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**United Nations
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**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
First meeting**

Geneva, 24–29 September 2017

Item 5 (b) (i) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for action by the Conference of the Parties at its
first meeting: matters stipulated by the Conference of
Plenipotentiaries: provisions for the functions of the
permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention**

**Revised report on proposals on how the Executive Director of
the United Nations Environment Programme would perform
the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata
Convention on Mercury**

Note by the secretariat

1. In paragraph 9 of the resolution on arrangements in the interim period, adopted within the Final Act (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/CONF/4, annex I), the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury, held in Kumamoto, Japan, on 10 and 11 October 2013, requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to present and the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury to consider, before the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a report on proposals on how he or she would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Convention, including an analysis of options that, inter alia, addressed effectiveness, cost-benefit, different locations for the secretariat, merging the secretariat with the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and utilizing the interim secretariat.
2. As requested by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, the Executive Director of UNEP, through the interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention and in consultation with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, prepared a report on proposals on how the Executive Director would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention, for consideration by the intergovernmental negotiating committee at its seventh session.
3. At its sixth session, held in Bangkok from 3 to 7 November 2014, the intergovernmental negotiating committee requested the interim secretariat to invite offers by Governments interested in hosting the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention and to compile and analyse any such offers for consideration by the committee at its seventh session. In June 2015, an offer was received from the Government of Switzerland to physically host the secretariat in Geneva and to provide financial support to the Minamata Convention on Mercury in the case of its permanent secretariat being fully merged into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

* UNEP/MC/COP.1/1.

4. At its seventh session, the intergovernmental negotiating committee had before it the following documents for its consideration:
 - (a) The report on proposals on how the Executive Director of UNEP would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15), which includes an analysis of options that, inter alia, addresses effectiveness, cost–benefit, different locations for the secretariat, merging the secretariat with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and utilizing the interim secretariat. The report contains the following options for the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention: option 1 (a): a merger into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva); option 1 (b): a merger into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a fourth branch (location: Geneva); and option 2: utilizing the interim secretariat (location: to be determined based on an analysis among the following UNEP duty stations: Bangkok; Geneva; Nairobi; Osaka, Japan; Vienna; Washington, D.C.);
 - (b) An offer by the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Geneva (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/INF/5), received in June 2015;
 - (c) An analysis of offers to host the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/16), which sets out an analysis of the offer by the interim secretariat, as requested by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries.
5. Following the discussions at its seventh session, the committee agreed that the report on proposals on how the Executive Director of UNEP would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat would be revised in the light of the discussions that had taken place. The revised report would respond to how the required political visibility and appropriate strategic, substantive and technical staff time would be given to the new Minamata Convention. The committee also requested more information on the full costs of running a permanent secretariat at each of the proposed locations; including the costs of holding meetings at each location; and the travel costs for staff to participate in key chemicals and waste meetings in Geneva were the permanent secretariat to be located elsewhere.
6. In response to the discussion on the offer by the Government of Switzerland to host the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention in Geneva, the committee also requested the Government of Switzerland to further clarify aspects of its offer, particularly with regard to the conditionality of the offer.
7. The subsequent clarification from the Government of Switzerland was received on 27 June 2017 (UNEP/MC/COP.1/INF/8). An analysis of the clarification is set out in document UNEP/MC/COP.1/28.
8. Two further documents are related to the consideration of the permanent secretariat: UNEP/MC/COP.1/18/Rev.1 sets out a draft decision on the physical location of the permanent secretariat, namely Bangkok, Geneva, Nairobi, Osaka, Vienna or Washington, D.C., the six locations identified in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15; and document UNEP/MC/COP.1/21/Add.2, as part of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2018–2019, sets out the projected staffing resource requirements needed to perform the secretariat functions of the different secretariat arrangement options, as well as the staffing resource requirements if a standalone secretariat is located in one the other five possible locations.
9. As requested by the committee at its seventh session, the annex to the present note sets out the revised report of the Executive Director on proposals on how he would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Convention, taking into account the discussions at the seventh session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and responding to requests to provide additional information on specific aspects to the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury at its first meeting.
10. In considering the proposed options, the Conference of the Parties may wish to balance the needs and requirements for secretariat effectiveness in the early period after entry into force, particularly in the period between the first and the second meetings of the Conference of the Parties, with long-term opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.

Suggested action by the Conference of the Parties

11. The Conference of the Parties may wish to review and discuss the different proposed options for performing the functions of the secretariat, as well as the options proposed for its location as set out in the present note and other documents. In summary, these options are: Option 1 (a) (merger): merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure, Option 1 (b) (branch): merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch, and Option 2 (standalone): establishing a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention.

12. Further to that deliberation, the Conference of the Parties may wish to adopt a decision in which it makes a recommendation to the Executive Director on one of the three proposed options outlined in the present note, and provide any other guidance as appropriate, bearing in mind that, in accordance with paragraph 4 of article 24 of the Minamata Convention, the Conference of the Parties may wish to provide guidance on cooperation and coordination between the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the secretariat of the other chemicals and waste conventions.

13. If the establishment of a standalone secretariat is recommended, the Conference of the Parties may wish to make a recommendation on where the secretariat should be located.

Annex

Revised report on proposals on how the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury

A. Background

1. The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted and opened for signature at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, held in Kumamoto, Japan, on 10 October 2013. During the negotiating process, the work of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury has been supported by secretariat services provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), through its Chemicals and Waste Branch within the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics.¹ Upon entry into force, the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury will be performed by the Executive Director of UNEP, as set out in paragraph 3 of article 24 of the Convention, unless the Conference of the Parties decides, by a three-fourths majority of the parties present and voting, to entrust the secretariat functions to one or more other international organizations.

2. At the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, further consideration was given to how the Executive Director of UNEP could perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Convention. Through the Final Act, Governments requested the Executive Director to present and the committee to consider, before the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a report on proposals on how he would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Convention.

3. At its seventh session, the intergovernmental negotiating committee therefore considered a report on proposed options on how the Executive Director of UNEP would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15).

The seventh session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee provided the first opportunity for a discussion by the committee on those options. The discussion captured a broad range of views on the matter.² Following the discussions of the committee at its seventh session, the chair indicated that the secretariat would revise document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15, taking into account the discussions, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting.

4. The present report is structured into four parts. The functions that the secretariat is expected to fulfil, according to article 24, are described in section B and supplemented by appendix I, which elaborates on the anticipated work of the Minamata Convention in the coming years. The factors to be considered in the analysis of options on how the Executive Director would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Convention, as identified by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, are presented in section C.

5. Section D of the present report provides an outline and analysis of the proposals of the Executive Director in terms of the secretariat arrangement structures and the staffing needed for each arrangement structure, as follows:

(a) **Option 1 (a) (merger):** Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva);

(b) **Option 1 (b) (branch):** Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva);

¹ In 2017, the Chemicals and Waste Branch was renamed the Chemicals and Health Branch, and the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics was renamed the Economy Division.

² The discussion on the agenda item is reflected in paragraphs 160–168 of the report of the intergovernmental negotiating committee on the work of its seventh session (UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/22/Rev.1).

(c) **Option 2 (standalone):** Establishing a standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention,³ with the location to be determined on the basis of an analysis of the following UNEP duty stations: Bangkok; Geneva; Nairobi; Osaka, Japan; Vienna; Washington, D.C.

6. Section D is supported by three appendices. Appendix II sets out the resources required for option 1 (a), option 1 (b) and option 2. Appendix III provides additional information on the structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions as context for considering how option 1 (a) (merger) and option 1 (b) (branch) might look in practice. Appendix IV sets out how a standalone secretariat, that is option 2 (standalone), might look in practice.

7. Throughout section D, a note has been made wherever an option has been strengthened or added to from the initial iteration of the report of the Executive Director.

B. Functions of the secretariat

8. As set out in article 24 of the Convention text, the functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention are:

(a) To make arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies and to provide them with services as required;

(b) To facilitate assistance to parties, particularly developing country parties and parties with economies in transition, on request, in the implementation of the Convention;

(c) To coordinate, as appropriate, with the secretariats of relevant international bodies, particularly other chemicals and waste conventions;

(d) To assist parties in the exchange of information related to the implementation of the Convention;

(e) To prepare and make available to the parties periodic reports on the basis of information received pursuant to articles 15 and 21 and other available information;

(f) To enter, under the overall guidance of the Conference of the Parties, into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions;

(g) To perform the other secretariat functions specified in the Convention and such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties.

9. In considering how the functions of the permanent secretariat are to be performed by the Executive Director of UNEP, the anticipated requirements of the Convention secretariat are used as a basis. A narrative of those requirements is included in appendix I to the present note. Furthermore, consideration was also given to how the interim secretariat has supported the intergovernmental negotiating committee.⁴ In addition, the synergies experiences of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions were taken into account. For those conventions, since 2012 the respective secretariat functions have been under the joint management of one Executive Secretary, according to which one secretariat serves the three conventions while respecting the legally autonomous nature of each convention.

C. Factors to be considered in the analysis of options on how to perform the functions of the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention

10. In paragraph 9 of its resolution on arrangements in the interim period, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention requested the Executive Director to present, and the intergovernmental negotiating committee to consider, a report on proposals on how he or she would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat, including an analysis of options addressing the following factors:

³ In document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15, this option was entitled “utilizing the interim secretariat”. As the permanent secretariat will replace the interim secretariat, for narrative clarity this option is entitled “establishing a standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention” in the present note.

⁴ Information on the activities of the interim secretariat is available in documents UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/22, UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/22/Corr.1, UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/INF/7, UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/21 and UNEP/MC/COP.1/20. The interim secretariat has made arrangements for seven meetings of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and meetings of its bureau; facilitated assistance to countries to support ratification and early implementation; and provided scientific and technical expertise to support and underpin the development of technical guidance, including guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practices that is to be presented for adoption at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

- (a) Effectiveness;
- (b) Cost-benefit;
- (c) Different locations for the secretariat;
- (d) Merging the secretariat with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
- (e) Utilizing the interim secretariat.

11. An analysis of the effectiveness of the secretariat arrangement options is to take into consideration the ability of the secretariat structure, in a variety of scenarios, to be responsive to the needs of parties in accordance with the Convention text and to deliver its functions in line with article 24. In considering the effectiveness of the secretariat arrangement options, relevant cooperation and coordination with other actors in the chemicals and waste cluster is also considered.

12. In terms of the cost-benefit of the secretariat arrangement options, consideration is given to the staffing cost implications of each of the options, as well as the potential benefits of each option.

13. With regard to the locations for the permanent secretariat, in the initial report by the Executive Director six locations (Bangkok, Geneva, Nairobi, Osaka, Vienna and Washington, D.C.) were proposed in the case of a standalone secretariat being established. The locations were based on two factors: the opportunity presented for cooperation and coordination on a substantive level with other parts of UNEP or with other entities and organizations that are directly involved in activities relating to the implementation of the Minamata Convention at that location; and the administrative, logistical and operational support available and a consideration of their relative costs. UNEP presently has offices in each of the six proposed locations, as well as host country agreement arrangements in place at the proposed locations.

14. With regard to merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, where the permanent secretariat would be located in Geneva under a joint Executive Secretary (D-2), consideration has been given to two options: Option 1 (a) (merger): a full merger of the secretariat functions into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions utilizing its current structure; and option 1 (b) (branch): a merger into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch, where the merger begins with a partial merger and moves towards a full merger at a later time, to be determined.

15. To establish a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention (option 2 (standalone)), the interim secretariat would be replaced by a standalone secretariat headed by a Minamata Convention Executive Secretary (D-1). Different locations are considered under this option, taking into account the relative costs of each location (i.e., salary costs in each location, as well as operational location costs, the costs of holding meetings in each location and the extra travel costs of staff to participate in chemicals and waste meetings in Geneva if the Minamata Convention secretariat is to be located in one of the other proposed locations.

16. Under all the secretariat arrangement options, administrative and fund management support to the secretariat of the Minamata Convention is assumed to be provided through programme support costs. In accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, 13 per cent of programme support costs are payable to UNEP with regard to expenditures made for Convention activities. In line with standard practice on the use of programme support costs, UNEP will provide an annual allocation to the Minamata Convention to help cover the costs of support services. The allocation is to cover the post of a P-3 Fund and Administrative Officer and one General Service post. As this support is the same under each secretariat arrangement option, the costs of administrative support are not specifically highlighted in the analysis below.

D. Proposals to perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention

17. The proposals on how the Executive Director of UNEP will perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention are presented in the following paragraphs.

1. Merging the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

18. In 2012, the secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions, as well as the UNEP part of the Rotterdam Convention secretariat,⁵ came under the joint management of a single Executive Secretary.⁶ The organizational structure of the three secretariats was adjusted to a matrix structure to better serve the three conventions. At the 2015 meetings of the conferences of the parties, it was agreed that a review would be carried out of the synergies arrangements and of the matrix management structure of the secretariat. The results of the review were presented to the 2017 meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The outcomes of the review of the synergies arrangements for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions are set out in joint documents UNEP/CHW.13/22-UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.8/21-UNEP/POPS/COP.8/25 and UNEP/CHW.13/22/Add.1-UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.8/21/Add.1-UNEP/POPS/COP.8/25/Add.1.

19. Following the second review of the synergies arrangements, the three conferences of the parties adopted identical decisions whereby they, among other things, welcomed the reports and requested the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to continue to seek opportunities for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to ensure policy coherence and enhance efficiency with a view to reducing the administrative burden and maximizing the effective and efficient use of resources at all levels.

20. Since the merging of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the conferences of the parties to those conventions have approved indicative staffing tables for costing purposes, authorizing the Executive Secretary to determine the staffing levels, numbers and structure of the secretariat in a flexible manner within the overall cost of staff indicated in the various budget decisions. The sharing of the staff costs in the General Trust Funds is decided by the three conferences of the parties in their respective budget decisions.

21. A merger of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions requires agreement by the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. At their 2017 meetings, the conferences of the parties, in their respective decisions on the programmes of work and budgets, agreed to invite the Executive Secretary of the three conventions “to continue cooperating on programmatic matters with the interim secretariat to the Minamata Convention and provide any secretariat support that may be requested and is fully funded by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention.”⁷

22. In considering merging the permanent secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, two possibilities are presented under this option, namely, merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva); or merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva).

