

COMMUNICATION

on format of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-4)

Dear Madam/Sir,

With reference to the COP-3 decision on the date and venue of COP-4, the Secretariat and I are pleased to inform Parties and observers that the Bureau of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury has reached agreement on the format for COP-4, which was originally scheduled to take place in Bali, Indonesia, from 1 to 5 November 2021.

Unfortunately, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation and related travel restrictions prevent the organization of the COP in its usual format. More specifically, the Indonesian Government will not allow large-scale gatherings, including an international conference, until the end of 2021 due to the travel and social distancing restrictions introduced in response to the pandemic.

During the fourth meeting of the Bureau, held on 3 March 2021, the Bureau members were invited to consider alternative options for convening COP-4 in consultation with their respective constituencies. As the President of COP-4, I confirmed the availability of Indonesia to host an in-person meeting in Indonesia during the first quarter of 2022.

After considering possible options and in consultation with National Focal Points from all regions, the Bureau decided, at its fifth meeting held on 14 April 2021, to organize COP-4 in two segments: a first segment to be conducted online within the period of 1 to 5 November 2021 and a second segment to be conducted in-person in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia.

The timing of the two segments will allow to keep momentum in decision-making and to avoid potential overlap with other international meetings in the remaining quarters of that year. The exact date of the in-person segment of the COP-4 will take into account, among others, the timing of the resumed in-person session of UNEA-5 from 28 February to 2 March 2022 and the special session of the UNEA-5 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme on 3 and 4 March 2022.

The online segment of COP-4 will include consideration of the Convention's programme of work and budget for biennium 2022-2023 and a few time-sensitive items. During the second segment of the COP, which will also be under the Indonesian Presidency, the Conference of the Parties will consider and/or resume consideration of all remaining items of the meeting. Please refer to Annex for further details.

Indonesia is confident that it will be possible to organize an international conference in Bali in the first quarter of 2022. Indonesia is committed, in collaboration with the Secretariat, to undertake all necessary safety measures to ensure safe participation in the in-person segment of COP-4 in 2022. Indonesia and the Secretariat will continue to monitor the evolution of COVID-19 related restrictions as they may further impact the organization of the in-person segment of the COP, keeping the Bureau abreast, and will prepare contingency planning as required.



Official invitation letters to COP-4 together with the provisional agenda and other relevant information will be circulated in due course.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with UNEP and the Secretariat's policies, exceptional support for the reimbursement of communication costs to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition will be provided to participate in the online segment of the meeting, under the modalities to be specified in the invitation letters.

The provisional agenda and annotations to the provisional agenda for the meeting, and the tentative schedule for COP-4 will be made available on the Convention's website at: <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Meetings/COP4>

The Secretariat will organize online regional preparatory meetings as well as additional technical and/or other sessions, as appropriate, to allow Parties to adequately prepare for the online segment of COP-4. Further information on the arrangements for online preparatory meetings will be made available on the Convention's website in due time. Preparatory meetings are also foreseen to be organized prior to the in-person segment in 2022.

We look forward to your active participation in COP-4 and to meeting you all in person in Bali next year!

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Rosa Vivien Ratnawati
COP-4 President

Monika Stankiewicz
Executive Secretary

To: National Focal Points of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva
Admitted observers at meetings of Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention

Att: Information on the agreement by the Bureau of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury on the working arrangements for the Fourth Meeting, taking into account the global COVID-19 pandemic

ANNEX:

Information on the agreement by the Bureau of the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury on the working arrangements for the Fourth Meeting, taking into account the global COVID-19 pandemic

14 April 2021

Format COP-4 will be held in two parts, namely an online segment, followed by an in-person segment in Bali, Indonesia.

Dates **COP-4.1:** Online segment to take place from 1 to 5 November 2021
COP-4.2: In-person segment to take place in the first quarter of 2022

Tentative schedule for the online segment from 1 to 5 November 2021

COP-4.1	Mon, 1 November 2021	Tue, 2 November 2021	Wed, 3 November 2021	Thu, 4 November 2021	Fri, 5 November 2021
4-hour session on 1 and 5 Nov 2021 2-hour session on 3 Nov 2021	Item 1: Opening of the meeting	<i>Contact group on POW/budget (English only)</i>		<i>Contact group on POW/budget (English only)</i>	<i>Consideration of the outcome of the contact group on POW/budget</i>
	Item 2: Organizational matters (a) Adoption of the agenda (b) Organization of work (d) Report on the credentials of representatives to the meeting		Item 7: Date of the resumed meeting, and Venue and date of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties		
	Item 6: Programme of work and budget		Item 4: Matters for consideration and/or action by the Conference of Parties (h) National reporting (e) Financial resources and mechanisms (i) Global Environment Facility		<i>Draft decision on date of the resumed session</i>
	Item 4: Matters for consideration or action by the Conference of Parties (i) Effectiveness evaluation				Item 9: Adoption of the report
					Item 10: Suspension of the meeting

Additional Notes on COP-4.1: Online segment from 1-5 November 2021

Description of work arrangements for COP-4.1: Five days of online meetings of the COP, with three days of plenary meetings, with interpretation in the six UN languages. The plenary sessions are planned as follows: On Monday, 1 November and Friday, 5 November 2021 the session would be (up to) four hours long, while the session on Wednesday would be (up to) two hours long. A contact group on POW/budget can meet on Tuesday and Thursday (English only). At the end of the online segment on Friday, the meeting will be suspended until the in-person segment convenes in the first quarter of 2022.

Matters for consideration and/or action during COP-4.1

Programme of work and budget: To introduce the documents presented for the COP's consideration on the Programme of Work and Budget for the 2022-2023 biennium, and in the interim to adopt the budget for 2022 and agree on elements of the preliminary budget for 2023. The completed budget for 2023, that takes into account resources required for intersessional work approved at the in-person segment in March 2022, will be part of the COP's consideration and action at the in-person segment in March 2022.

Note: The Secretariat will prepare a draft decision for COP-4.1 consideration.

Date of the resumed meeting of the in-person meeting: The COP has decided to meet in Bali, Indonesia for its Fourth Meeting. The online segment is to formally agree on the exact dates of the in-person meeting. The date is expected to be in the first quarter of 2022. *Note: The Secretariat will prepare a draft decision for COP-4.1 consideration.*

National reporting: To present draft guidance for completing the full reporting format as requested by MC-3/11. The first full national reports by Parties are due by 31 December 2021, and this draft guidance is to support Parties for the reporting cycle to clarify the information being sought in the national report format.

Financial resources and mechanism: To inform the Parties of the Eighth Replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, one component of the financial mechanism of the Convention, and allow Parties the opportunity to make statements if they may wish on the replenishment for the Secretariat to forward to the GEF Council in time for the replenishment planning discussions running from December 2021 to January 2022.

Effectiveness evaluation: To inform the COP of Parties-led consultations on effectiveness evaluation, for consideration together with the outcome of intersessional work on effectiveness evaluation – as set out in MC-3/10 – at the later in-person segment.

Additional Notes on COP-4.2: In-person segment in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia

Description of work arrangements for COP-4.2: One-week in-person meeting with interpretation in the six UN languages. During the in-person segment the COP will consider all agenda items that were not considered or concluded on during the online segment in November 2021

Matters for consideration and/or action during COP-4.2

It follows, that all other matters for consideration and/or action by the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be addressed during the in-person meeting in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia.