



**Group of Technical Experts on Mercury Releases  
Intersessional Work between COP 3 and 4**

Second Online Meeting  
Tuesday 30 June 2020, 14h00-16h00 CEST

Summary

**Participants**

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Ms. YE Jing, China  
Ms. Kania Dewi, Indonesia  
Mr. SUZUKI Noriyuki, Japan  
Mr. Ahmed Mohammad Ajabnoor, Saudi Arabia  
Mr. Ajith Priyal de Alwis, Sri Lanka  
Mr. Alex Radway, European Union  
Mr. Ian Marnane, European Union  
Ms. Lic. Lucía Muntaner, Argentina  
Ms. Zuleica Castilhos, Brazil  
Mr. Cristián Enrique Brito Martínez, Chile  
Mr. Carlos Calleja-Amador, Costa Rica  
Ms. Alison Dickson, Canada  
Mr. Rafael Zubrzycki, Germany  
Ms. Ine Merethe Lorgen, Norway  
Ms. Petra Hagström, Sweden  
Mr. Greg Helms, United States  
Ms. Paulina Riquelme Pallamar, Chile  
Ms. Gabriela Duran Brand, Chile  
Ms. Tashana Redmond, Guyana  
Ms. Jenny Green, European Union  
Ms. Eriko SUDA, Japan  
Ms. Kaoru OKA, Japan  
Mr. KOZUKA Shohei, Japan  
Ms. KURODA Itsuki, Japan  
Mr. Takashi NISHIDA, Japan  
Mr. Joel Ormala, Norway  
Ms. Teeraporn Wiriwutikorn, Thailand  
Mr. Kristof Doucot, UNECE  
Mr. Kenneth Davis, UNEP  
Mr. Andrea Cararo, UNITAR  
Mr. Jacob Maag, UNITAR  
Mr. Jorge OCANA, UNITAR  
Mr. Jon Miller, Albemarle Corporation  
Ms. Melissa Barbanell, ICMM  
Mr. Mik Gilles, ICMM  
Mr. Julian Fisher, Independent consultant (dental sector)  
Mr. Seung-Whee Rhee, Kyonggi University, Republic of Korea

Mr. David Lennett, Natural Resources Defense Council  
Mr. Naji Kodeih, ZMWG

## **1. Opening**

Eisaku Toda of the Minamata Convention Secretariat opened the meeting. He noted that this was the second online meeting for the re-nominated members, but the first one for observers. He invited Mr. Greg Helms, one of the co-chairs elected at the first online meeting, to chair the first part of the meeting.

The group adopted the agenda as circulated in advance.

## **2. General guidance for release inventories**

The co-chair reminded the group that a draft general guidance was circulated to the group on 21 April, and that the group agreed to post the draft on the website while commenting within the group at the same time. The comments received by the deadline of 19 June was compiled as Document 2-2, and the Secretariat's proposed revision was circulated as Document 2-3.

The Secretariat explained that most of the comments were reflected in the new draft, but that the comments regarding the relationship with pollutant releases and transfer registers (PRTR) were not easy to reflect. The Secretariat chose to note in an early part of the document that PRTR data may be used for the inventory where they exist, and have the rest of the guidance addressed to Parties that do not have PRTR system, or those that choose to develop an inventory separate from, or building on, a PRTR.

One expert who had submitted comments on PRTR supported the way the Secretariat handled the comments, and provided further comments including a brief text to explain PRTR, description of steps for establishing an inventory, and more references to existing resources. The Secretariat noted that it had already received specific proposed edits, which will be taken into account.

A number of experts agreed on the importance of the link with PRTR. Specific comments include the following:

- The guidance should describe the role of national authorities in the quality control, such as the verification of reported data.
- Regarding the direct measurement, the importance of representativeness should be mentioned.
- One should note the difference between the different types and categories of sources between PRTR and mercury release inventory.
- The emission inventory guidance under Article 8 which was adopted at COP-1 may need to be revisited to be consistent with the release inventory. From the viewpoint of mass balance, mercury waste may also need to be considered.
- Some comments in Document 2-2 seem to be too specific to database and information technology, which is not the focus of this guidance.
- PRTR usually identifies "relevant sources" as an initial step, whereas Article 9 requires Parties to identify relevant point sources, for which Parties need to consider the significance of existing sources.