Option 1 (a) (merger): Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure

Location: Geneva

Structure

23. Under this option, the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention would be fully merged into the current structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The functions to be performed for the Minamata Convention and all related staff positions would be divided among the existing three branches of the secretariat (the Conventions Operations Branch, the Technical Assistance Branch and the Scientific Support Branch), as well as through the Executive Office of the secretariat. The functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention would be delivered within this structure. The current structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions is set out in appendix III to the present report.

⁵ The secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention is co-administered by UNEP in Geneva and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome.

⁶ The Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions is at the D-2 level. The posts of Executive Secretary to the prior respective Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm convention secretariats were at the D-1 level.

⁷ Decisions BC-13/24, RC-13/24, SC-8/27 on the programmes of work and budgets of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions respectively for the biennium 2018–2019.

Staffing

24. Under this option, the functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention would be incorporated in the merged secretariat and the sharing of time and related costs of all posts in the merged secretariat would be determined and approved by each of the conferences of the parties to the four conventions. It is envisaged that the Minamata Convention pays for 20 per cent of the post of the Executive Secretary and of the Deputy Executive Secretary, as well as 20 per cent of the remaining posts currently budgeted in the general trust funds of the three conventions. The percentage for the Minamata Convention staff posts has been determined at 20 per cent, taking into account the expected level of activity of the respective conventions. The remaining 80 per cent staff time will be allocated for the implementation of the programmes of work of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

25. As a consequence, the functions of the Executive Secretary, Deputy Executive Secretary and Branch Chiefs, as well as functions currently supporting more than one convention, such as meetings coordination, legal and governance, technical assistance and capacity-building, scientific support, outreach and public awareness, information management and technology, administration, finance, human resources and resource mobilization, will be sourced from existing staff, with 20 per cent cost-sharing by the Minamata Convention. It should be noted that the fund and administrative functions are to be funded from the programme support costs generated by the Minamata Convention and are not cost-shared among the conventions. A P-3 fund and administration post and one General Service post will be created and funded by the programme support costs generated by the Minamata Convention.

26. In terms of additional staff to the newly merged secretariat, the following new positions are expected to be required: one P-4 officer (scientific support), one P-4 officer (capacity building and technical support), one P-3 officer (scientific support), one P-3 officer (capacity-building and technical assistance), one P-3 officer (conference coordination) and four General Service posts. Those posts would service all of the conventions, imply additional costs to parties to all four conventions and would be covered by the cost-sharing arrangement among the four conventions, that is, the Minamata Convention would be expected to cover 20 per cent of the posts currently budgeted for in the general trust funds of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, as well as of the new posts established.

27. Furthermore, the cost savings for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm convention parties generated by this option could be partially reinvested to strengthen the matrix structure of the joint secretariat to hire the equivalent of 1.5 P-3 Programme Officers (to cover the costs of functions such as legal support, knowledge management, outreach and information technology services).

Analysis

28. The delivery of the secretariat functions for the Minamata Convention would be fully merged into the matrix-based structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions under the authority of a joint Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the Minamata Convention. The legal autonomy of each of the conventions and related programmes of work would be maintained.

29. The delivery of the secretariat functions will be organized along the following existing areas of work: scientific matters, technical assistance and conventions operations, as well as the areas of work attached to the Executive Office, which include administration, finance, human resources and resource mobilization (see appendix III). The delivery of the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention would be fully integrated into the existing structure of the secretariat, which has been running in this manner since 2012.

30. To fulfil the additional secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention, a merged secretariat would require a total of six and a half new Professional staff posts and four new General Service posts. This marks an increase of two new Professional staff posts and one additional General Service post over the proposal presented in UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15. The costs for the existing staff of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, and the additional staff positions required for a merged secretariat that also fulfils secretariat functions for the Minamata Convention, would be shared across the four conventions. On the basis of the staffing requirements described above, the total staff costs for the Minamata Convention for this option (see appendix II, table 2) are estimated at **\$2,749,134/year**.

31. The interim secretariat currently covers a variety of tasks, including political coordination, meetings management, document preparation, scientific and technical support, awareness-raising and capacity-building. These functions are similar to those performed by the secretariat of the Basel,

Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The relocation of functions from the interim secretariat into the three branches and Executive Office of the secretariat will require the realignment of roles to match the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm secretariat structure and job reclassification of the positions. This would be similar to the adjustments that took place during the initial merger of the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. As with any change in an organizational structure, a change management process, in accordance with United Nations rules, may need to be undertaken. Existing staff of the secretariat will need to build their expertise in mercury and understanding of the Minamata Convention, and integrate the work of the Minamata Convention into their current and ongoing activities as they take on those additional roles.

32. The expectation is that merger arrangements may increase cooperation and operational synergies in a number of areas among the four conventions, including in science and technical activities, capacity-building and technical assistance, and policy, legal and governance activities. Increased opportunities are anticipated for joint activities, assisting countries in furthering their implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and putting in place their arrangements for the implementation of the Minamata Convention. Furthermore, this option may show opportunities for improved regional delivery over and above current joint activity, through the coordinated use of the regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm conventions, and the regional delivery aspects of the joint technical assistance programme.

Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch

Location: Geneva

Structure

33. Under this option, a Minamata Convention branch would be established under a joint Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the Minamata Convention. While the Executive Secretary would discharge the overall leadership, executive direction and oversight over the four conventions, the Minamata Convention branch would specifically coordinate and deliver policy and substantive activities related to the functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. The legal autonomy of each of the conventions and related programmes of work would be maintained.

34. The Minamata Convention branch would be supported by the Deputy Executive Secretary for administrative matters and other arrangements as required for the effective discharge of the functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. The Chief of the Minamata Convention branch would also be supported by the Chief of the Conventions Operations Branch for the functions related to making arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention and its subsidiary bodies. Support to the Chief of the Minamata Convention branch by the Deputy Executive Secretary and the Chief of the Conventions Operations Branch would be under the overall guidance and leadership of the Executive Secretary.

35. This approach would be in place until a further decision is made with the aim of fully merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the current structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, as presented in option 1 (a).

Staffing

36. The Minamata Convention branch would be composed of the following staff: one D-1 branch chief for policy and coordination, one P-4 officer for scientific matters, one P-3 officer for technical and science matters, one P-3 officer for technical assistance and capacity-building, one P-3 officer for knowledge management and reporting and four General Service posts.

37. In addition, to increase the capacity of the matrix structure to meet the needs of the Minamata Branch, the equivalent of 1.5 P-3 officers will need to be newly hired under the Chief of the Conventions Operations Branch to cover the costs for functions such as legal, outreach and public awareness, information technology and information management.

38. Similar to option 1 (a), where existing staff of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions would take on functions for the Minamata Convention, such positions would be cost-shared among the four conventions. In that regard, for calculation purposes, those positions have been estimated to amount to 40 per cent of a D-2 post (Executive Secretary), 20 per cent of a D-1 post (Deputy Executive Secretary) and 40 per cent of a P-5 post (Branch Chief, Conventions Operations Branch) to be paid by the Minamata Convention, and representing their contribution to the functions for the Minamata Convention.

39. It should be noted that the fund and administrative functions are to be funded from the programme support costs generated by the Minamata Convention and are not cost-shared among the conventions. A P-3 fund and administration post and one General Service post will be created and funded by the programme support costs generated by the Minamata Convention.

Analysis

40. The separate and dedicated Minamata Convention branch would enable attention to be focused on all matters related to mercury and the Minamata Convention in the early life of the Convention, and allow the Minamata Convention branch to draw on key strategic and key generic secretariat functions from the rest of the secretariat. The Minamata Convention branch would be responsible for policy and substantive elements in the programme of work of the Minamata Convention, including document preparation, the development of scientific and technical items, the facilitation of technical assistance and capacity-building, and support to parties in reporting and information exchange. Such an arrangement would also build on links already established with ongoing knowledge management and e-learning activities among multilateral agreements, including the InforMEA exchange and e-learning portal and the reporting portal built by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, so as to be informed of best practices and utilize scales of economy.

41. The Minamata Convention branch would draw on the Deputy Executive Secretary to manage administrative matters and other arrangements as may be required to effectively discharge the functions of the secretariat to the Minamata Convention. For meetings arrangements, the Minamata Convention branch would draw on the Chief of the Conventions Operation Branch to coordinate the preparation of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention and its subsidiary bodies.

42. In terms of staff costs, this option implies a reduction in overall costs to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, as three existing Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm staff posts would be co-funded by the Minamata Convention. Furthermore, it implies a strengthening of the existing matrix structure as 1.5 P-3 positions would be added to the current staff complement of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. Those 1.5 positions would be funded from the savings that the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions would derive from the Minamata Convention contribution.

43. The five new professional posts and four new General Service posts that would need to be created to fulfil Minamata Convention branch functions would be fully funded by the Minamata Convention.

44. In response to the calls for high political visibility and attention to the Minamata Convention during the deliberations at the Dead Sea, the following increases were introduced from the initial report of the Executive Director: the time of the D-2 Executive Secretary was raised from 20 per cent to 40 per cent; and the time for the P-5 Conventions Support Branch Chief was raised from 25 per cent to 40 per cent, recognizing that two meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention are expected to be held in the biennium 2018–2019. The revised proposal also raises the post of the Chief of the Minamata Convention branch from P-5 to D-1. Furthermore, while three General Service posts were proposed in the initial proposal, here four new General Service posts are proposed. Appendix III gives an outline for how this option could look in practice.

45. On the basis of the staffing requirements described above, the total staff costs for the option of a Minamata Convention branch (see appendix II, table 2) are estimated at **\$2,772,917/year**.

46. As this is an interim option with the aim of a full merger into the existing structure of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm secretariat, the option of a Minamata Convention branch would be the approach that is in place until a further decision is made.

47. The relocation of functions from the interim secretariat into the Minamata Conventions Branch of the merged secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the Minamata Convention will require the realignment of roles to fit with relevant parts of the current structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. Job classification of the new positions will need to be undertaken, and some adjustments to relevant existing positions would be required.

2. Establishing a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention

48. The Executive Director was also requested to consider utilizing the current interim secretariat in his analysis of options on how to perform the permanent secretariat functions. The current staff composition of the interim secretariat includes 40 per cent of one D-1 staff member, one P-5 staff member, one P-4 staff member, one P-3 staff member, 33 per cent of one Junior Professional Officer,

and two General Service staff members.⁸ For the option of a standalone secretariat six locations were proposed in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.7/15.

Option 2 (standalone): Establishing a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention

Structure

49. On the basis of the lessons learned from the existing interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention, the permanent secretariat to deliver the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention can be established as a standalone secretariat. With the addition of a number of new staff positions to the current structure of the interim secretariat, the permanent secretariat as a standalone secretariat will manage its activities, much like other similarly sized multilateral environmental agreements hosted by UNEP, such as the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

50. Support that had previously been provided to the interim secretariat by other entities within UNEP would be entirely performed by the staff of the standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention.⁹ Cooperative activities on technical assistance and scientific issues with other parts of UNEP would be utilized and built upon as has already been done in the period of the interim secretariat.

Staffing

51. The secretariat would be headed by the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention at the D-1 level, who would be supported by two service branches. The first branch (policy services) would focus on policy, science and meeting services, as well as coordination, as appropriate, with secretariats of relevant international bodies. The second branch (technical services) would focus on all activities related to capacity-building, technical assistance and the exchange of information related to the implementation of the Convention. Both branches would facilitate and support assistance to parties, as required or requested, in the implementation of the Convention.

52. The two branches would each be headed by a branch chief at the P-5 level. Under the Policy Services Branch, which focuses on policy and overall coordination, work on science and the science-policy interface would be carried out by a science officer at the P-4 level and a science policy outreach officer at the P-3 level. A legal officer at the P-3 level would work on legal guidance and general policy issues, and the coordination and preparation for conferences would be supported by another P-3 officer. Under the Technical Services Branch, which focuses on capacity-building and technical assistance, work on capacity-building and technical assistance would be carried out by an officer at the P-4 level. To assist exchange of information, a P-3 officer would lead knowledge management, information technology services and outreach to support capacity-building and technical assistance. The secretariat arrangement option would be supported by a total of four General Service staff members (see appendix IV for an outline of this option).

Analysis

53. Establishing a standalone secretariat headed by an executive secretary of the Minamata Convention would mean all the functions of the secretariat would be performed by its own staff complement. Legal services would be integral to the functions of the Policy Services Branch, while information management support services would be integral to the substantive information support services offered by the Technical Services Branch. Such an arrangement would build on the current

⁸ UNEP has approved successive projects covering the work of the interim secretariat since 2009. The work included arranging and providing support to seven meetings of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and meetings of its bureau, facilitating and supporting a range of technical assistance and other activities towards ratification and early implementation, and leading outreach and awareness-raising on the Convention. The interim secretariat has also provided scientific knowledge and technical support for intersessional work to develop technical guidance, including guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practices that is ready to be presented to the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting. In addition, the interim secretariat has cooperated and coordinated with the secretariat of relevant international bodies, most importantly the Global Environment Facility. The interim secretariat has prepared the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention and entered into administrative and contractual arrangements as required to effectively undertake these secretariat functions.

⁹ Such support included administrative support provided through the Chemicals and Health Branch; legal support provided by the Law Division, information technology support provided through the United Nations Office at Geneva; and surge support for conference servicing during peak meetings, and information management (particularly website server maintenance) provided through the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

structure of the interim secretariat and on the practices of the interim secretariat,¹⁰ as well as on links already established with ongoing knowledge management and e-learning activities among multilateral agreements, including the InforMEA exchange and e-learning portal and the reporting portal built by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, so as to be informed of best practices and utilize scales of economy.

54. A standalone secretariat would be supported by a small administrative services unit, which would consist of a P-3 Fund and Administrative Officer and a General Service post supported through programme support costs, in the same way as would be provided by the Minamata Convention in options 1 (a) and 1 (b).

