitoring

90. A monitoring plan was included in the project application. Milestones seem adequate for measuring implementation progress. Over the duration of the project, five (5) interim reports (2020 to 2022) were prepared which reflected changes in the status of the project over time. Some of the project interim reports reviewed for this evaluation were found to be adequate. A comprehensive final project report was prepared. A substantial portion of the information used in this report on the achievement of planned project outputs and outcomes were derived from these sources of information on project monitoring.

91. The original project results framework included verifiable indicators and means of verification for the project objectives and outcomes. Day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress was undertaken by the Project Team based on the project's annual work plan. There was little discussion of the problems encountered. There was no reporting on when the Project Advisory Committee met. However, project progress reports were submitted to the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on a routine basis.

c) Project Reporting

92. As discussed above, monitoring of project implementation was reported in interim reports. All reporting was duly done against indicators and milestones. The interim reports provided a good description of implementation progress for each “measure.” Financial reports were provided with progress reporting. Compliance with reporting requirements at the project level would be deemed to be adequate.

7.0 Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

a) Conclusions

93. At the end of project implementation, the planned project outputs had been produced and significant progress has been made towards strengthening Institutional and technical frameworks to support the phase down and phase-out of mercury added products. Progress seems to have been made in developing the capacity for research and surveillance and to investigate, albeit on a limited basis, mercury contaminated sites. In addition, international and regional cooperation has been enhanced through South-South cooperation by sharing knowledge regionally. By successfully mobilizing support and gaining buy-in from key stakeholders such as governments and multilateral organizations, a key assumption made by the project at design held.

94. The project has made progress towards the intermediate state of increasing stakeholder and the general public’s knowledge of the risks posed by using mercury-added products. Through knowledge and awareness, progress, albeit limited at this point, is being made towards the stated impact of protecting human health and the environment from emissions and the release of mercury and enable Argentina to transition to a mercury-free economy.

95. The evaluation further concludes that collaboration among partners was relatively efficient and effective in delivering training activities and, in general, the SIP project. Effective communication within the project team facilitated the sharing of knowledge and expertise between project partners. The knowledge and expertise were subsequently provided to participating institutions and at workshops and awareness raising campaign events.

96. The project has contributed to strengthening institutional and technical capacity. Yet, those contributions do not eliminate the need for additional national actions, support and capacity building activities in Argentina. Indeed, in the foreseeable future, additional external inputs will be required before the country can effectively eliminate the mercury containing products and switch to mercury-free alternatives.

97. The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in the implementation of many activities. Activities related to training, workshops and seminars had to be conducted remotely and through the use of videos online. Unexpectedly though, the switch to remote modalities allowed the project to reach a larger number of participants than if face-to-face events had been undertaken.

98. There is evidence that in-kind contributions have constituted an important part of the resources used to implement this project. Following a request from this evaluation, however, a break down of how the in-kind contributions were expended was provided as indicated in Annex G. Through interviews for this evaluation there is indication that the government is ready to fund future training, research and awareness raising activities. The legislation developed and approved has internalized the administrative, human, technical and budgetary resources.
99. Effective collaboration among government agencies, organizations, and universities who participated in this project was viewed as critical to its successful implementation. In particular, collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and sustainable Development, the National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina (INTI) seemed to have been remarkably effective. Good communication and shared mission were considered the main contributing factors to effective collaboration. That, it was argued, represents a model for future collaboration on other projects.
100. Gender considerations were factored into project design. For example, gender-disaggregated indicators and targets were included in the results framework of the project. A project report (Mercury and Gender Issues: Exposure to mercury, the importance of the sound management of mercury and mercury-containing products) concluded that there exist differential impacts on men, women and children of exposure to chemicals with particular reference to mercury in products. The report concluded that women are disproportionately affected. Therefore, it is necessary to understand and address such differences with the aim of protecting human health and welfare. This conclusion was based on the finding of a survey that, it is still women who play the role of caregivers and use these products more frequently and, for that matter, are more susceptible to exposure to these dangerous substances.

b) Lessons

Lesson 1: The SIP Project confronted numerous challenges mostly produced by the problems caused by the COVID-19. Fortuitously, the pandemic presented the opportunity to explore new approaches to the delivery of training, awareness raising and communication activities. Virtual meetings and remote training activities became an important part of program delivery. This made it possible for larger -than-planned audiences to be reached. **In this regard, the SIP Project represents a relevant lesson for the delivery of capacity building projects where workshops, meetings, and awareness raising events, could be conducted remotely not only to reduce costs but to reach a wider audience.**

Lesson 2: Based on the final project report and interviews with the project team, it would seem that effective communication with the different key actors and stakeholders, including the Municipalities, Provinces, Academia, Private and Public Sector, such as NGOs, on the subject of mercury in products was crucial to the success of the delivery of planned activities. **This evaluation notes that a careful and fairly detailed identification of stakeholders at the project design stage may have contributed to effective collaboration in order to address the environmental management of mercury in a comprehensive and synergistic way. To**

that effect, engagement of a wide cross-section of stakeholders at all levels is important in projects where the achievement of expected long-term impacts is highly dependent on their actions.

Lesson 3: The experience gained from this project, based on reporting and interviews conducted, shows that existing institutional structures and regulatory frameworks can provide continuity to training, awareness raising activities and communication with interested actors and the general public in order not only facilitate the implementation of the Minamata Convention, but also to promote better environmental management of mercury. **The capacities developed through this project together with other initiatives, programs and projects being executed, supported by the networks created, will provide continuity to the results achieved to date and form the basis for addressing new challenges in the future.**

Lesson 4: This evaluation is of the opinion that the Theory of Change's depiction of the intervention logic provides a closer and more coherent and logical representation of the project and should have formed the basis for the preparation of the logical framework. However, **while the ToC for the Argentina project seems to have presented correctly, the causal relationships between the various results levels, it failed to identify the key drivers and assumptions likely to facilitate movement along the causal chain from activities towards project impact. Future projects should present TOCs as a basis for developing their logframes.**

c) Recommendations

- a) This evaluation fully supports the recommendation by the project that, the dissemination of information generated through the implementation of project activities should continue through the support of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. **Additional information should be developed with regards to the use of added mercury products and their relationship to the risks of exposure and for their proper management in the event of accidents, such as breakage of a thermometer and lamps containing mercury.**
- b) The project identified challenges faced in interacting with local authorities in undertaking project activities. There was significant difficulty in understanding the existing situation in mercury management and the extent to which implementation of the Minamata Convention has occurred at the local level. **Dialogue and collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and stakeholders must be improved significantly in order to develop capacity at the local level with the goal of transitioning to mercury-free alternatives in products.**
- c) Follow-up support to complement this capacity building project should ensure that key issues raised in the final project report including: **a) further dissemination of the results of project activities; b) establishing a network at the local level for peer-to-peer learning; c) supporting the publication and promotion of the different mercury-free technologies that exist so that mercury-added products are no longer imported into the country and d) fully implementing the national training plan and relaunching the Comprehensive Mercury Seminar for various local authorities and the general public on the Virtual Campus, are addressed.**
- d) A key challenge that the project reported which must be addressed is the environmentally sound management of mercury waste from products that contain mercury. Argentina does not have installed capacity nor does it

have a national strategy to address this challenge which is often reported by local authorities. Perhaps a follow-up project to address this issue must be considered by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable development.

