

MINAMATA CONVENTION IN 2022

Progress Report on activities



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Foreword

I invite you to read the 2022 edition of our Progress Report, a publication that provides an overview of the latest developments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury, including but not limited to our fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-4). A lot of significant work, collaborations and preparations take place before and after our COPs, and this publication aims to illustrate a small but significant part of this.

One such major development is the amendment of the Convention to ban manufacture, import and export of eight additional mercury-added products, adopted by Parties at COP-4 in 2022. The newly amended Annex A, set to enter into force on 28 September, will further reduce demand for mercury on the market, will reduce mercury exposures and will result in less mercury waste. Having new binding requirements agreed by countries during a single Conference of the Parties is quite an achievement and a proof that the Convention works. The upcoming fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, from 30 October to 3 November 2023, will consider the further strengthening of Annex A as well as of Annex B regulating industrial processes using mercury.

To ensure that the Convention is effective in its design and implementation, Parties regularly review progress in implementing the Convention, based on national reporting and other sources of information. Parties have also initiated the first evaluation of the effectiveness of the Convention. These processes utilize best available science and data to provide the most complete and accurate picture of how we are meeting the objective of the Convention.

More concretely, you will read in this report about a new open-ended scientific group established by COP-4. The group will provide the Conference of the Parties with comparable data on the presence and movement of mercury in the environment as well as trends in levels of mercury observed in biotic media and vulnerable populations. The group operates on the basis of unprecedented transparency and inclusiveness, as each party can nominate its representative to the group, with its work is supported by a roster of additional experts as well as invited stakeholders.

The publication highlights an impressive rate of over 90% of Parties who submitted to the Secretariat their first full national reports on the implementation of the Convention. This national reporting provides an increasingly clear picture of the discrete needs of each of the Parties and challenges they face. This information is well timed with the record eighth GEF replenishment, to feed into development of its new programmes and projects to implement the Convention in 2022–2026.

From this report you will also learn how the cooperation among the secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, often facilitated or convened by UNEP, has flourished. The Secretariat cooperates with colleagues on digitalization (through InforMEA), gender, servicing the Conferences of the Parties, enhancing linkages between mercury and biodiversity, and more.

I want to offer a warm welcome to new countries who have joined the Minamata Convention in the past year. There are many benefits of becoming a party to the Convention, and we hope this report gives you a glimpse of what we can accomplish together.



Monika Stankiewicz

Monika Stankiewicz

Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention



Bali, Indonesia

New global commitment to strengthen efforts against toxic mercury achieved at Minamata Convention COP-4

The second segment of the [fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury](#) (COP-4) took place in Bali, Indonesia, from 21–25 March 2022. Building upon the work developed at the first online segment in November 2021, the resumed Conference was held with the goal of evaluating, expanding and strengthening efforts against toxic mercury pollution. Representatives of hundreds of Parties and organizations gathered to develop a framework to evaluate the Convention's effectiveness and to review the annex on mercury-added products, as well as to advance the phase-down of dental amalgam and the mainstreaming of gender within the activities of the Convention. Another outcome of the meeting was a Global Environment Facility (GEF) report to support Parties in implementing the Convention's provisions.

The first day saw the presentation of the Bali Declaration, a non-binding political declaration on enhancing international cooperation, developing practical tools to monitor and share information and promoting the exchange of experiences and practices to combat the illegal trade of mercury. The meeting was further enriched by voices from civil society, partner organizations and Indigenous Peoples, who contributed their expertise and knowledge on the needs and realities on the ground.

The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will convene in Geneva, Switzerland, from 30 October to 3 November 2023 under the presidency of Claudia Dumitru (Romania). The Bureau of COP-5 supports the preparations for the meeting, and includes nine Vice-Presidents: Anahit Aleksandryan (Armenia), Oarabile Serumola (Botswana), Roger Baro (Burkina Faso), Osvaldo Patricio Álvarez Pérez (Chile), Marie-Claire Lhenry (France), Sverre-Thomas Jahre (Norway), Syed Mujtaba Hussain (Pakistan), Cheryl Eugene-St.Romain (Saint Lucia), and Saeed A. Alzahrani (Saudi Arabia).



COP-5 President Claudia Dumitru, COP-4 President Rosa Vivien Ratnawati and Executive Secretary Monika Staňkiewicz

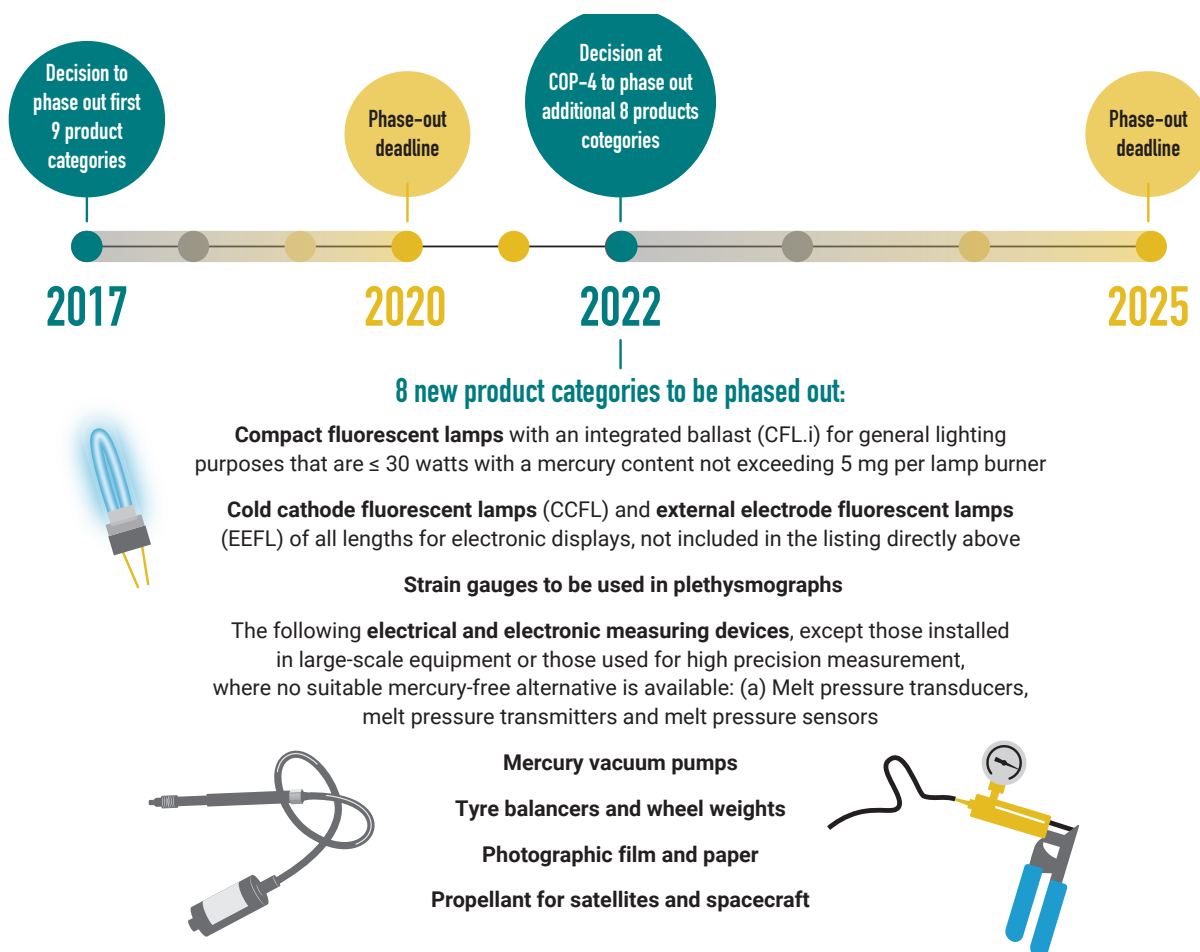
New mercury-added products to be phased out globally by 2025