55. Relocating the secretariat to a different duty station could imply a degree of discontinuity of work depending on the percentage of current staff of the interim secretariat that may or may not relocate to the new duty station. A location outside of Geneva may imply a reduction in opportunities for cooperation with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on a daily working level, although cooperation and coordination can be maintained through electronic means, building on current best practices with other partners, as well as scheduled visits.

56. Six locations were put forward in the initial report of the Executive Director, namely Bangkok, Geneva, Nairobi, Osaka, Vienna and Washington, D.C. The following table provides an overview analysis of the six locations:

Location	Description	Costs
<p>Bangkok (based on standard salary costs)</p>	<p>Bangkok is a regional United Nations hub housing the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and a range of other regional secretariats and regional offices of other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. Bangkok has emerged as an international transport hub with facilitative visa entry procedures. Bangkok also has suitable United Nations conference facilities.</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$2,140,500/year (see appendix II, table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$200,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs per meeting of the Conference of the Parties at this location are \$820,000;</p> <p>Estimated staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings are about \$40,000 for the biennium 2018–2019.</p> <p>For information, travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bangkok are about \$470,000.</p>
<p>Geneva (based on actual salary costs)</p>	<p>Based at International Environment House, the location would allow close cooperation with a number of entities in the chemicals and waste cluster, including the Chemicals and Health Branch, and in particular the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership, the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. Furthermore, for implementation purposes, Geneva also hosts the UNEP Regional Office for Europe and the global headquarters of the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization,</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$3,233,709/year (see appendix II, table 2 and table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$200,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs per meeting of the Conference of the Parties at this</p>

¹⁰ The current Minamata Convention website is hosted on the server of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, although the website itself was built through an external contract and is being maintained and adjusted as needed by the staff of the interim secretariat.

Location	Description	Costs
	<p>the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Trade Organization. The United Nations Office at Geneva, which is a United Nations headquarters duty station, the Economic Commission for Europe and numerous other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and associations are also located in Geneva. The presence of the permanent missions in Geneva – often with specific substantive expertise in the chemicals and waste cluster – provides the opportunity to give joint briefings related to chemicals and waste issues. Geneva also has suitable United Nations conference facilities.</p>	<p>location are \$1,300,000.</p> <p>Travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Geneva are estimated at \$850,000.</p>
<p>Nairobi (based on standard salary costs)</p>	<p>As the headquarters duty station of UNEP, Nairobi provides the opportunity for close cooperation with and support from other areas of the organization, in particular the Corporate Services Division, the Law Division, the Science Division, the Ecosystems Division and the Communications Division. Furthermore, the Ozone Secretariat is based in Nairobi, as is the UNEP Regional Office for Africa, numerous regional offices of United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations, and permanent missions. Nairobi also has suitable United Nations conference facilities.</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$2,074,550/year (see appendix II, table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$200,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs per meeting of the Conference of the Parties at this location are \$620,000;</p> <p>Estimated staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings are about \$36,000 for the biennium 2018–2019.</p> <p>Travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nairobi are estimated to be about \$630,000.</p>
<p>Osaka (based on standard salary costs)</p>	<p>For Osaka, the presence of the UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre, which is doing extensive work on waste, including mercury waste, is considered an advantage. The International Environmental Technology Centre is an extended part of the Chemicals and Health Branch of the Economy Division of UNEP. As Osaka does not have a United Nations conference facility, either commercial premises need to be rented or meetings can be convened in Bangkok, the closest city with suitable United Nations conference facilities.</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$2,674,800/year (see appendix II, table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$200,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs in Bangkok as a location for meetings of the Conference of the Parties are \$840,000 per meeting;</p> <p>Estimated staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings are about \$45,000 for the biennium 2018–2019.</p> <p>Estimated travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bangkok are about \$470,000.</p>

Location	Description	Costs
<p>Vienna (based on standard salary costs)</p>	<p>The location provides an opportunity for close cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, a key executing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) involved extensively in implementing activities related to the Minamata Convention, and the presence of permanent missions. The permanent secretariat could be co-hosted in the UNEP office with the interim secretariat of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. Vienna also has suitable United Nations conference facilities.</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$2,346,400/year (see appendix II, table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$250,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs per meeting of the Conference of the Parties at this location are \$870,000;</p> <p>Estimated staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings are about \$20,000 for the biennium 2018–2019.</p> <p>Travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Vienna are estimated to be about \$670,000.</p>
<p>Washington, D.C. (based on standard salary costs)</p>	<p>The location provides the opportunity for close cooperation with the secretariat of GEF and also the opportunity to work closely with the World Bank, another executing agency involved in implementation activities related to the Minamata Convention. The UNEP Regional Office for North America is based in Washington, D.C., and also hosts the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, which provides advice to GEF on strategies, policies and projects, including on matters related to the Minamata Convention. A presence in North America would also allow more direct links to the United Nations Development Programme, another executing agency of GEF involved in implementing activities related to the Minamata Convention. It also offers the opportunity to work with permanent missions. As Washington, D.C., does not offer a United Nations conference facility, either commercial meetings costs need to be factored in, or meetings could be held in Montreal, the closest city with suitable United Nations conference facilities (besides New York).</p>	<p>The staffing cost for this option is \$2,490,050/year (see appendix II, table 3).</p> <p>Furthermore, as per appendix II, table 4:</p> <p>Estimated secretariat operation costs at this location are \$450,000/year;</p> <p>Estimated costs in Montreal as a location for meetings of the Conference of the Parties are \$980,000 per meeting;</p> <p>Estimated staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings are about \$40,000 for the biennium 2018–2019.</p> <p>Estimated travel costs for funded technical delegates to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Montreal are about \$670,000.</p>

Appendix I

Functions of the secretariat of the Minamata Convention

1. In considering how the functions of the permanent secretariat are to be provided by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the anticipated requirements of the Convention are used as a basis. A narrative of such requirements is provided below. The narrative follows the functions as identified in article 24, and describes the projected work that the Convention would do over the coming years on the basis of the provisions in the Convention text and the expected decisions emanating from the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties. While the narrative speaks to all the areas of work of the Convention over the coming years, the note by the secretariat on the programme of work of the secretariat and budget for the period 2018–2019 (UNEP/MC/COP.1/21) describes the work of the secretariat for the first biennium of its operation.

A. To make arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies and to provide them with services as required

2. While the details are not yet elaborated, it is anticipated that parties will request an annual meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the first few meetings to enable rapid adoption of guidance that was not adopted at the first meeting. Experience with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions would indicate that it is likely that the first three meetings of the Conference of the Parties will be held on an annual basis and that parties may then decide to move to a two-year cycle. However, parties may determine that less frequent meetings may be appropriate, depending on the work to be undertaken. Some meetings of the Conference of the Parties may include a high-level segment.

3. In addition, the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting will identify the membership of the implementation and compliance committee, which will meet intersessionally, and will need to elaborate its rules of procedure and commence its work. The committee is considered somewhat small (15 members). At the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, additional subsidiary bodies of the Convention could be established for which secretariat services will be required.