Annex A: Proposed schedule and deliverables

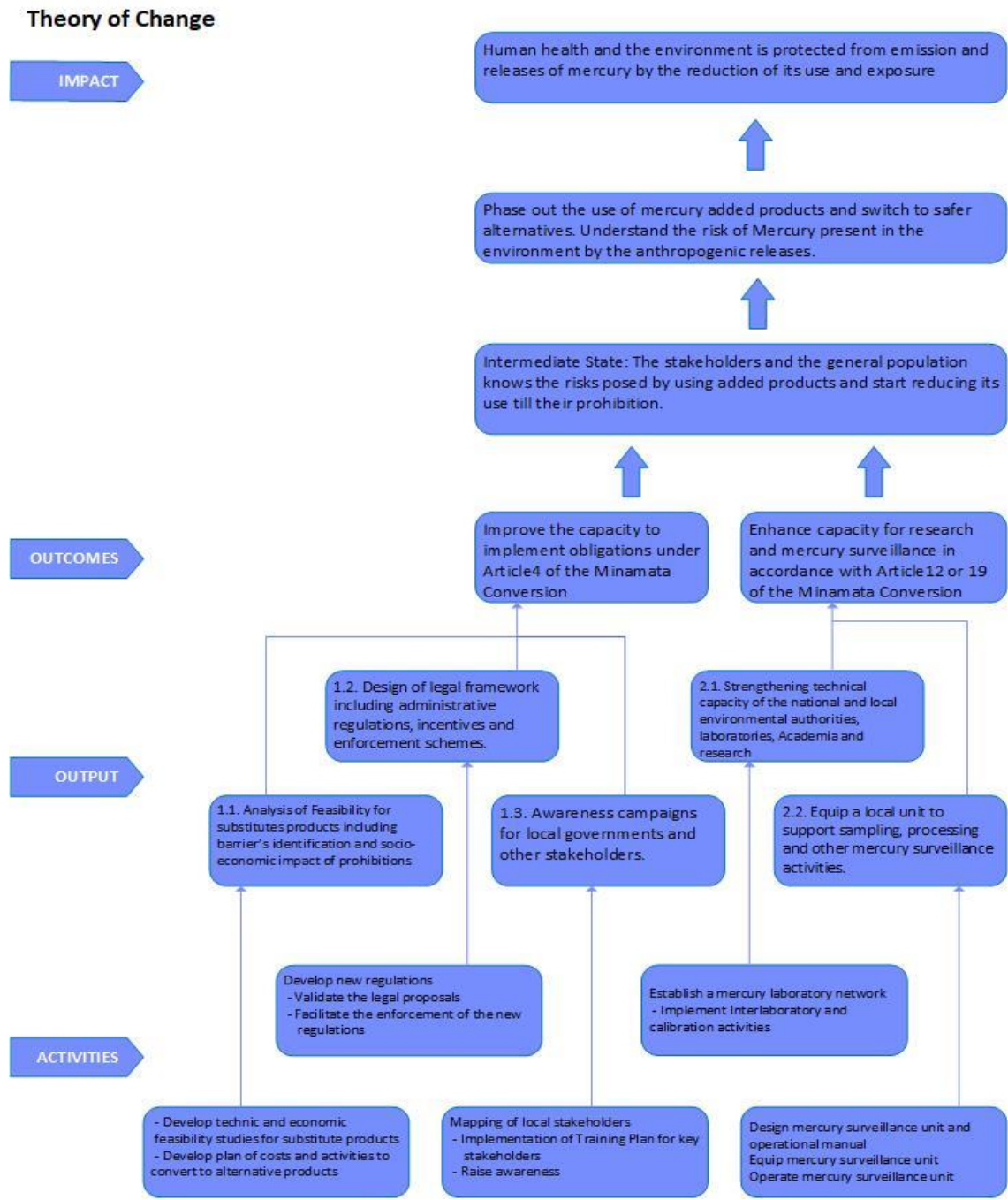
Phase	Activities & Deliverables	Proposed timeline (2023)
Inception	Start-up teleconference	January 25, 2023
	Initial documentation review	January 7-30, 2023
	Draft Inception report	February 3, 2023
	(Internally) Finalized Inception report	February 15, 2023
Data Collection and Analysis	In-depth documentation review	February 2023
	Survey Launch (if needed)	February 15
	Interviews with Project Teams	February – March 2023
	Other Telephone Interviews (where needed)	March 15 – 30, 2023
	Data analysis	February – March, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Argentina	March 3, 2023
	Draft Report for Argentina	March 15, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Armenia	March 17, 2023
	Draft Report for Armenia	March 23, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Lesotho	March 25, 2023
	Draft Report for Lesotho	March 30, 2023
	Convention Secrétariat comment due	April 15, 2023
	Final Reports	April 30, 2023

Annex B: Project results framework - Argentina

Project objective:	Outcomes	Outputs	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Source of verification	Risks/ Assumptions
Strengthen the capacity of the country to implement Article 4 of the convention and develop information generation mechanism in order to fulfil Minamata Convention						.		Effective coordination at national level
	The project outcome is to switch to the use of alternatives to the products listed in Annex A. Part 1 of the Minamata Convention		National Strategy Agreed at the National level	0		1	Publication of a strategy validated by the Inter-ministerial working Group	
		Output 1.1 Feasibility for substitute products including barriers identification and socio-economic impact prohibitions	Studies	0		3	A feasibility study report on lamps, batteries ,switches, relays and dental amalgams	
		Output 1.2 Design of Legal framework including administrative regulations, incentives and enforcement schemes	Legal framework designed	:0		1	Proposals for new norms related to the administrative procedures	
Output 1.3 Awareness campaigns for local government and other stakeholders	Training activities implemented Awareness campaigns for different	:0 0		5 3	List of participants for each training Report of campaign results			

