



#OECDchem

| 7-8 November 2022

MERCURY



Programme

Global Forum on Environment:

Working towards the elimination of mercury and reducing its harmful impacts to human health and the environment



Introduction

Mercury (Hg) and its compounds are well-known pollutants that affect human health and the environment over many years. The most significant anthropogenic releases of mercury globally are through emissions to air, as well as releases from various sources directly to water and land. Sector-wise, artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) is considered to be the largest source of mercury emission, which is followed closely by coal combustion, primary non-ferrous metal production, and cement-clinker production. These sectors are also major contributors of the global anthropogenic releases of mercury to aquatic systems. Overall emissions of mercury and its compounds to air from industrial installations drastically reduced over the years due to global actions such as the United Nations Minamata Convention on Mercury, however, its emissions and releases to the environment are still a global concern.

Regardless of the efforts put into working towards eliminating mercury and its compounds from the value chain, mercury use continues to exist in different forms. The ASGM and vinyl chloride monomer (VCM) production still account for over 60 percent of global mercury consumption. Beyond the industrial uses of mercury, there are many daily-used products containing mercury, such as batteries, pesticides, medical devices and cosmetics. Some of these products production and use, such as skin whitening creams and thermometers, have decreased significantly in developed countries over the past decades; however, other countries maintain their availability in the market. And mercury-in-products are not only direct sources of exposure but also contribute to mercury emissions and releases due to their production and poor waste management practices.

In some countries, legal mercury imports for registered uses such as dental amalgams are below the estimates of mercury consumption, which indicates that there are illicit mercury trade flows. Therefore, trade and economic solutions for better regulating the flows of mercury are critical to reducing registered mercury use and its way into illegal uses. Due diligence processes in supply chains play an important role in preventing and governing illicit trade of mercury-added products. Above the responsibilities of the industry partners, international and regional cooperation is needed to ensure a formalised and unified action against the illegal trade of mercury and mercury-added products.

The Global Forum on Environment on Mercury brings together leading actors in the field of chemicals and waste management of mercury to promote effective engagement, collaboration and action on eliminating or reducing mercury from the supply chain. This includes regulators and policy makers in charge of chemical safety in OECD Member and Partner governments, in particular those that are responsible for implementing the Minamata Convention on Mercury in their country, as well as relevant stakeholders from International Governmental Organisations, private industry organisations and companies, civil society, philanthropies and more.

The event will enable participants to:

- exchange experiences on common challenges in implementing and enforcing the Minamata Convention on Mercury between countries, the global treaty to protect human health and the environment from the effects of mercury;
- discuss innovative solutions and best practices to eliminate mercury from the value chains.

The Global Forum will also:

- raise awareness of stakeholders on the harmful impacts of mercury on human health and the environment and possible solutions to them;
- promote new economic tools developed by the OECD and other IGOs to implement these solutions;
- contribute to the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the new UN framework on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

Programme

Day 1: 7 November 2022

14:00 - 14:10

Opening Session

Speaker: Deputy Secretary General: Kerri-Anne Jones, DSG

14:10 - 15:30

Session 1 - Keynote speeches: Issues and challenges

14:10 - 14:35

1. The sources of man-made emissions and releases of mercury and impacts on health and environment

Speaker: Jacqueline Alvarez, Head of UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch

- What are the main sources of exposure to mercury from air, water, soil and due to anthropogenic activities (artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM), mercury-in-products, (e.g. skin lightening creams) in developed and developing countries and what are the priority areas for action?
- What are the main flows of both legal and illegal mercury?
- What control measures are enforced during the flow of mercury, aside from the Minamata Convention?