4. The generic arrangements to be undertaken by the secretariat for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies include the issuing of invitation letters to parties and observers, including countries, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations; compilation of the list of participants; possibly negotiating a legal instrument with the country hosting the meeting if the meeting is held outside a United Nations headquarters venue, such as Geneva, Nairobi or Bangkok; arrangements for travel and payment of daily subsistence allowances for sponsored participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including facilitating visas and mobilizing resources in order to be able to support travel; booking of conference facilities, including all logistical arrangements, such as the provision of security, set-up of conference rooms, requests for suitable technology to support the meeting, side events and exhibition, media and outreach; and arrangements at the local level, including in non-headquarters duty stations (identification of suitable hotels).

5. On a technical level, the secretariat is responsible for the preparation of all meeting documents, including liaison and coordination with relevant actors, and working with Conference Services to ensure that edited and translated documents are available in a timely manner.

6. For high-level meetings, there may be special arrangements to support the attendance of senior representatives (such as ministers), including formal requests for travel and arrangements to facilitate access to the venue.

B. To facilitate assistance to parties, particularly developing country parties and parties with economies in transition, on request, in the implementation of this Convention

7. Capacity-building and technical assistance work will be required to support parties in their efforts to achieve full implementation of the Convention and to support non-parties in achieving early ratification and implementation. This work is expected to be more focused on needs identified through work on the Minamata Initial Assessments undertaken under the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

8. Work may be requested from the secretariat on all obligations under the Convention, including providing assistance with regard to supply and trade in mercury in relation to article 3 of the Convention, as well as trade in mercury-added products in relation to article 4 of the Convention.

9. Parties may also require assistance in the development and maintenance of inventories, including those needed to identify stocks of mercury (article 3), sources of supply of mercury (article 3), the manufacture of mercury-added products (article 4), facilities that use mercury or mercury compounds in manufacturing processes (article 5), artisanal and small-scale gold mining (article 7), emissions (article 8), releases (article 9), management of mercury wastes (article 11) and contaminated sites (article 12).

10. Parties may also require assistance in their obligations to control, and where feasible reduce, emissions of mercury from sources listed in Annex D to the Convention as required in article 8, as well as releases from identified sources as required in article 9. They may also require assistance in developing suitable interim storage for mercury intended for a use allowed to a party under the Convention, as well as in the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes.

11. Assistance may also be required to facilitate relevant work under article 17 (information exchange), article 18 (public information, awareness and education) and article 19 (research, development and monitoring). Collaborative work with the World Health Organization may be required to assist in the implementation of article 16 (health aspects).

12. The above areas of activities will be facilitated by the secretariat, in partnership with relevant actors, including, inter alia, the Chemicals and Health Branch of UNEP, the regional offices of UNEP, the Basel and Stockholm regional centres, as well as GEF and its implementing agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. Other international agencies involved in the work include the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the World Customs Organization and the World Trade Organization. As relevant, work may be facilitated by cooperation with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, and technical cooperation may be established with the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

C. To coordinate, as appropriate, with the secretariats of relevant international bodies, particularly other chemicals and waste conventions

13. Coordination of activities has been integral to much of the work of the interim secretariat during the negotiating process of the Minamata Convention. Such coordination is expected to be extended, particularly in the delivery of aspects of the financial mechanism following entry into force.

14. Such coordination of activities includes but is not limited to activities on capacity-building and technical assistance in cooperation with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, as well as other relevant secretariats of international bodies. Efforts will also be made with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions to ensure coordination in other activities, such as the planning of meetings calendars, to ensure maximum efficiency in the delivery of activities, as well as to avoid any overlap or challenges for attendance at relevant meetings. Coordination will also take place in relation to the work of the implementation and compliance committee. Much of this is already occurring on the basis of the organization of back-to-back meetings in the regions.

15. Coordination is also required with other secretariats, in particular the secretariat of GEF to develop workplans and implement the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties to the Council of GEF.

D. To assist parties in the exchange of information related to the implementation of this Convention

16. Information exchange will require the establishment and maintenance of a formal structure, which will be necessary for parties to meet their obligations under the Convention. In particular during its establishment phase, the information exchange platform is likely to require the allocation of resources and will benefit from early efforts by the interim secretariat to collaborate with other knowledge-sharing platforms such as InforMEA.

17. More concretely, the secretariat is requested under article 17 to facilitate cooperation in the exchange of information on a number of issues, as well as with relevant organizations, including the secretariats of multilateral environmental organizations and other international initiatives, in addition to information from parties. That information will include information from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with expertise in the area of mercury, and from national and international institutions with such expertise. Information exchange as it relates to article 17 covers the following:

- (a) Scientific, technical, economic and legal information concerning mercury and mercury compounds, including toxicological, ecotoxicological and safety information;
- (b) Information on the reduction or elimination of the production, use, trade, emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds;
- (c) Information on technically and economically viable alternatives to:
 - (i) Mercury-added products;
 - (ii) Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used;
 - (iii) Activities and processes that emit or release mercury or mercury compounds;
 including information on the health and environmental risks and economic and social costs and benefits of such alternatives;
- (d) Epidemiological information concerning health impacts associated with exposure to mercury and mercury compounds, in close cooperation with the World Health Organization and other relevant organizations, as appropriate.

18. In addition, other provisions of the Convention will require the secretariat to facilitate the exchange of information, such as provisions under the following articles:

- (a) Article 3, which requires the secretariat to maintain a public register of notifications of consent;
- (b) Article 4, which requires the secretariat, on the basis of information provided by parties, to collect and maintain information on mercury-added products and their alternatives, and to make such information publicly available, as well as information provided by a party on mercury-added products not covered by any known use of mercury-added products prior to the date of entry into force of the Convention for it and any other relevant information submitted by parties;
- (c) Article 5, which requires the secretariat, on the basis of information provided by parties, to collect and maintain information on mercury-added products and their alternatives, and to make such information publicly available, as well as information provided by a party on the number and types of facilities within its territory that use mercury or mercury compounds for processes listed in Annex B and the estimated annual amount of mercury or mercury compounds used in those facilities and any other relevant information submitted by parties;
- (d) Article 6, which requires the secretariat to maintain a register of exemptions.

19. Lastly, the assistance of the secretariat may also be felt necessary in other areas where the exchange of information is called for, for instance under article 5, where parties are encouraged to exchange information on relevant new technological developments, economically and technically feasible mercury-free alternatives, and possible measures and techniques to reduce and where feasible to eliminate the use of mercury and mercury compounds in, and emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds from, the manufacturing processes listed in Annex B, or under article 18.

E. To prepare and make available to the parties periodic reports on the basis of information received pursuant to articles 15 and 21 and other available information

20. The work to prepare and make available to the parties periodic reports on the basis of information received pursuant to articles 15 and 21 and other available information is likely to involve outreach and communication with parties, including reminders in relation to reporting requirements, the circulation of the format for reporting and the provision of advice on completing the reports. As it is intended, as presented and discussed by the committee at its sixth session, to maintain electronic reporting to the extent possible, activities to set up the online structure, as well as ongoing maintenance of the structure, would be required. Following the receipt of reports from parties, the secretariat would need to confirm the completeness of the reports, and follow up with the submitting party should any information not be provided. The development of periodic reports to the parties will require the compilation and analysis of submitted information.