Project objective:	Outcomes	Outputs	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Source of verification	Risks/ Assumptions
			Stakeholders with a gender approach implemented					
		Output 2.1. Strengthening Technical Capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, local government entities, laboratories, academic and research centres	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development strengthened in sound mercury management	0		1	Not provided	
		Output 2.2 Equip a local unit to support sampling, processing and other mercury surveillance activities together with the establishment of a mercury laboratory network		0		1	Not provided	

Annex C: Project Theory of Change



Annex D: List of Documents Consulted for the Inception Report

1. Capacity Building for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention: Project Cooperation Agreement Between United Nations Environment Programme and National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina, June 2019
2. Capacity Building for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention: Amendment to Project Cooperation Agreement Between United Nations Environment Programme and National Institute of Industrial Technology of Argentina, July 2020
3. Minamata Convention on Mercury, Specific International Program, Application form 1AB & II, and Amendment Argentina, August 2018
4. First Interim Report, February 2020, Progress Report and Annexes
5. Second Interim Report, July 2020, Progress Report and Annexes
6. Third Interim Report, December 2020, Progress Report and Annexes
7. Fourth Interim Report, July 2021, Progress Report and Annexes
8. Fifth Interim Report. December 2021, Progress Report and Annexes
9. Final Project Report, December, 2021
10. Evaluation Terms of Reference
11. Expenditure reports, co-financing records, budget revisions
12. Technical reports on project Outputs, studies, publications, outreach material, etc.;
13. Terms of Reference for SIP Consultants
14. Co-Financing Letters
15. Letters from Partnering Organizations
16. Minamata Convention on Mercury: Text and Annexes, September 2019 www.mercuryconvention.org
17. Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance, <https://mercuryconvention.org/en/implementation/specific-international-programme>

Annex E: Terms of Reference (ToR)

Organizational Unit - UNEP/Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

1. Purpose

1.1 Explain the requirement for a consultant / individual contractor including the reference to the work programme (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*):

Article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury defines a mechanism for the provision of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources to support developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. The mechanism is comprised of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) trust fund and the Specific International Programme (SIP) to support capacity-building and technical assistance. The SIP is administered by UNEP through the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury under the oversight of the SIP Governing Board which implements its guidance, including decision-making on projects and project management.

In decision MC-1/6, the Conference of the Parties established guidance on the operations of and duration of the SIP and establishment of its Terms of Reference and Governing Board. Its Rules of Procedure were adopted by the Governing Board at its first meeting in 2018 and completed at its third meeting.

The SIP is mandated to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication with other existing arrangements to provide capacity-building and technical support, in particular GEF and the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, as well as other existing assistance frameworks, and be consistent with the integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste.

The purpose of this consultancy is to undertake terminal evaluations of three SIP projects. Project logical frameworks and reporting provide key information from which to assess the effectiveness and impacts of individual projects and provide important information for reviewing the overall programme.

1.2 Ultimate result of services (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*):

3 terminal evaluation reports, one for each of three completed SIP projects, namely, the projects in Argentina, Armenia, and Lesotho.

1.3 Legislative authority reference (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*)

-
- Minamata Convention Article 13

1.4 Title and identification number of programme / project (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*)

-
- Programme of work and budget of the Minamata Convention, 2022-2023 biennium, Activity 13
-

1.5 Source of Funds Regular Budget Extra-budgetary
(*corresponds to box 4 of P.104/A*)

Specific Trust Fund First Round

1.6 Allotment Account / Budget Line

Total: USD 26,000

2. Qualifications / special skills or knowledge

*(Indicate what expertise and experience, i.e. special skills or knowledge are required / essential to perform the specific tasks and responsibilities stipulated above and the level of expertise required)
Corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*

Advanced university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area; a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience, including of evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of issues relating to international chemicals management; proficiency in English, along with excellent writing skills in English. Knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN Environment Programme, is helpful.

The consultant certifies that he/she has not been associated with the design and implementation of the SIP in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards achievements and performance. In addition, he/she will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the work of the SIP.

