

MINAMATA - SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

Comments from the European Union and its Member States

Following the call for comments contained in UNEP's letter of 5 June, below follow the views of the EU and its Member States.

These views are intended to inform the document which the interim secretariat will prepare on the Specific International Programme (SIP) of the Minamata Convention (MC) for consideration by the nominated experts on financing at their meeting in advance of the seventh session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC7).

In accordance with the mandate agreed at INC6, these experts will meet once in order to provide input to INC7 on the preparatory work on the SIP. This work to prepare eventual decisions by Minamata COP1 will be based on the relevant provisions of the Minamata Convention, notably its Article 13(9), as well as Resolution 2 on Financial Arrangements of the Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries.

Bearing this purpose and context in mind, and without prejudice to more detailed discussions at the meeting of experts as well as at INC7 and eventually at COP1, the European Union and its Member States believe that the following basic principles will contribute to frame the discussions:

- (a) The SIP should support capacity building and technical assistance to implement the Minamata Convention (Article 13 MC), in an effective and efficient manner;
- (b) The hosting institution has to be an existing institution, as required by Article 13(9) MC;
- (c) The hosting institution should demonstrate that it has the necessary technical and financial competence, capacity and expertise to support capacity-building and technical assistance for beneficiary Parties;
- (d) The arrangements have to be attractive to all Parties to contribute to the SIP, within their capabilities, in line with Article 13(12) MC;
- (e) The effective use of resources has to be ensured and structural and operational synergies maximised. Ensuring complementarity and avoiding duplication with the main part of the financial mechanism (the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund - GEF) and other sources of funding (e.g. the Special Programme for institutional strengthening at the national level) are essential criteria in this respect. It will also be important to consider where relevant, in the operation of the SIP, complementarities and synergies with other existing assistance frameworks, especially such relating to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, including clean energy technology.

On the duration of the SIP, this matter is closely linked to the eventual arrangements of the programme, including the choice of hosting institution. Therefore, it may be premature to engage in detailed discussions on the specific term of its duration before there is a common understanding on the hosting institution and other relevant arrangements.

With the above in mind, the EU and its Member States believe that the meeting would be best used to have an open and frank discussion on Parties' expectation on the SIP, bearing in mind the provisions of the Minamata Convention. A discussion on the secretariat paper on possible hosting arrangements should be allocated a significant amount of time. It would be helpful for the discussion if the paper included an analysis of advantages and disadvantages of different arrangements, including costs, and examples from other conventions.

In conclusion, the EU and its Member State believe that the options to be considered at the expert meeting in preparation of discussions at INC7 should ensure a maximum of policy and operational coherence and effectiveness through respecting the basic principles mentioned above.

We would be grateful if the Secretariat could take these views into account when preparing its paper for the meeting of experts on financing. We also understand that the comments received from INC parties will be made available for that meeting.

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