21. The establishment of the reporting platform will benefit from the early efforts by the interim secretariat to collaborate with other knowledge-sharing platforms and well-functioning reporting portals such as the one built by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre for various other multilateral environmental agreements.

F. To enter, under the overall guidance of the Conference of the Parties, into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions

22. The administrative and contractual arrangements that will be required for the performance of the functions of the secretariat will be influenced to some extent by the location of the secretariat, in addition to the following, inter alia:

(a) Development of agreements related to the provision of suitable office facilities for the secretariat;

(b) Establishment of the administrative arrangements associated with the administration of the trust fund for the receipt of assessed contributions (General Trust Fund) and of the trust fund for the receipt of voluntary contributions (Special Trust Fund), including arrangements for the use of any programme support costs charged to support the activities of the secretariat;

(c) Arrangements for suitable staffing of the secretariat, including, as appropriate, the development of job descriptions in line with the agreed budget and the recruitment of suitably qualified staff into such positions;

(d) Arrangements for the provision of suitable information technology infrastructure and ongoing support;

(e) Any contractual arrangements with partners that may be required for holding meetings or delivering activities through such partners to support any activities undertaken by the secretariat.

G. To perform the other secretariat functions specified in the Convention and such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties

23. In relation to other secretariat functions, it is anticipated that the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting will adopt the technical guidance on air emissions required by the Convention. Other than updating this guidance as needed, or developing guidance on new sectors that may be added to Annex D to the Convention, limited further work is anticipated.

24. The Convention identifies that the Conference of the Parties will, as soon as practicable, adopt guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practice for releases and the methodology for preparing inventories of releases. As parties are only obligated to identify their relevant point sources of releases within three years after the date of entry into force, the work on developing guidance on releases may not commence within the period of the annual meetings of the Conference.

25. Other guidance required under the Convention, such as in relation to supply, storage, waste and contaminated sites may require further work, particularly in the initial phase after the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Appendix II

Resource requirements for the proposals on how the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury

1. The present appendix with its four tables corresponds to Section D and provides an overview of the resource requirements for the proposals on how the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat for the Minamata Convention on Mercury.
2. Table 1 provides an overview of the staff posts for each of the options:
 - (a) Option 1 (a) (merger): Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva);
 - (b) Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a fourth branch (location: Geneva);
 - (c) Option 2 (standalone): Establishing a standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention, with the location to be determined on the basis of an analysis of the following UNEP duty stations: Bangkok, Geneva, Nairobi, Osaka, Vienna and Washington, D.C.
3. Table 2 provides an overview of the total projected staffing costs for option 1 (a), option 1 (b) and option 2 on how the Executive Director would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat in Geneva.
4. Table 3 provides an overview of the total projected staffing costs of a standalone secretariat in any of the six proposed locations (option 2).
5. Table 4 responds to the request made by the intergovernmental negotiating committee for more information on the following areas: an estimate of the full costs of running a robust secretariat at each proposed location; an estimate of the full costs of holding meetings at each location; and an estimate of travel costs for staff to participate in key chemicals and waste meetings in Geneva if the permanent secretariat is located in one of the other five proposed locations. An estimate of the daily subsistence rate totals for funded participants for a meeting of the Conference of the Parties held at the six secretariat locations is indicated for location comparison purposes.

Table 1
Indicative staffing tables for the proposed options for the secretariat of the Minamata Convention

Option 1 (a) (merger): Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva)				
Staff category and level	<i>Total proposed for the Minamata Convention secretariat 2018–2019</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Minamata Convention-funded Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata conventions posts</i>	<i>New funded posts for Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata conventions</i>	<i>Minamata Convention posts funded by programme support costs</i>	
A. Professional categories				
D-2	20% of 1.00			0.20
D-1	20% of 1.00			0.20
P-5	20% of 7.00			1.40
P-4	20% of 7.00	20% of 2		1.80
P-3	20% of 16.00	20% of 4.5	1.00	5.10
P-2	20% of 2.00			0.40
Subtotal A	6.80	1.30	1.00	9.10

B. General Service category	20% of 12.00	20% of 4	1.00	4.20
Subtotal B	2.40	0.80	1.00	4.20
TOTAL (A+B)	9.20	2.10	2.00	13.30
Remarks	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	

Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva)

Staff category and level	Total proposed for the Minamata Convention secretariat 2018–2019			
	<i>Minamata Convention-funded Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata conventions posts</i>	<i>New Minamata Convention-funded posts</i>	<i>Minamata Convention posts funded by programme support costs</i>	<i>Total</i>
A. Professional categories				
D-2	0.40			0.40
D-1	0.20	1.00		1.20
P-5	0.40			0.40
P-4		1.00		1.00
P-3	1.50	3.00	1.00	5.50
P-2				
Subtotal A	2.50	5.00	1.00	8.50
B. General Service category		4.00	1.00	5.00
Subtotal B		4.00	1.00	5.00
TOTAL (A+B)	2.50	9.00	2.00	13.50
Remarks	<i>a</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	

Option 2 (standalone): Standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention (location: to be confirmed among Bangkok, Geneva, Nairobi, Osaka, Vienna and Washington, D.C.)

Staff category and level	Total proposed for the Minamata Convention secretariat 2018–2019			
	<i>Minamata-Convention funded Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata convention posts</i>	<i>New Minamata Convention-funded posts</i>	<i>Minamata Convention posts funded by programme support costs</i>	<i>Total</i>
A. Professional categories				
D-2				
D-1		1.00		1.00
P-5		2.00		2.00
P-4		2.00		2.00
P-3		4.00	1.00	5.00
P-2				
Subtotal A		9.00	1.00	10.00
B. General Service category		4.00	1.00	5.00
Subtotal B		4.00	1.00	5.00
TOTAL (A+B)		13.00	2.00	15.00
Remarks		<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	

Remarks

- In the case of a merger of the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, this refers to posts of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions budgeted in the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions' general trust funds for 2018–2019, to be co-funded by Minamata Convention assessed contributions.
- In the case of a merger of the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention with the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, this refers to new posts co-funded by the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and Minamata Convention assessed contributions.
- Minamata Convention posts funded by programme support costs of 13 per cent generated by the Minamata Convention.
- Minamata Convention posts funded by Minamata Convention assessed contributions.