The consultant agrees not to disclose information from non-public applications and reports to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluations and review.

3. Objectives, output expectations and performance indicators

(Include the final and intermediate results and outputs of services which should be measurable; performance indicators should allow for the evaluation of the results; include details as to how the work must be delivered (e.g. electronic submission, hard copy, etc.))

In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy and the SIP Application Guidelines, all projects with funding from the SIP of over USD 150,000 are required to undergo a terminal evaluation. The UN has Evaluation Norms and Standards to which contracted evaluators are bound. UNEP evaluations and reviews consider nine specific evaluation criteria: relevance; quality of project design; nature of external context; effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the provision of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; financial management; efficiency; monitoring and reporting; sustainability; and factors and processes affecting project performance and cross-cutting issues.

Three projects from the First Round of applications to the SIP have completed their activities and will be evaluated. They are:

- a. Argentina: Capacity Building Programme for the implementation of the Minamata Convention
Budget: USD 250,000 Duration: 31 July 2019 – 31 December 2021
- b. Armenia: Strengthening capacity to promote phasing-out of mercury-added products (lamps)
Budget: USD 162,000 Duration: 1 June 2019 – 30 November 2021
- c. Lesotho:
Budget: USD 200,550 Duration: 10 May 2019 - 09 November 2022

Terminal Evaluations Arrangements, Approach and Methods: Each of the terminal evaluations should assess the quality of the project and its implementation against the UNEP evaluation criteria and specific questions as outlined below, and provide recommendations for addressing any programming challenges, scaling up, and for ensuring sustainability of achieved results or any other recommendations within the context of the Minamata Convention's capacity building and technical assistance support towards implementing the mandates of the Convention.

The terminal evaluations will use a participatory evaluation approach to consult key stakeholders and keep them informed throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used, as appropriate, to determine achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.

The consultant will maintain close communication with the Minamata Convention Secretariat and promote information exchange with key stakeholders throughout the evaluations to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the findings.

The findings of the evaluations will be based on the following:

A desk review of:

- Relevant background documentation, including legal agreements, amendments or changes thereto, and application guidelines and forms, amongst others;
- Appraisal documentation and Governing Board comments on applications, if any;
- Project interim progress and financial reports;
- Project final reports;
- Supplemental materials provided by project partner to the Secretariat and/or the consultant.

Interviews (individual or in groups, undertaken virtually) with:

- Project focal points and Minamata Convention national focal points of each country;
- Secretariat staff;
- Relevant resource persons.

If the consultant considers **surveys** of relevant partners and/or stakeholders of each country to be useful and within the resources available for the evaluations, the consultant will submit draft survey instruments to the Secretariat for review, comment, and, if needed, revision.

4. Specific tasks and responsibilities

(Cover all aspects of the work to be carried out)

The consultant will prepare:

- **Inception Reports:** for each of the three terminal evaluations, these may be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation and supporting documentation, to be presented to the Secretariat. They will contain the review framework, procedures, and tentative review schedule for the evaluation.
- **Preliminary Findings Notes:** these will be in the form of either a PowerPoint presentation or a one- to two-page memo, for each of the three terminal evaluations, presented to the Secretariat, in draft form. It provides an opportunity for early comments and feedback with respect to preliminary findings before preparation of a formal draft report.

- **Draft and Final Evaluation Reports:** one report for each of the three terminal evaluations, containing executive summaries that can act as stand-alone documents; synthesized analyses of the review findings organized by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations. The reports will each be no longer than 15 pages, excluding the executive summaries and annexes, and will be to the point and written in plain English. They will explain the purpose of the evaluations, the methodology used, and evidence-based and balanced findings covering the evaluation criteria set forth in “Objectives and Scope” above and the additional review questions set forth in the outline below, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.
 - The consultant will submit initial draft reports to the Secretariat and revise the drafts in response to Secretariat comments with respect to factual errors and other suggestions, as appropriate. The consultant will then provide revised drafts on which the Secretariat will provide substantive comments. The Secretariat may also, at its discretion, provide the drafts to additional stakeholders, such as specific project partners, for comment. The consultant will provide the final report. The consultant will be available for brief interaction with the Secretariat as the latter develops relevant documentation for the SIP Governing Board and the Conference of the Parties for a period of four weeks following submission of the final report.
 - The consultant will ensure that the evaluation reports are complete, coherent and presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible.
 - The consultant will liaise with the Programme Management Officer on comments received, will finalize the evaluation reports, ensuring that comments are taken into account, and will prepare Response to Comments documents for the Secretariat, listing those comments not accepted by the consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection.
 - The consultant will maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence.
 - **The proposed structure of the terminal evaluation reports is as follows:**