Annex A of the Convention lists mercury-added products that are to be phased out: nine product categories that were to be eliminated by 2020. COP-4 amended the annex to add eight product categories to be phased out by 2025, including compact fluorescent lamps, photograph film and paper, and satellite propellant, based on availability and feasibility of non-mercury alternatives. The amendment also strengthened measures to phase down the use of dental amalgam by discontinuing its use in the dental treatment of children and pregnant women, and limiting its use to an encapsulated form.

The [amendment of Annex A](#) is the first since the Convention entered into force in 2017. The amendment was officially communicated to Parties on 28 September 2022 and will enter into force on 28 September 2023, unless Parties declare otherwise.

COP-4 also agreed that COP-5 will further consider the phase-out dates of four additional product categories, as well as introducing polyurethane production to part I of Annex B, which lists the manufacturing processes where the use of mercury is to be phased out. COP-5 will also examine the technical and economic feasibility of mercury-free alternatives for the production of vinyl chloride monomer and sodium or potassium methyllate or ethyllate, the processes in which mercury use is restricted by listing them in part II of Annex B.

[National reports](#) submitted under Article 21 of the Convention revealed that 33 out of 113 reporting Parties had not yet taken measures to implement the 2020 phase-out deadline for mercury-added products. With the financial support of the European Union, a global workshop will be convened by the Secretariat to help Parties to meet the 2020 deadline as well as the new 2025 deadline.





ASGM site

Taking action on artisanal and small-scale gold mining

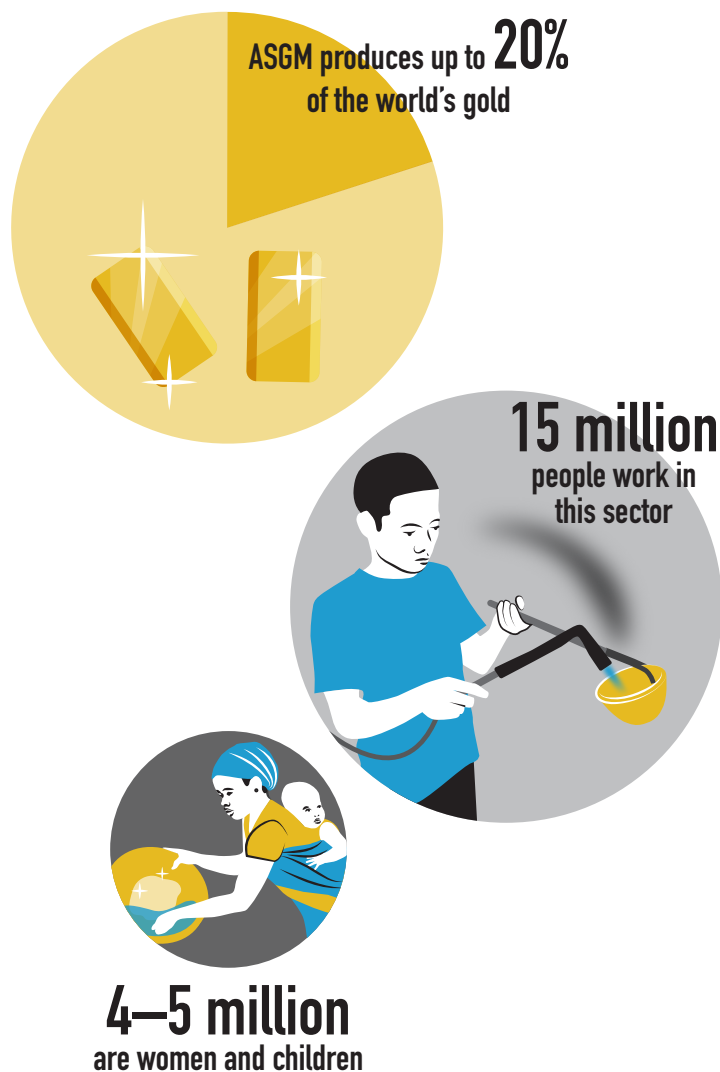
Minamata Convention Parties are addressing the largest global source of emissions and releases of mercury: artisanal and small-scale gold mining, or ASGM. The use of mercury in ASGM operations results in not only grave impacts on human health through direct inhalation of mercury vapours and contamination of fish and other food sources, but also devastating impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems.

