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Mercury Waste Related Activities Under the Basel Convention

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Goal of the Basel Convention

- To protect human health and the environment from the adverse impacts of hazardous and other wastes from the generation, transboundary movements and management

- entered into force on 5 May 1992

- 170 States Parties plus European Community



Hazardous Wastes Controlled by the Basel Convention



- Annexes I, VIII and IX, exhibiting Annex III characteristics (Art. 1(1)(a) of Annex I)
- Annex II (Art. 1(2))
- Wastes considered hazardous under the national legislation of a Party, as notified to the Secretariat under Article 3 (Art. 1(1)(b)) (This information may be accessed at the Secretariat's website: www.basel.int/natdef/frsetmain.php)



Environmentally Sound Management

- Central Policy instrument is Environmentally Sound Management (ESM):

“taking all practicable steps to ensure that hazardous wastes or other wastes are managed in a manner which will protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects which may result from such wastes”

- ESM includes minimizing the generation of such wastes, reducing transboundary movements, improving treatment and disposal, and ensuring such wastes are handled as close as possible to where they were generated



Classification of mercury waste in the Basel Convention

Annex I

- Y1 – Clinical wastes from medical care in hospitals, medical centres and clinics
- Y17 – Waste resulting from surface treatment of metals and plastics
- Y18 – Residues arising from industrial waste disposal operations
- Y29 – Mercury; mercury compounds



Classification of mercury waste in the Basel Convention

Annex VIII (List A)

- **A1010 – Metal wastes and waste consisting of alloys of ...mercury**
- **A1030 – Wastes having as constituents or contaminants any of the following....mercury; mercury compounds**
- **A1170 – Unsorted waste batteries (when containing Hg)**
- **A1180 – Waste electrical and electronic assemblies or scrap containing e.g. Mercury-switches; glass from CRTs (containing Hg)**
- **A2010 – Glass waste from CRTs and other activated glasses**



Classification of mercury waste in the Basel Convention

Annex VIII (List A)(contd)

- **A4020 – Clinical and related wastes**
- **A4100 – Wastes from industrial pollution control devices**
- **A4140 – Waste consisting of or containing off-specification or outdated chemicals corresponding to Annex I categories**



Basel Convention COP Mandates on Mercury

Decision VIII/33 of COP8

- **Adopted the programme and budget for 2007-2008 and agreed to include a new Strategic Plan focus area on mercury**
- **Agreed that in cooperation with UNEP to develop partnerships around the theme of environmentally friendly technologies and awareness raising regarding avoidance, use and disposal of mercury wastes; develop capacity building and technical assistance programmes to reduce and prevent pollution from mercury; and to develop guidelines on ESM of mercury waste with emphasis on sound disposal and remediation practices.**



Work Programme on Mercury Agreed by OEWG6

In cooperation with UNEP Chemicals:

- to develop partnerships around the theme of environmentally friendly technologies and awareness raising regarding avoidance, use and disposal of mercury wastes;**
- develop capacity building and technical assistance programmes to reduce and prevent pollution from mercury; and**
- to develop guidelines on ESM of mercury waste with emphasis on sound disposal and remediation practices.**



Work Programme on Mercury in Basel Convention

Specific objectives:

- To develop methodological tools for implementation of national plans for ESM of mercury wastes with focus on EoL equipment;
- To compile data and information on ESM practices;
- To set up plan for long-term storage of mercury waste;
- To build capacity to monitor TBM of mercury waste and prevent illegal traffic:
- To develop awareness raising programme.



Basel Convention Work Programme on Mercury

Component I: Development of technical guidelines on ESM of mercury waste

- Feb. 2007: draft Table of Contents were developed
- July 2007: MOU signed with IGES, Japan to develop the technical guidelines
- First draft completed 24 July 2007
- Comments/input invited from Parties and other stakeholders
- Second draft completed 23 August 2007
- September 2007: Draft technical guidelines was presented to the OEWG6 meeting



Basel Convention Work Programme on Mercury

Component I: Development of technical guidelines on ESM of mercury waste (contd)

- **OEWG6 noted the progress and agreed to the continuation of work on technical guidelines**
- **3rd draft was presented to COP9 (June 2008)**
- **Decision IX/15 of COP9 agreed work to continue**
- **Intersessional Working Group established**
- **Input/comments invited from Parties and other stakeholders**
- **4th draft to be ready by 30 April 2009 and to be presented to OEWG7 and COP10**



Basel Convention Work Programme on Mercury

Component II:

In cooperation with UNEP Chemicals

- **implementation of pilot projects in selected countries on environmentally sound technologies and awareness raising regarding avoidance, use and disposal of mercury and its wastes; and**
- **develop capacity building and technical assistance programmes to reduce and prevent pollution from mercury**
- **OEWG6 noted the Work Plan, to be carried out subject to availability of funds**



Basel Convention Work Programme on Mercury

Present Status for Component II:

- **Sub-regional capacity building and technical assistance project on mercury waste in health sector and other sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean region initiated by SBC**
- **To be coordinated by BCRC in Uruguay**
- **Cooperative Agreement with USEPA (2008-2012) signed by SBC in 2008**
- **Contribution also received from Norway**



FURTHER INFORMATION



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