1. PROJECT KEY INFORMATION

1.1. Implementing Government and Implementing Government Institution

Project Focal Point: Functional Title, Address, Telephone, E-mail

1.2. Project Title as per PCA

1.3. Budget USD Specific Trust Fund; Applicant Government Contribution [if any]

1.4. Start Date

1.5. End Date

1.6. Evaluation Date

2. SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND OVERVIEW OF REPORT

2.1. Project summary

2.2. About this Evaluation [objectives, duration]

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Institutional context of the project [Division/Branch/Unit, regions/countries]

3.2. Minamata Convention Articles to which the project contributed

3.3. Overall project outcome

3.4. Summary of Project Outputs [planned and achieved]

4. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection: Describe the evaluation methods and information sources used. These will include indicators and means of verification from the log frame, periodic progress and expenditure reports of the project, interviews including the number and type of respondents, and observations. It will be useful to include justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative/mixed methods; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, sites visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder consultation; details of how the data was verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders, etc.) and data analysis method(s) used.

4.2. Addressing Limitations: Describe the strategies employed to address any potential or actual limitations in the evaluation process, such as strategies used to include the feedback of potentially marginalized groups (e.g. women, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and youths). Describe strategies used to include divergent views while taking care not to violate human rights and ethical considerations during the review process.

5. THE PROJECT CONTEXT AND RESULTS MONITORING FRAMEWORK

5.1. Project Context: Describe the rationale of the project intervention clearly stating the problem(s) the project intended to address.

5.2. Geographic coverage [country or countries in the case of a regional project]

5.3. Results monitoring framework: Present the project results monitoring framework (i.e. the results hierarchy as presented in the logical framework including the corresponding data sources/verification methods). It may be useful to attach the full project logframe including its indicators and means of verification as an annex.

5.4. Project implementation structure and stakeholder engagement: Present the implementing institutions and supporting implementing partners and their respective roles in ensuring successful project delivery. Define how different stakeholder groups were involved in the project and the roles they played and the resultant benefits to the project in achieving desired results. Comment on the value of collaborations if any.

5.5. Project change management: Describe any changes made to project plans to adapt to evolving needs, including approved budget revisions, if any.

5.6. Gender Strategies: Describe how the project implemented its gender strategies.

6. REVIEW FINDINGS

- 6.1. Project design quality: Discuss the strength and weakness of the project design in relation to the project context (i.e. both a project specific situational analysis and in relation to the broader mandates of the Minamata Convention).
- 6.2. Relevance: How aligned is the project with the broader environmental/chemical mandates within the region/country/sector? How is the intervention aligned with the mandates of the Minamata Convention and other global environmental and sustainable development blueprints such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?
- 6.3. Coherence: How well does the intervention fit in the country, sector etc? How does the project complement other ongoing or completed efforts within the country/sector? How did the project optimize through synergizing and avoiding duplication of effort with such efforts?
- 6.4. Efficiency: How well did the project deliver in relation to the available resources? Comment on timeliness and cost effectiveness, the delivery process, and the quality of results. How well did the project conduct timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives and how well was the quality of data and information presented?
- 6.5. Effectiveness: Did the intervention achieve its objectives? How well did the project achieve its desired outcomes (Assess both the quality and quantity of achievements as they apply)? Comment on any project revisions and their effect on achieving results.
- 6.6. Impact: What difference does the intervention make? Discuss the potential and achieved long lasting positive benefits of the project. If not already attained, assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Assess the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. effect on livelihood of vulnerable groups).
- 6.7. Sustainability of outcomes: To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue? Describe the socio-political, financial and institutional sustainability achievements. Assess the plans for project continuity following project closure through any commitments made including legal and policy enforcement. Comment on the nature of any relationships and collaborative partnerships that were developed through SIP support and how their continuity will be sustained.
- 6.8. Factors and processes affecting project performance and cross-cutting issues: including nature of external context; financial management; monitoring and reporting.

7. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tentative schedules for consultant deliverables for the evaluations and reviews

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Armenia Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: October 2022

Inception report to the Secretariat: October 2022

Preliminary Findings Note: November 2022

Draft evaluation report: November 2022

Final report: December 2022

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Argentina Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: November 2022

Inception report to the Secretariat: December 2022

Preliminary Findings Note: January 2023

Draft evaluation report: January 2023

Final report: February 2023

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Lesotho Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: December 2022

Inception report to the Secretariat: January 2023

Preliminary Findings Note: January 2023

Draft evaluation report: February 2023

Final report: March 2023

5. Reporting lines

(Indicate whom the consultant / individual contractor is reporting to and who will evaluate the outputs of the consultant / individual contractor)

The consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Programme Management Officer for Capacity Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention Secretariat, Ms. Marianne Bailey.

6. Duration

(The timeframe, including the delivery dates, should be clear and realistic; the planned starting date is considered realistic if the ToR are finalized at least four weeks before the intended starting date)

Corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A

1 October 2022 to 14 April 2023

7. Travel involved

(Indicate the required travel itinerary, if applicable – please tick box 7 of P.104/A)

Travel will be organized by Substantive Office Selected candidate

8. Indicative level of remuneration

(Include the terms of payment (lump-sum, instalments) – corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A - as well as any cost of travel and any DSA payable – corresponds to box 5 of P.104/A and the indicative level of remuneration. Please note that the total remuneration budgeted for this purpose which is indicated in box 1 of P.104/A may be different)

Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Secretariat of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Reports for Armenia and Argentina	30%
Approved Final Terminal Evaluations for Armenia and Argentina	40%
Approved Final Terminal Evaluation for Lesotho	30%

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected UNEP quality standards, payment may be withheld until the consultant has improved the deliverables to meet UNEP quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit satisfactory final products to the Secretariat in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of his/her contract, the Secretariat reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the reports, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Secretariat to bring the reports up to standard.

Products	Specific Uses and Applications	Mercury-Free Alternatives
Batteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Button battery, silver oxide • Button battery, zinc air • Alkaline manganese (manganese dioxide) • Mercuric oxide • Button battery, mercury oxide • Button battery, zinc carbon 	Mercury-free units such as lithium batteries
Switches and Relays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tilt/vibration switch • Pressure switch • Float switch • Temperature switch • Wet foil relay • Displacement relay • Contact relay • Flame sensor • Thermostat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • metal ball; electrolytic; potentiometer; mechanical; solid-state; capacitive • mechanics; solid state • mechanical; magnetic dry tongue; optical; conductivity; sonic/ultrasonic; capacitance • mechanical; solid-state Dry magnetic, electromechanical, hybrid (electromechanical and solid state) dry tab, silicon controlled rectifier, solid state • Electronic ignition system • Digital, fast switch / mechanical and electronics

Lamps/lighting	<p>Linear fluorescent</p> <p>Compact fluorescents LED</p> <p>High intensity discharge</p> <p>Backlight units for LCD displays</p> <p>Short arc of mercury</p> <p>Neon</p>	<p>Linear LED</p> <p>downlight LED</p> <p>Halogen, LED, mercury-free units</p> <p>LED</p> <p>No known mercury-free alternative</p>
Non-electronic measuring instruments in the health sector	<p>Sphygmomanometer</p> <p>Thermometer</p>	<p>Aneroid, oscillometer</p> <p>Digital, infrared</p>
Dental amalgams	Dental cements and fillings	Composite, glass ionomer, resin ionomer

Source: Final Project Report

Annex F: MAP Product Substitutes

Annex G: In-kind Contribution

III. Final Report Co-financing

Project ID: 2018/01/LAC/ARG

Country/Region: Argentina / Latin America and the Caribbean

Project Title: Capacity Building Programme for the implementation of the Minamata Convention

Duration: 36 months

Organization/Institution delivering the project: National Institute of Industrial Technology in Argentina (Argentina)