National Action Plans

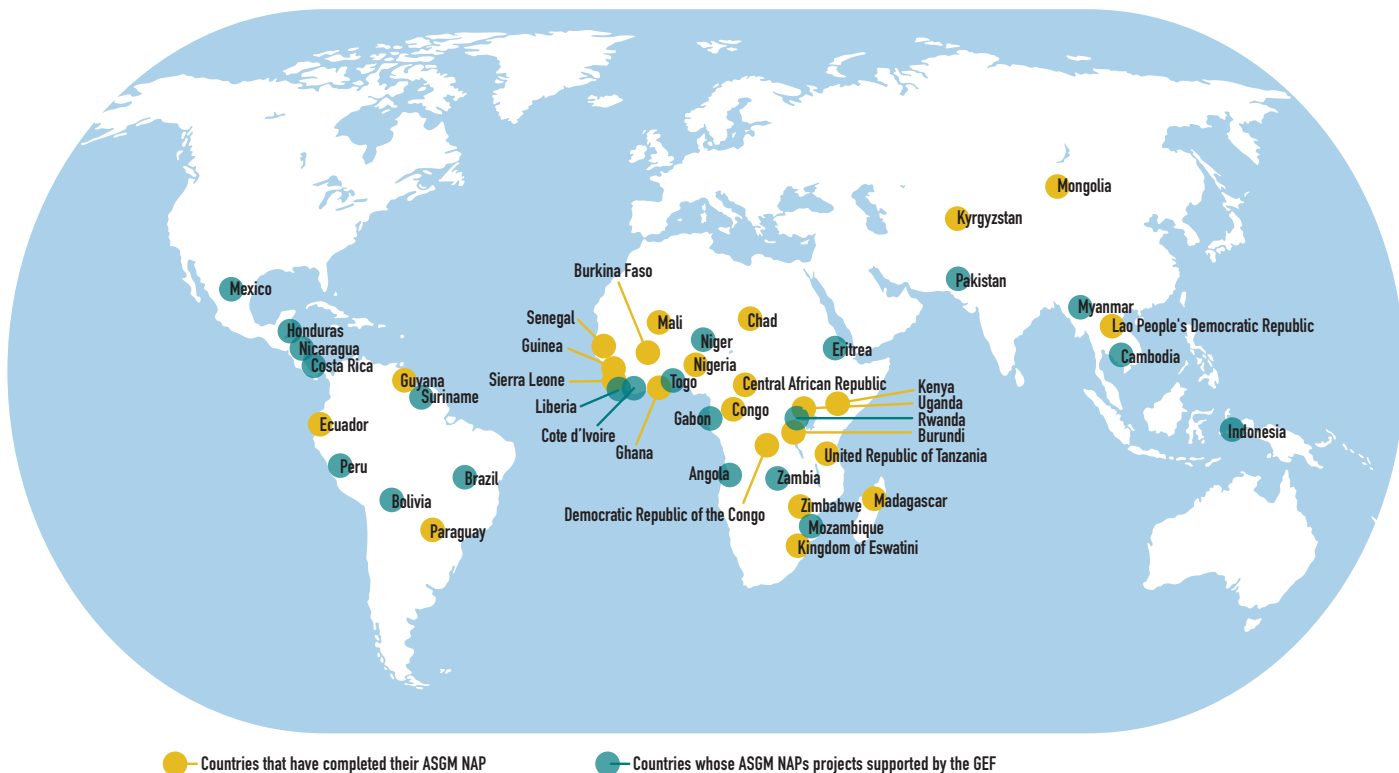
ASGM National Action Plans (NAPs) are one of the main instruments through which Parties are countering mercury emissions from artisanal mining. To date, 23 countries have completed and submitted their NAPs to the Secretariat. Another 25 NAP projects are underway through the support of the GEF.

ASGM NAPs are robust plans that include baseline estimates, strategies and reduction targets as called for in Annex C of the Convention and developed according to guidance from the COP. The guidance has recently been updated with new information on health strategies provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and on mine tailings management. Parties are expected to engage Indigenous Peoples, local communities and other relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of NAPs.

To assist Parties in implementing their NAPs, the GEF funds the [planetGOLD programme](#) to provide technical solutions for mercury elimination in ASGM, along with support for formalization, access to finance, and awareness raising. The expanded planetGOLD includes 22 Parties engaged in transforming this sector to apply mercury-free approaches in support of responsible gold supply chains. The Minamata Convention Executive Secretary addressed the opening session of planetGOLD's 2022 Global Forum on ASGM, a major knowledge-sharing event that brings together a wide range of stakeholders, to thank planetGOLD stakeholders for applying their expertise to the challenges presented by mercury use in ASGM, and to encourage the Forum's extremely relevant discussions on trade, supply chains, and financing, and the use of digital technologies.



ASGM National Action Plans



Mining practices and investments

The Minamata Convention, through its regulation of primary mercury mining, ASGM and mercury waste, including tailings, is an example of how the environmental sustainability of minerals and metals can be enhanced along their full lifecycle. Because tailings pose a risk to the environment and human health, especially if they contain residual mercury or other toxic materials that can leach into surface and ground water and contaminate soils, in March [COP-4 decided](#) to update the NAP guidance document with a chapter focusing on key principles and recommendations for ASGM tailings management.

Intergovernmental consultations convened by UNEP in the first half of 2022 are identifying opportunities for enhanced international cooperation in the mining sector as per UNEA [resolution 5/12](#), for consideration by UNEA-6 in 2024.



In this resolutions Member States and relevant stakeholders are encouraged to align their mining practices and their investments in mining with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with their obligations and decisions under MEAs. The Secretariat is engaged in this process to promote knowledge about the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

Human rights

The 51st Session of the Human Right Council in September 2022 discussed risks for human rights from the use of mercury in ASGM and included the presentation of a thematic report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Toxics, Marcos Orellana. Over 40 countries made statements about the importance of the issue, and most noted the significant work ongoing under the Minamata Convention. In her [statement](#) at the Council, the Executive Secretary underpinned that ASGM NAPs are a key to fulfilling the goals of the Convention.



Indigenous Peoples

COP-4 [requested](#) the Secretariat to compile views on the needs and priorities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities with regard to the use of mercury in ASGM. To start with, an [Indigenous Peoples Platform](#) has been created on the Convention website along with a group on a social media platform to facilitate the exchange of views. With generous funding from Norway, the Secretariat is preparing a survey and study to assess the needs and priorities of Indigenous Peoples with regard to the use of mercury in gold mining in the Amazon region to be ready in time for COP-5.



Convention supports the new global biodiversity framework

COP-4 adopted a decision on [international cooperation and coordination](#), recognizing the Minamata Convention's contribution to addressing the triple planetary crises of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change.

The Secretariat was requested to continue gathering knowledge, raising awareness, and demonstrating the contribution of the Convention to other international regulations and policies related to pollution, biodiversity, and climate change. Thanks to funding from Norway, the Secretariat is preparing a report, including recommendations, on how the Convention could contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for consideration at COP-5.