14:35 - 15:00

2. Socio-economic impacts of mercury, including on human rights

Speaker: Marcos Orellana, Special UN Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

15:00 - 15:30

3. The Minamata Convention: a big step forward but implementation and enforcement will be key

Speaker: Monika Stankiewicz, Minamata Convention Executive Secretary

- How does the Minamata Convention control the life cycle of mercury covering its supply, trade, use, emissions, releases and disposal?
- What are the challenges and good practices of the Parties in implementing and enforcing the Convention (based on the [national reporting](#) pursuant to article 21 of the Convention)?
- What are the common challenges of the Parties noted in the Minamata ASGM National Action Plans pursuant to [Article 7.3 of the Convention](#)?
- How can we evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of the Convention?

15:30 - 16:00

Coffee break

16:00 - 17:00

Session 2 - Presentations and panel discussion: The solutions for reducing or where feasible eliminating mercury from the value chains

16:00 - 16:30

2.1. Role of co-operation in fighting ongoing trade of illegal mercury and mercury-added products and misuse of legal products

Registered uses of mercury and mercury-added products may be misused for other processes. This session aims to highlight the importance of cooperation at the bilateral, regional and international levels to prevent illegal trade and misuse of legal mercury and mercury-added products.

- What is the role of regional and bilateral cooperation in identifying illegal products and in law enforcement?

Moderator:

o Ben Vauter (EPA-OITA) from Global Mercury Partnership – Chlor-Alkali Partnership

Speakers:

- o Hakuri Agustina - Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia
- o Chi-wang LAM, Operations Coordinator at INTERPOL
- o Jerome Stucki, UNIDO

16:30 - 16:45

PANEL DISCUSSION

16:45 - 17:15

2.2. Trade solutions

The global movement of mercury and mercury-added products requires trade practices consistent with the Minamata Convention on Mercury, domestic regulations related to manufacturing, import, and export of goods, and the development of monitoring practices exercised between countries. The objective of this session is to identify solutions for improving trade practices, addressing the improper use of mercury-added products, and tracking technologies used in trade.

- What is the role of regulating and monitoring manufacturing, import, and export of mercury-added products?
- How to avoid misuse of legal products (e.g. mercury imported for dental amalgam used in ASGM)?

Moderator:

o Rob Dellink, Environment & Economy Integration Division, Environment Directorate, OECD

Speakers:

- o Peter Maxson, Director of the Brussels-based consultancy, Concorde East/West Srl
- o Tom Groeneveld, US Environmental Protection Agency (Mercury in Products Partnership Lead)
- o Oscar Campanini, Director of the Documentation and Information Center of Bolivia (CEDIB)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

17:15 - 17:30

PANEL DISCUSSION

END OF DAY

Programme

Day 2: 8 November 2022

09:30 - 10:15

2.3. Public and civil society actions

A “bottom-up” approach to tackling the global action on eliminating or reducing mercury from the value chains may initiate a more rooted solution. During this session, the panellists will discuss the importance of public and civil society actions in the demand and availability of mercury in ASGM and mercury-added products.

- What is the role of public procurement as a lever for action?
- What is the role of civil society and consumers’ associations and of education and training in reducing the demand for mercury (e.g. skin-lightening creams)? What is the impact of national and regional policies in reducing the demand and availability of mercury-added products?

Moderator:

- Jakob Maag – (UNITAR) Chemicals and Waste Management Programme Unit

Speakers:

- o Lena Diesing, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD
- o Elena Lymberidi Settimo, European Environment Bureau (EEB, Zero Mercury Working Group)
- o Amira Adawe, Beautywell from Grass root advocacy

10:15 - 10:30

PANEL DISCUSSION

10:30 - 10:45

Coffee break

10:45 - 11:30

2.4. Due diligence in gold and mercury supply chains

Due diligence practices benefit mutually to governments and private companies by informing them about risks associated with their activities. Panel members will share their experiences in due diligence activities carried out for the ASGM in the supply chain. In addition, possible ways of incorporating mercury-free technologies within the gold supply chains will be discussed.