Table 2

Projected staffing costs for the proposals on how the Executive Director would perform the functions of the permanent secretariat in Geneva, per year
(in United States dollars)

	<i>Option 1 (a) (merger): Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm secretariat, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva)</i>	<i>Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm secretariat by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva)</i>	<i>Option 2 (standalone): Standalone secretariat of the Minamata Convention (location: Geneva.)</i>
<i>Total staff</i>	13.30	13.50	15
<i>Total staff costs (core excluding programme support costs)</i>	2 749 134	2 772 917	3 233 709
<i>Programme support costs on staff costs</i>	357 387	360 479	420 382
<i>Total staff costs (core including programme support costs)</i>	3 106 521	3 133 396	3 654 091

Table 3

Projected staffing costs for a standalone secretariat in the six proposed locations, per year
(in United States dollars)

	<i>Option 2: Standalone Minamata Convention secretariat</i>					
	<i>Bangkok</i>	<i>Geneva</i>	<i>Nairobi</i>	<i>Osaka</i>	<i>Vienna</i>	<i>Washington</i>
<i>Total staff</i>	15	15	15	15	15	15
<i>Total staff costs (core excluding programme support costs)</i>	2 140 500	3 233 709	2 074 550	2 674 800	2 346 400	2 490 050
<i>Programme support costs on staff costs</i>	278 265	420 382	269 692	347 724	305 032	323 707
<i>Total staff costs (core including programme support costs)</i>	2 418 765	3 654 091	2 344 242	3 022 524	2 651 432	2 813 757

Table 4

Overview of estimate of the full costs of running a secretariat in the six proposed locations (including office costs, meeting costs and staff travel costs for Geneva-based meetings)
(in United States dollars)

Estimated approximate full costs of running a secretariat in the six proposed locations							
Remarks	Bangkok	Geneva	Nairobi	Osaka	Vienna	Washington, D.C.	
Estimated secretariat operation costs (including office space and common services costs)	1	200,000/year	200,000/year	200,000/year	200,000/year	250,000/year	450,000/year
Estimated costs of meetings of the Conference of the Parties	2	820,000/meeting	1,300,000/meeting	620,000/meeting	840,000/meeting	870,000/meeting	980,000/meeting
Funded delegates travel to the meeting of the Conference of the Parties	3	470,000/meeting	850,000/meeting	630,000/meeting	470,000/meeting	670,000/meeting	850,000/meeting
Estimated secretariat staff travel costs to Geneva for chemicals and waste meetings	4	40,000/biennium	0	36,000/biennium	45,000/biennium	20,000/biennium	40,000/biennium
Remarks					5, 6		5

Remarks:

- Depending on the location, the estimated office space and common service costs may include rent, office usage and maintenance fees, security fees, full desk setup, common service charges and other related charges to maintain full required secretariat office operations.
- Estimated costs of meetings of the Conference of the Parties refer to costs at the specific location and may include venue rental costs, related venue non-rent costs, venue security costs, United Nations office charges and conference services charges. For Osaka and Washington, D.C., the estimate also includes the cost of secretariat travel to Bangkok and Montreal as proposed conference venues. The meeting costs exclude funded delegate travel to the location.
- This estimate is calculated on the basis of the current daily subsistence rates for the locations, an estimate of flight costs to the location and terminal expenses as per the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules
- This amount is to be added to the \$200,000 currently set in the programme of work and budget for staff travel. The travel covers estimated secretariat staff travel costs to attend one meeting of the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization and two meetings related to the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals in Geneva. Those missions to Geneva will also serve as an opportunity for interaction with colleagues from UNEP and other chemicals-and-waste-related organizations based in Geneva.
- As there is no United Nations conference venue in Osaka or Washington, D.C., and reliance on commercial venues may not necessarily be feasible for budgetary reasons without additional allocations, the costs for meetings for a secretariat based in Osaka and Washington, D.C., are based on cost estimates of holding a meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bangkok and Montreal respectively, as those cities present the closest viable United Nations conference venues.
- Office operation costs for Osaka are given for calculation purposes only and are on the basis of the current conditions for the International Environmental Technology Centre based in Osaka. The Centre is supported by a host country contribution and arrangements.

Appendix III

Merging into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

1. An overview of the structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions is provided as context for considering:

(a) Option 1 (a) (merger): Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva);

(b) Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva).

Overview: Structure of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

2. The secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions is headed by an Executive Secretary who is supported by an Executive Office and three branches: the Convention Operations Branch, the Technical Assistance Branch and the Scientific Support Branch.

3. The Executive Office covers the following corporate activities:

- (a) Leadership and executive direction;
- (b) Management, oversight and monitoring;
- (c) Synergies coordination;
- (d) Administration (finance, budget, human resources);
- (e) Resource mobilization;
- (f) Coordination with the financial mechanism under the Stockholm Convention.

4. The Conventions Operations Branch is responsible for the following:

- (a) Management of meetings of the conferences of the parties and subsidiary bodies;
- (b) Legal and governance;
- (c) Compliance;
- (d) International cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations;
- (e) Cooperation on the Rotterdam Convention between UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- (f) Conference services;
- (g) Knowledge/information management and public awareness;
- (h) Information technology.

5. The Technical Assistance Branch is responsible for the following:

- (a) Development and management of the technical assistance programme for the conventions;
- (b) Needs assessments (including national implementation plans, national action plans, etc.);
- (c) Capacity-building and training activities (including projects, workshops, webinars, online training, etc.);
- (d) Partnerships;
- (e) Regional centres.

6. The Scientific Support Branch is responsible for the following:
- (a) Providing technical and scientific input;
 - (b) Supporting the scientific work of the conferences of the parties and their subsidiary bodies, including intersessional work;
 - (c) Developing technical documents, including guidelines and guidance;
 - (d) Managing the collection, review, assessment and evaluation of scientific and technical information;
 - (e) Drawing up national reports, notifications and exemptions.

Table 1

Option 1 (a) (merger) Merging the secretariat functions of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, utilizing its current structure (location: Geneva)		
Executive services		
Executive Secretary		20% of D-2
Deputy Executive Secretary		20% of D-1
Other staff		2xP-5, P-4, 2xGS
Posts	Current Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm convention staff (approximate average of 20% time for Minamata Convention)	Additional staff
Scientific support	P-5, 2.5xP-4, 4xP-3, P2,	P-4, P-3
Capacity-building and technical assistance	2xP-5, 2xP-4, 3xP-3	P-4, P-3
Conference	P-5, 0.5xP-4, 5xP-3	P-3
Legal support	P-4, 2xP-3	0.5xP-3
Knowledge management, outreach and information technology	P-5, 2xP-3, P-2	P-3
Other staff	10xGS	4xGS
Administrative support through programme support costs: Administrative and Fund Management Officer 1x General Service staff		P-3 1xGS

Table 2

Option 1 (b) (branch): Merging the secretariat of the Minamata Convention into the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions by creating, in the interim, a Minamata Convention branch (location: Geneva).	
Executive services	
Executive Secretary	40% of D-2
Deputy Executive Secretary	20% of D-1
Minamata Convention branch	
Minamata Branch Chief	D-1
Science	P-4
Technical and science	P-3
Technical assistance and capacity-building	P-3
Knowledge management and reporting	P-3
Other staff	4xGs
Further new posts:	
Outreach and public awareness, information technology and information management	2x50% of P-3
Legal Officer	50% of P-3
Further cost-shared post:	
Branch Chief: Operations	40% of P-5
Administrative support through programme support costs:	
Administrative and Fund Management Officer	P-3
1x General Service staff	1xGS

Appendix IV

Establishing a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention

Option 2 (standalone): Establishing a standalone secretariat for the Minamata Convention			
Executive services			
Executive Secretary			D-1
Other staff			1xGS
Policy Services Branch		Technical Services Branch	
Branch Chief: Policy	P-5	Branch Chief: Technical	P-5
Science and policy	P-4	Capacity-building and technical assistance	P-4
Science policy outreach	P-3	Knowledge management, outreach and information technology	P-3
Legal	P-3		
Conference	P-3		
Other staff	2xGS	Other staff	1xGS
Administrative support through programme support costs:			
Administrative and Fund Management Officer			P-3
1x General Service staff			1xGS