The framework, which was adopted in December 2022 by [COP-15 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity](#), defines goals and targets to reverse biodiversity loss and restore ecosystem functions.

Various mercury monitoring networks exist that generate valuable data on mercury levels at a global scale. As well as helping evaluate the effectiveness of the Minamata Convention, these monitoring efforts can contribute to measuring progress toward Target 7 of the framework, which aims under Goal A to reduce "pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services", as well as reducing the overall risk from highly hazardous chemicals by at least half.

Thanks to funding from Sweden, the Secretariat has finalized and will soon make available two exploratory studies to further demonstrate the contribution of the Convention to safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystem services. The studies focus on the impacts of mercury pollution on ecosystem functions and services, and on the socioeconomic impacts of mercury on fisheries and local livelihoods.

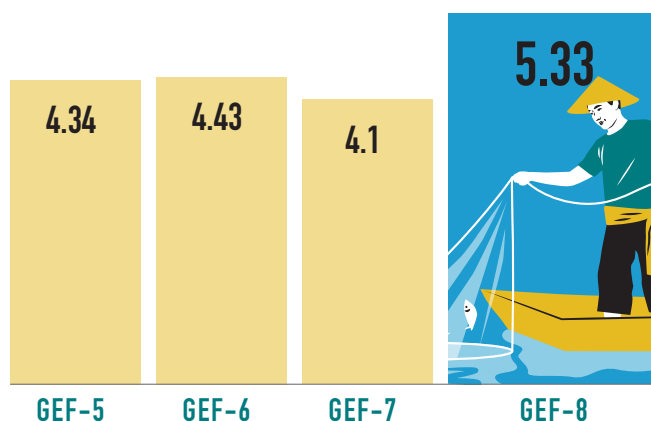
According to Executive Secretary Monika Stankiewicz, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework "will serve to amplify our common goals of protecting biodiversity and ending mercury pollution. To this end, the Minamata Convention stands ready to contribute to the Global Biodiversity Framework ambition and to a world of living in harmony with nature. I personally look forward to strengthening the ties with the CBD and other biodiversity-related conventions."

GEF provides more funds to address mercury

The historic eighth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, for which donor pledging concluded in April 2022, was welcomed by the Convention Parties, Secretariat and community. Twenty-nine countries have pledged a total of \$5.33 billion for the four-year GEF-8 programming cycle that started in July 2022, an increase of more than 30% over the previous cycle. Recognizing that action to address chemicals and waste, including through the Minamata Convention, is essential for the health of people and the planet, donors significantly increased the allocation for programmes and projects to support the implementation of the Convention's obligations to \$269 million.

The GEF supports an integrated approach to the challenges of biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, and chemicals and waste, maximizing the ability of individual programmes and projects to protect human health, biota, and ecosystems. Parties to the Convention have numerous deadlines and requirements to meet in the GEF-8 period. Support from the GEF will be instrumental in their ability to meet these on time and in full. From coal combustion and cement production to chlorine and PVC production, from thermometers to skin-lightening products, and throughout the entire lifecycle of mercury, the Minamata Convention provides a clear path forward. As GEF CEO Carlos Manuel Rodriguez stated during COP-4, "We believe that we have designed a strategy that will address the needs of the countries and the obligations of the Conventions in an integrated way. Collectively, these will propel us forward towards our shared goals to end pollution and make mercury history".

GEF-8 replenishment cycle (billion USD)



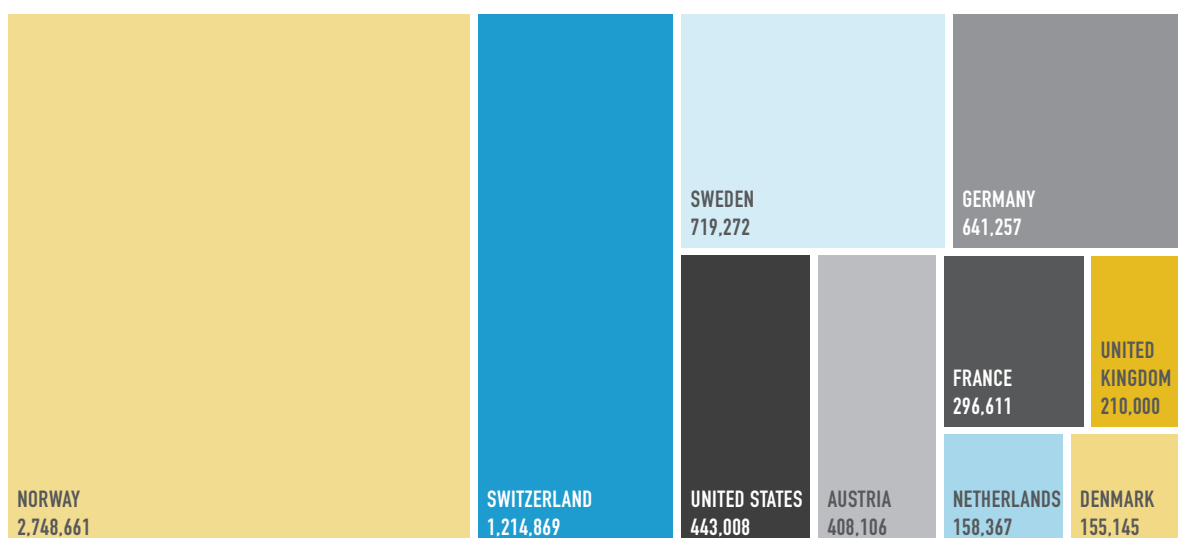
Five years of support for capacity-building and technical assistance

2022 marked the mid-point of the initial term of the [Specific International Programme to support Capacity Building and Technical Assistance](#) (SIP). The SIP is one of the two components of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention, together with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and it is administered through the Secretariat of the Convention.