Total Amount: USO 201.111

Expenditure Reporting period: from 01/08/2019 to 31/12/2021

	2019	2020	2021	Total SIP
Total in-kind contribution per year				
The calculation is made by price in US dollars	2019	2020	2021	Total SIP
Office	\$ 17.778,00	\$ -	₡ 17.778,00	₡ 35.556,00
Staff of the INTI and Basel Regional Centre	\$ 50.000,00	\$ 50.000,00	\$ 50.000,00	₡ 150.000,00
Press and communication	\$ 2.222,00	\$ 2.222,00	\$ 2.222,00	\$ 6.666,00
Services (includes computer services such as Notebooks, Microsoft 365, Zoom)	\$ 476,19	\$ 2.296,92	\$ 4.155,51	\$ 6.928,62
Articles and supplies (office)	\$ 1.428,57	\$ 896,36	\$ 923,45	\$ 3.248,38
Cleaning Services	\$ 2.000,00	-	\$ 2.000,00	\$ 4.000,00
TOTAL AMOUNT	\$ 73.904,76	\$ 55.415,28	\$ 77.078,96	\$ 206.399,00

Terminal Evaluation of the Capacity Building Programme for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention in Argentina

Signature of a duly Authorized officer:

Name : Marfa Claudia Pascual

Position : Project Financial Officer CRBAS

Date :31/03/ 2022

Terminal Evaluation of the Capacity Building Programme for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention in Argentina

III. Final Report Co-financing

ProjectID: 2018/01/LAC/ARG

County/Region: Argentina / Latin America and the Caribbean Project
 Title: Capacity Building Program for the implementation Duration: 36 months

Organisation/Institution delivering the project: National Institute of Industrial Technology in Argentina (Argentina)

Total Amount: USO 201.111

Expenditure Reporting period: from 01/08/2019 to 31/12/2021

		Price in Arg Pesos	Price in US Dollar	Price in Arg Pesos	Price in US Dollar	Price in Arg Pesos	Price in US Dollar	
		2019	2019	2020	2020	2021	2021	
Description		Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	
Office	Rental of physical place of work	\$ 1.120.014,00	\$ 17.778,00	\$	\$	\$ 1.925.179,62	\$ 17.778,00	
Staff of the INTI and Basel Regional Centre(+)	Calculation based on professional basic salary values(*) The staff converted from Basel Regional Centre for Training; and Technology Transfer for South America and National Institute of industrial Technology. The price of each year is the value of the corresponding basic vital and mobile salary, which is multiplied DV4.27 by the category of basic, vital and mobile professional salary.	\$ 3.150.000,00	\$ 50.000,00	\$ 4.462.500,00	\$ 50.000,00	\$ 5.414.500,00	\$ 50.000,00	
Press and Communication	Includes the costs of the Official Gazette for the publication of regulations, design of covers, presentations, editorials, communications in internal and external press bulletin of the Ministry of Environment, INTI and Regional Center, creating graphics for videos, creating interactive videos and filming; design of web page services, virtual campus., virtual training and technical assistance services., among others.	\$ 139.986,00	\$ 2.222,00	\$ 198.313,50	\$ 2.222,00	\$ 240.620,38	\$ 2.222,00	
Services	includes computer services such as Microsoft 365, Zoom, web page services, virtual campus, virtual training and technical assistance services, among others	Price ZOOM service	\$	\$	\$ 145.000,00	\$ 1.624,65	\$ 360.000,00	\$ 3.324,41
		Price of Microsoft 365 Services requested from the Ministry according to the Annual Budget (BAPIN)	\$ 30.000,00	\$ 476,19	\$ 60.000,00	\$ 672,27	\$ 90.000,00	\$ 831,10

Terminal Evaluation of the Capacity Building Programme for the Implementation of the Minamata Convention in Argentina

Articles and supplies(office)	Work material and supplies offices including notebooks and technical training material	Notebooks acquired by the Ministry for the work of the Project Staff- important observation: the 2019 computers due to personnel turnover were delivered to other Ministry personnel, therefore new computers had to be purchased that were delivered during the pandemic.	\$ 40.000,00	\$ 634,92	\$ 80.000,00	\$ 896,36	\$	\$
		Price of training material and supplies from the Ministry according to the Annual Budget (BAPIN)	\$ 50.000,00	\$ 793,65	\$	\$	\$ 100.000,00	\$ 923,45

	Description	Price in Arg P150s	Price in US Dollar	Price In Arg Pesos	Price in US Dollar	Price In Arg Pesos	Price In US Dollar
		2019	2019	2020	2020	2021	2021
		Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit	Price by unit
Cleaning Services	Maintenance service of the rented office.	\$ 126.000	\$ 2.000	\$	\$	\$ 216.580	\$ 2.000

Signature of a duly Authorized officer.