- How can private companies identify environmental risks? How to incentivize private sector-led due diligence in legal gold and mercury supply chains?
- How to stop (or discourage) the financing of harmful practices? How to convince policy makers to reduce and stop incentives to industries and activities that release or emit mercury, or that use products whose manufacturing processes are dependent on the use of mercury? How to raise awareness of financial institutions and corporations? How to include natural capital assets in the balance sheets of businesses and the public sector? Example case: how financing can be distributed to miners through gold supply chains, as part of supply chain due diligence risk mitigation efforts?

Moderator:

- o Benjamin Katz, Financial and Enterprise Affairs Directorate, OECD

- o Christophe Nicolet, from PX Group
- o Marcin Piersiak from Alliance for Responsible Mining Europe (ARM Europe)
- o Rocío Santivañez, Director of Pollution Control and Chemical Substances, Ministry of the Environment, Peru

11:30 - 11:45

PANEL DISCUSSION

11:45 - 12:30

2.5. Economic solutions: economic incentives and financing

Part 1

During this session, panel members will share experiences and propose possible solutions of economic incentives for mercury-free practices for both companies, and miners whose income is currently dependent on using mercury.

- Which waste and management solutions should be prioritised for investment? How to increase sustainable financing for mercury waste management?
- Example case: Financing Mercury Phase-Out and Environmentally Sound Management in the Chlor-Alkali Sector
- Example case: Mercury containing tailings after ASGM (in Colombia)

Moderator:

- o Kenneth Davis, UNEP

Speakers:

- o Itsuki (Suki) KURODA Ministry of Environment (Japan)- CBC Japan Delegate
- o Ben Vauter (EPA-OITA) from Global Mercury Partnership – Chlor-Alkali Partnership
- o Alfonso Rodriguez from Pure Earth

12:30 - 14:00

LUNCH

14:00 - 14:45

Part 2

- What are economic instruments, including incentives to accelerate the uptake/development of alternatives, as well as disincentives to conducting “business as usual” and for offsetting damage?
- How to improve access to financing for mercury-free products and processes, e.g. for miners working in ASGM?
- How to promote the adoption of mercury-free technologies (e.g. for ASGM and/or mercury-added processes)?

Speakers:

- o Diana Culillas from Swiss Better Gold Association
- o Susan Egan Keane, planet Gold programme, National Resources Defence Council
- o Adam Kiefer from Mercer University (USA)

14:45 - 15:15

PANEL DISCUSSION

15:15 - 15:45

Coffee break

15:45 - 16:45

Session 3 - Conclusion panel: How to foster international cooperation and public/private partnership for mercury-free supply chains? How to monitor progress?

The final session aims to identify the best practices for (i) cooperation to eliminate or reduce the availability of mercury or mercury-added products in the global supply chain, and (ii) ways for other sectors to benefit from these possible solutions.

- How can the global supply chain involving mercury be made more transparent?
- How to have an integrated approach to leverage investments and supply chain investments to address the triple challenge – climate change, biodiversity and pollution?
- What are lessons learned from partnerships (e.g. UNEP Global Mercury Partnership)?
- Which other industrial areas using or emitting mercury can benefit from fostering international cooperation and public/private partnership?

Moderator:

- Kumi Kitamori , Environment Deputy Director, OECD

Panellists:

- o Claudia Dumitru, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests Romania and Minamata COP5 President
- o Rodges Ankrah, US- EPA
- o Teeraporn Wiriwutikorn, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand and Global Mercury Partnership Advisory Group Co-chair
- o Kay Williams, Chair of Chemicals and Biotechnology Committee (CBC)
- o Rachel Kamande on Lamps from Clean Lighting Coalition (NGO)
- o Ludovic Bernaudat, GEF Chemicals team, UNEP
- o Neil Harby, Chief Technical Officer (CTO) of the London Bullion Market Association

16:45 - 16:55

Session 4 - Closing session

Speaker: Bob Diderich, Head of the Environment, Health and Safety Division

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