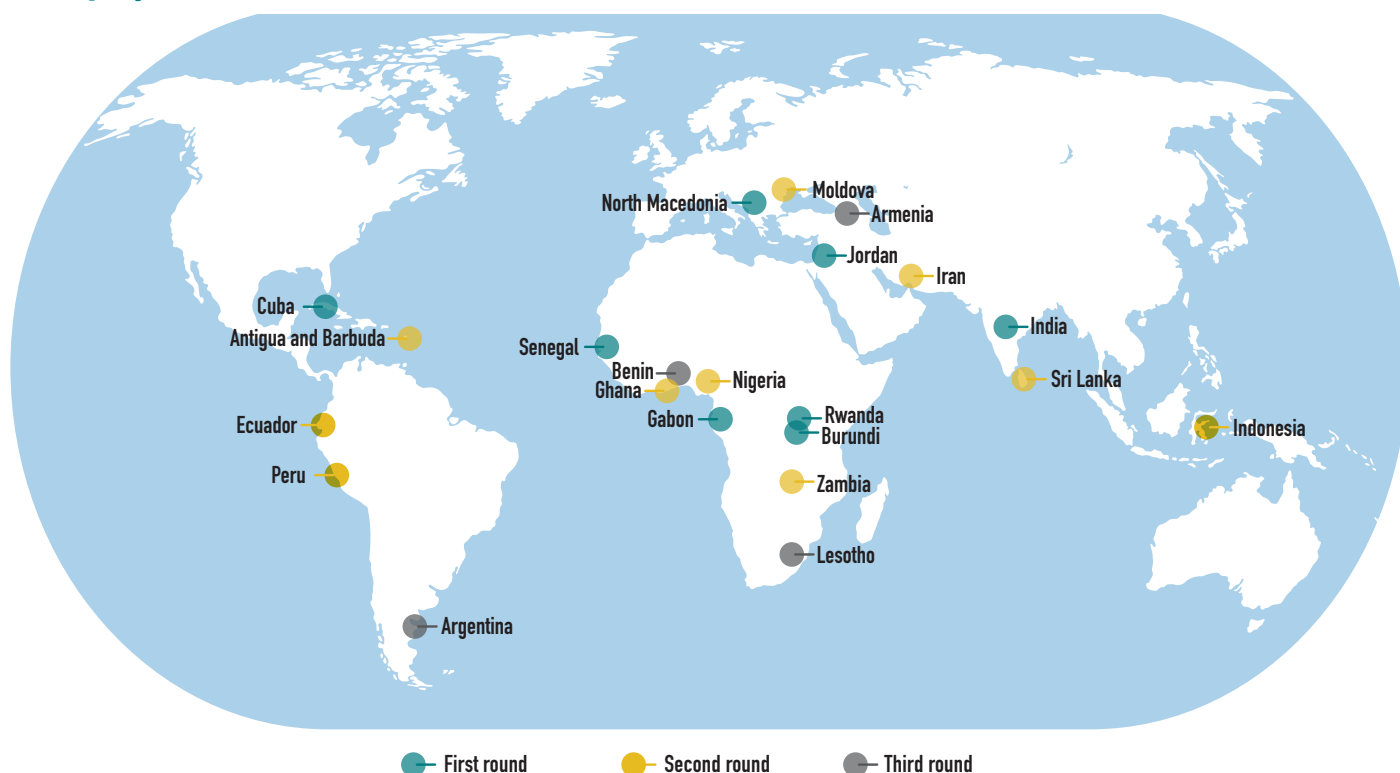
Since the establishment of its trust fund in 2018, the SIP has supported 24 projects in developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition around the world, including least developed countries and small island developing states.

Contributions and pledges to the Specific Trust Fund 2018–2023 (USD)

TOTAL 6,995,295.39 (AS OF 15 FEBRUARY 2023)



SIP projects around the world



These projects provide direct capacity-building support to address specific implementation needs identified by eligible Parties.

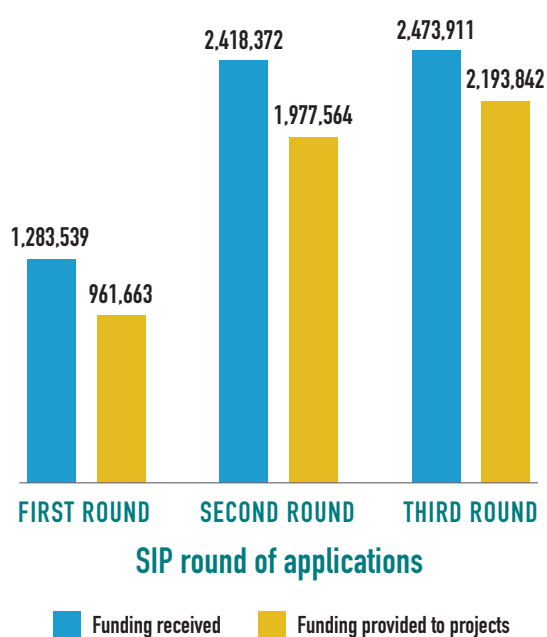
Five projects have already completed their activities, improving Parties' capacity to eliminate mercury use in the chlor-alkali industry, develop legislation and strategies to phase out mercury-added products and soundly manage their waste, and engage stakeholders – industrial technicians, dental providers, customs officials, traditional healers, women's consumer federations and more – to shape and implement solutions. [Final reports](#) on the completed projects are available on the Convention website. Terminal evaluations and the mid-term evaluation of the SIP, as called for by the Governing Board, will follow.

During its seventh meeting in November 2022, the Board welcomed new Board members and elected Ms. Gina Griffith of Suriname and Mr. Andrew Clark of the United States as co-chairs. The Board reviewed progress on all projects and overall operations of the SIP and emphasized the need to increase funding levels prior to the launch of the Fourth Round of applications.

The SIP faces high demand. In the Third Round of applications to the SIP, more projects were submitted than funding was available to support. A robust replenishment of the trust fund is needed to support the Fourth Round of applications. Contributions to the fund can be made by Governments, the private sector, foundations, non-governmental organizations,

international organizations, academia, and civil society actors. Nearly all SIP funding goes directly to Parties for their projects, which are elaborated using results-based project management methods, and have been thoroughly vetted and appraised for technical and programmatic merit before their consideration by the Board.