The co-chair requested the Secretariat to revise the text based on the discussion and circulate it for further discussion at the next online meeting.

## **3. Review of potentially relevant point source categories**

Ms. Bianca Dlamini, the other co-chair elected at the first online meeting, chaired the rest of the meeting. She invited the Secretariat to introduce document 3-4.

The Secretariat explained that there were two general comments on the structure of the table: adding a column on “obligation to establish inventory”, and deleting two columns “point or diffuse source” and “whether addressed in other articles”. It then went through the specific comments on the source categories as follows:

- The text for source categories “extraction and use of fuel/energy sources” and other categories will be edited focusing on wastewater.
- Regarding gold and silver extraction using amalgamation, the group considered during its discussion in the last intersessional period that releases from artisanal and small-scale mining was sometimes difficult to clearly identify and may be regarded as diffuse sources.
- Regarding non-ferrous metals production, information from the Global Mercury Partnership consultation meeting may be useful.
- Documented information on the release, including that from the production of mercury-added products may be needed.
- The group may need to discuss whether dental offices are point sources.
- The group may also need to discuss whether indirect discharges from industry to municipal wastewater systems should be covered in this document.

One expert explained that he proposed to delete two columns “point or diffuse source” and “whether addressed in other articles”, since the COP-3 decided that the proposed categories should only include point sources that are not addressed in other articles. He further proposed that the group should develop a shorter list following the COP guidance while retaining the long list as an appendix for information purposes. This would support the work mandated by COP – “subject to the completion of the work outlined above, and with a view to helping parties that wish to widen the scope of the inventory referred to in Paragraph 6 of Article 9 to additional point sources other than those covered by Article 9, the guidance on the methodology for preparing inventories of releases should also provide information on significant point sources of releases covered by other provisions of the Convention”. This proposal was supported by other experts. On the other hand, one expert emphasized that the focus of the work of this group should be on Article 9, also supported by other experts.

Regarding the “obligation to establish [an] inventory”, one expert noted that the Article 9 provides that Parties are to identify relevant point sources – significant anthropogenic point sources not addressed in other provisions – and to establish an inventory of releases from these sources. Other experts supported this explanation.

Regarding specific source categories, experts made following comments:

- Mine tailings are not addressed by Article 11 as long as mining waste is excluded in the definition of mercury waste, pending further discussion by the waste threshold group. Some experts supported maintaining mine tailings in the list. However, other experts considered that mine tailings are addressed in Article 11 and should be deleted from the list.
- Dental offices are regarded as point sources, e.g. in the US.
- Discharge to municipal wastewater systems should be covered in the list. Mercury discharged there may eventually be released to the environment depending on how the wastewater is treated.
- Regarding the source category “intentional use of mercury in industrial processes”, Article 5 address the releases of processed listed in Annex B. However, there is no provision for guidance on these releases, which might be helpful for implementing Article 5. Processes not listed in Annex B are not addressed under Article 5.

- Regarding the source category “manufacturing of consumer products with intentional use of mercury”, Article 4 addresses mercury releases from manufacturing Annex A Part I products, since it will be phased out by 2020, but do not address other products.

Summarizing the discussion, the co-chair proposed to request the Secretariat to revise the table reflecting the discussion, and also add information on available release estimation methods or documented mercury releases. The revised and supplemented table may be circulated to the group for comments and input, and the discussion at the next online meeting. Experts are invited to provide information on release estimation methods or documented releases, if such information is not included in the past submissions. Her proposal was supported by the group.

#### **4. Any other business**

At the invitation by the co-chair, the Secretariat clarified the policy for the participation of observers. It noted that the COP decisions do not limit the numbers of the observers, but they provide recommended qualifications of observers. If the Secretariat receives a request for observer participation, it will request information on the expertise of those who wish to participate, and check them against the recommended qualifications. Such information will be made available to members if requested.

The group agreed that the next online meeting should take place in a July-August frame, considering that group has a remaining task of reviewing the list of source categories carefully. The Secretariat will do a Doodle poll to set up a date in the weeks of 20 and 27 July. The Secretariat noted that it intended to spend more time to work on the table of point sources, but since the group agreed to meet in July, it will quickly reflect the comments received so far as well as the discussion today, and circulate a draft short list well before the next online meeting.