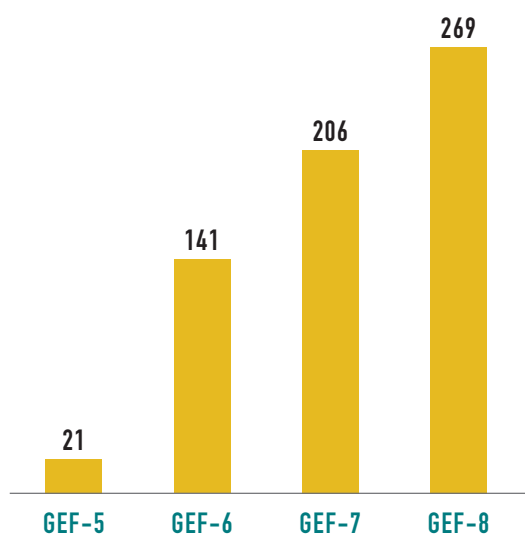
SIP project funding per round (USD)



Reviewing the Convention's financial mechanism

Implementation is vital for the Convention to meet its objectives. Article 13 of the Convention recognizes this in its establishment of a financial mechanism made up of the GEF Trust Fund and the SIP, and in its requirement for regular reviews of the mechanism to assess its effectiveness and ability to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. The Parties agreed on terms of reference for the second review of the financial mechanism at COP-4, and work is underway to assemble relevant information, including submissions and survey results, and to prepare a draft review report for consideration by the Parties at COP-5. This will allow Parties to take action, as needed based on the review, to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.

Minamata Convention allocation GEF-5 through GEF-8 (million USD)



Parties achieve 92% national reporting rate

The Parties to the Minamata Convention achieved a 92% reporting rate for the [first full reporting period](#) covering the time from 16 August 2017 – when the Convention came into force – to 31 December 2020. Of the 123 countries that were party to the Convention during this period, 113 had submitted their reports as of 15 November 2022.

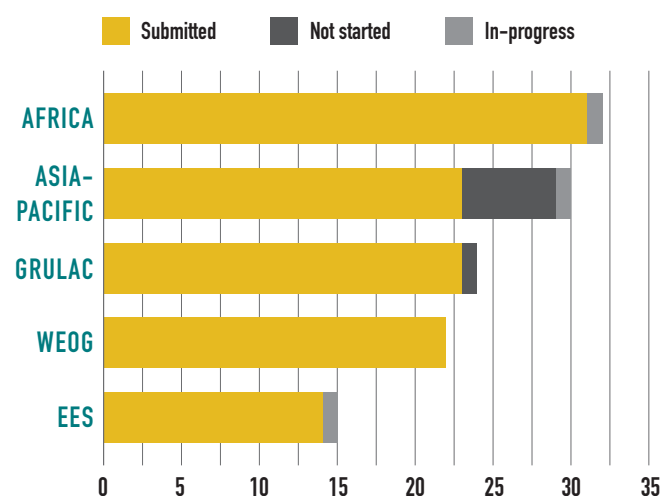
Parties are required under Article 21 of the Convention to report on implementation measures taken, the effectiveness of such measures, and the challenges faced. National reports are a key source of information for the Implementation and Compliance Committee (ICC), a subsidiary body of the COP. The Committee can use the reports to examine both individual and systemic issues of implementation and compliance and to craft recommendations.

Full national reports are demanding as it covers 43 multi-tiered questions corresponding to key measures in various areas ranging from mercury supply and sources to financial resources and mechanisms.

The Secretariat has provided comprehensive support to Parties to complete and submit their reports, including six online sessions and other web-based training during 2021, as well as regular outreach and follow-up. Parties were invited to submit their reports using the new Online Reporting Tool.

The ICC, currently chaired by Paulina Riquelme (Chile), will conclude its review of the results of the full reports when it meets on March 7–9, 2023.

Reports by region





Defining mercury waste

Parties have an obligation to manage mercury waste in an environmentally sound manner. COP-3 in 2019 defined two types of mercury waste – waste consisting of mercury, and waste containing mercury above certain thresholds. There is a third type of mercury waste – waste contaminated with mercury – for which thresholds are still to be established. COP-4 decided that no threshold is needed for tailings from ASGM using mercury, and those tailings should be managed under Article 7 (which is focused on ASGM) and its NAPs. Further, the COP established thresholds for tailings from other mining. The Convention's group of technical experts on mercury waste, under co-chairmanship of Gabriela Denisia Vasiliu Isac (Romania) and Oluwatoyin Olabanji (Nigeria), continues its work to develop a proposal for the remaining thresholds to be considered at COP-5.

Another milestone for 2022 is the adoption of revised technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of mercury waste by the COP of the Basel Convention, which addresses the movement and disposal of hazardous wastes. These guidelines are also referred to in the Minamata Convention.

With financial support from Switzerland, the Secretariat is developing training materials on the management of mercury waste taking into account the revised guidelines.

Evaluating the Convention's effectiveness

Article 22 of the Convention text requires the COP to regularly review the Convention's effectiveness. This requirement creates a mechanism for Parties to reflect deeply on the progress made towards keeping people and the planet safe from the harmful impacts of mercury.

During each COP since the Convention entered into force in 2017, and in each intersessional period, arrangements for the evaluation process have advanced. At COP-4, Parties **decided** to begin the **first effectiveness evaluation**. They also established the Open-ended Scientific Group, with Dominique Bally (Ivory Coast) and Terry Keating (USA) as co-chairs, to start preparing a report on monitoring data, and mandated the preparation of a report on emissions and releases. This brings the number of reports under preparation specific to the effectiveness evaluation to four: the Article 21 synthesis report; the trade, supply and demand report, the emission and releases report, and the monitoring data report. COP-4 also acknowledged the work done on indicators for the evaluation and requested that a refined list of indicators be presented to COP-5 for adoption.

At COP-5, Parties will also consider the final timeline for the delivery of the first effectiveness evaluation and finalize the membership of the new Effectiveness Evaluation Group.



Tracking mercury releases

COP-4 adopted guidance on the development of inventories of mercury releases to land and water under Article 9 of the Convention. An expert group, with Cristián Enrique Brito Martínez (Chile) and Bianca Hlobisile Mkhathshwa-Dlamini (Eswatini) as co-chairs, is further developing guidance on best available techniques and environmental practices to control mercury releases to be adopted at COP-5. A draft has been made available on the Convention website for comments.

Stronger ties with the International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant

The International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant (ICMGP) is an international scientific conference convened every two years since 1990. The conference provided scientific evidence throughout the negotiation and development of the Minamata Convention. The Secretariat is strengthening collaboration with ICMGP as part of its science-policy interface. The fifteenth ICMGP, held online in July 2022, is developing synthesis papers as scientific input to global policymaking, to be published as a special issue of the journal *Ambio*. The Secretariat co-organized online events on the themes of the papers and other topics as part of the mercury science stream of Minamata Online (see below).

The sixteenth ICMGP will be held in July 2024 in Cape Town, South Africa. The Secretariat will continue its cooperation with the ICMGP organizing committees.

New science-policy panel to support effort on mercury and “Beyond 2020” process

In a [decision](#) at COP-4, Parties to the Minamata Convention welcomed [a resolution](#) adopted at UNEA-5 to establish a science-policy panel to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. The science-policy panel could provide an important new mechanism for the implementation of the Convention.

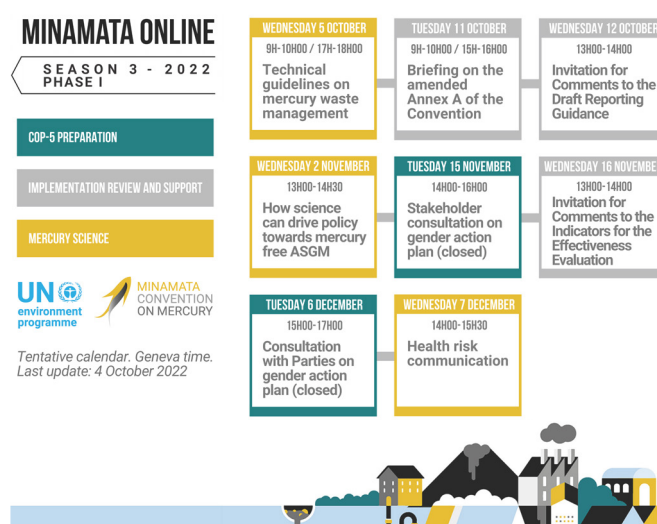
In the same decision, Parties to the Minamata Convention also welcomed a [UNEA-5 resolution](#) on the sound management of chemicals and waste, which invites Governments and all stakeholders involved in the “Beyond 2020” process to put in place an ambitious, improved enabling framework to address the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The Secretariat actively participates in the beyond 2020 process, including the fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4), in preparation of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5).

Third season of Minamata Online webinars

In 2022, more than 20 free webinars to strengthen support Parties and other stakeholders in the global effort to control mercury were held by the Secretariat. The webinars continue to focus on implementation support and review, mercury science, and COP preparations, including topics such as how science can drive policy towards mercury-free ASGM, and invitations for comments, namely the indicators for the effectiveness evaluation. These sessions are held twice and in several languages as much as possible to cater to audience in different regions of the world.

Initiated by the Secretariat as a new form of collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic, Minamata Online returned for a second season in the run-up to COP-4. A third season in preparation for COP-5 started in October 2022 and will run until the meeting in late October 2023.

The overall impact of Minamata Online is the further clarification and communication of the Convention’s provisions, as well as its policy and scientific aspects. So far, hundreds of participants have registered for webinars and followed live streams, actively engaging in the discussions and sharing knowledge under the Minamata Online banner. Past webinars, including presentations and video recordings, can be found [on the Convention website](#).



How new countries can join the Minamata Convention

A new factsheet on “[Becoming a Party to the Minamata Convention on Mercury](#)” prepared by the Secretariat explains the procedure for becoming a party and identifies the benefits of joining the Convention, including technical and financial assistance for eligible Parties.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury



Joining the Convention allows a party to...



Protect its own **people's health and environment** from the harmful effects of mercury from anthropogenic sources.



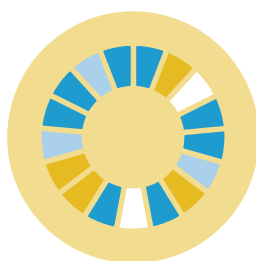
Benefit from global efforts to protect human health and the environment from **anthropogenic emissions and releases** of mercury and mercury compounds.



Influence the development and implementation of the Convention through **participation in the decision-making process** of the Conference of the Parties.



Participate in **trade regimes** to manage mercury responsibly.



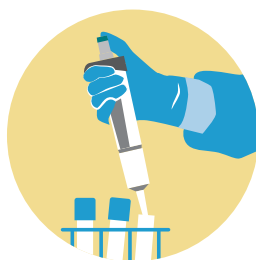
Contribute to achieving its commitment to **Sustainable Development Goals**.



Access **capacity-building and technical assistance** support for eligible parties through the Convention's financial mechanism and through capacity building and technical assistance activities provided by the Secretariat.



Improve information, awareness-raising and public education, especially through regular **exchange of information and expertise** and drawing also on the Secretariat and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.



Improve **research and development** on mercury.



Facilitate cooperation among parties and other stakeholders to support the implementation of Convention obligations

Knowledge management collaboration through InforMEA

The Secretariat is expanding its collaboration with the [InforMEA](#) Initiative and through it with other MEAs by sharing experiences and best practices on knowledge management and the development of tools and interfaces for automated data and information exchange. InforMEA is the United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), hosted by UNEP and funded by the European Union. It is a one-stop portal for information on MEAs searchable by key terms across treaty texts, COP decisions, national plans and reports, laws, court decisions and more. It brings together 60 global and regional legally binding treaties from 26 secretariats.



Membership				
BIODIVERSITY	LAND	CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE	CHEMICALS	MARINE AND FRESHWATER
CBD	UNCCD	UNFCCC	Basel C.	DOALOS
CITES	IPPC*	Ozone & Montreal Protocol	Rotterdam C.	MAP & Regional Seas Conventions
CMS/AEWA	ITPGR-FA	LRTAP	Stockholm C.	Ramsar
IPCC*			Minamata C.	
WHC			SAICM	
IPBES	ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNANCE & CROSS CUTTING	Aarhus C. Escazu C.	UNECE Cs.	International Whaling Commission

InforMEA

The thirteenth InforMEA Steering Committee Meeting, held in a hybrid format in October 2022 in Montreux, Switzerland, reinforced collaboration within the MEAs family. Through the establishment of communities of practice among the knowledge management officers, progress is made yearly to improve the InforMEA platform and its use across organizations. Participants deliberated on a range of issues to exchange experiences and to decide on a series of recommendations to guide the work of InforMEA over the next year on the areas of technical interoperability, semantic indexing and tagging, e-learning, outreach, reports, and dashboards, as well as joint issues such as web archiving and project data. The Secretariat of the Minamata Convention showcased its new national reporting system and a pilot on visualization of data on GEF projects. This meeting was a great opportunity to discuss the next chapter of the InforMEA portal and further collaboration on knowledge management.



InforMEA Steering Committee meeting in Montreux, Switzerland

Gender mainstreaming in the activities of the Secretariat, Parties and other stakeholders

Following a COP-4 [decision](#) on gender mainstreaming and with the financial support of Sweden, the Secretariat organized a series of online consultations for Parties and other stakeholders between September and November 2022 to gather input for the draft gender action plan for the Minamata Convention. The draft gender action plan provides a blueprint for actions to promote gender equality and mainstreaming within the Secretariat and in the Minamata Convention's activities undertaken by Parties and other stakeholders, in cooperation with other MEAs. The gender action plan is expected to increase the effectiveness of the Convention and bring the Minamata Convention into alignment with gender action plans already implemented in other MEAs, such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The draft action plan, incorporating the inputs received, is expected to be submitted for consideration by COP-5.

The Secretariat also worked with InforMEA, WHO and the International Labour Organization to produce an [e-learning course on mercury and gender](#). More information on gender activities is available on the Convention's [website](#).



Collaboration with the Global Mercury Partnership

The Secretariat maintains close cooperation with the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP). The Executive Secretary participated in the 13th meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group held in Paris on 9–10 November 2022, and discussed a range of actions that would benefit from cooperation between the GMP and the Secretariat, in such areas as the intersessional work for COP, the development of technical documents under the Convention, and capacity-building activities. Examples of specific cooperation in 2022 include the development of COP documents on customs codes and ASGM tailings management, and events such as a side event on mercury waste at the COP to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

The GMP is a key partner to support Parties in meeting their obligations related to ASGM, including through implementation of GEF-funded knowledge management components of planetGOLD and NAP projects. For example, a [new visualization tool on NAPs](#) provides insights on NAP status, reduction targets, and strategies.

The GMP secretariat is engaged in the technical review of applications to the SIP and facilitates interaction between SIP project focal points and GMP members to enhance implementation. Many other GMP activities, such as its [ASGM dashboard](#), provide useful information for the implementation of the Convention.



Woman working in ASGM

Highlighting the Convention at Stockholm+50

The Stockholm+50 international environmental meeting held in June 2022 marked five decades of UNEP and multilateral action to ensure a healthier planet for future generations. As part of the conversation on accelerating integrated action, the Environmental Management Group organized a dialogue with leaders from UN Agencies and MEAs, among others, who shared their views on opportunities and priorities for environmental action. Executive Secretary Monika Stankiewicz took part in the event, highlighting that the Minamata Convention “stands as a guiding light for common-sense global cooperation”.



Secretariat wins award for COP success in face of pandemic challenges

UNEP recognized the Secretariat with an award for its successful organization of COP-4, the first conference of the Parties to a multilateral environment agreement held in person since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretariat received the [Kipepeo Award for innovation](#) after devising unique solutions for the meeting, including effective arrangements for online participation for Parties and delegates who were unable to travel.



Host country Indonesia as well as members of the secretariats of other MEAs provided vital support for the smooth running of the event.

The annual award recognizes teams and projects demonstrating exceptional efforts and performance in pursuit of UNEP's goals. Kipepeo, the Kiswahili word for butterfly, is a nod to the location of UNEP headquarters in Kenya and a symbol of transformation for the better.

About the Minamata Convention

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global treaty designed to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury. It was agreed and adopted in 2013, and it entered into force on 16 August 2017. Five years and a half later, it counts 140 Parties from all over the world.

The Secretariat of the Convention, based in Geneva, Switzerland, is headed by Executive Secretary Monika Stankiewicz. The Secretariat's functions include making arrangements for COP meetings and its subsidiary bodies, providing assistance to Parties and supporting the exchange of information, preparing periodic reports, and coordinating with other secretariats, particularly those of other chemicals and waste conventions.

The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury ([COP-5](#)) will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 30 October to 3 November 2023, under the presidency of Romania.

THE FUTURE WE WANT MINAMATA CONVENTION

“ This multilateral environmental agreement is one of the world’s youngest, and like any youngster it holds massive potential. Everyone on the planet is exposed to mercury: only concerted, united action through this Convention and all of its allies can stop this toxic heavy metal endangering human and environmental health. ”

Inger Andersen, UN Environment Executive Director

2013

After years of meetings and five intergovernmental sessions, the text of the Minamata Convention is adopted by over 140 countries at the **Diplomatic Conference in Kumamoto** (Japan).

The signatures demonstrate the countries’ resolve to work towards the Convention’s objective of **protecting human health and the environment from mercury**.

2017

The **Minamata Convention on Mercury** enters into force on 16 August.

It is named after **Minamata Bay** (Japan) to keep in mind the lessons of the tragic health damage by industrial mercury pollution in the 1950-60s.

The **1st Conference of the Parties (COP-1)** adopts guidance on BAT/BEP for controlling mercury emissions as well as trade in mercury, and on reducing and eliminating mercury use in ASGM.

2020

Deadline for phasing out manufacture, import and export of listed **mercury-added products** (including certain lamps, batteries, cosmetics, pesticides).

2021

COP-4.1 (online segment) continues the multilateral work, including review of the annexes and **second reporting deadline** for parties to the Convention.

TODAY

2023

COP-5 to be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

2032

Deadline for ending **primary mercury mining** in known producing parties.

2016

The **Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-7)** at the Dead Sea (Jordan) finalizes the Best Available Techniques / Best Environmental Practices guidance (BAT/BEP) on air emissions.

Agreement on guidance for developing **National Action Plans** on artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM).

2018

Deadline for phasing out any **acetaldehyde production using mercury** (responsible for the pollution of Minamata Bay).

COP-2 adopts guidelines on the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury other than waste mercury.

2019

COP-3 adopts guidance on the management of contaminated sites. First reporting deadline for parties.

The Convention also includes measures to phase down mercury dental amalgam and to reduce mercury by half when used in vinyl chloride monomer production processes (used for plastic products).

2022

COP-4.2 (in-person segment) in Bali, Indonesia focuses on **effectiveness evaluation**, mainstreaming gender within the activities and the **first amendment** to the text of the Convention.

140 PARTIES

2025

Deadline for phasing out **mercury-cell chlor-alkali production** (an outmoded process for chlorine production) and **eight new product categories** (photographic film and spacecraft propellant, among others) according to the COP-4 decision.

MULTILATERALISM MAKES MERCURY HISTORY

* This list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather a small sample of the Convention’s multilateral work.



MINAMATA
CONVENTION
ON MERCURY

minamataconvention.org



Minamata Convention in 2022

Progress Report on activities

www.minamataconvention.org