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Calendar of meetings

Interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention

- First and second Francophone Africa sub-regional workshops - Dakar, Senegal, 9 to 11 July and 14 to 16 July 2014
- Arabic speaking countries workshop – Dead Sea, Jordan, 5 to 7 August 2014
- South America workshop – Brasilia, Brazil - 2 to 4 September 2014
- Asian countries workshop – New Delhi, India, 18 to 20 September 2014
- Pacific countries workshop - Marshall Islands, dates to be confirmed(*)

The UNEP Chemicals Branch Newsletter is published periodically to give readers world-wide an update of activities to promote the environmentally sound management of chemicals and so help protect public health and the environment.

UNEP promotes sustainable development by catalysing vital global actions and building national capacity for the sound management of chemicals through information exchange, training, and capacity building.

Inquiries and editorial correspondence should be sent to: chemicals@unep.org.

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A list of publications is available from UNEP Chemicals Branch and on the Web (www.chem.unep.ch). Publications are free of charge.

- Sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee – Bangkok, 2-7 November 2014

(*) The Interim secretariat is also planning 3 additional sub-regional workshops in 2014: Central America, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe-Central Asia, for which the dates and venues still are to be confirmed.

SAICM

- 17th meeting of the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee, date to be confirmed, Geneva, Switzerland
- Second session of the Open Ended Working Group, 14-17 December, Geneva, Switzerland

UNEP's POPs Global Monitoring projects “highly satisfactory”

An independent evaluation report (December 2013), has found UNEP's projects supporting the Implementation of the Global Monitoring Plan of POPs in the four Sub-Regions: Eastern Southern Africa, West Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, and Pacific Islands “highly satisfactory”. The projects built capacity on the ground for sampling and analyzing POPs relevant to the minimum requirements for the first effectiveness evaluation of the Stockholm Convention and generated results in regions where systematic data generation has not occurred before. Cost-effectiveness was achieved through partnerships with WHO, BRS secretariat, existing programmes, and accredited POPs laboratories.

Proposed health and environment integrated Observatory to predict prevent and reduce chemicals risks in Africa

On 16-17 June 2014, UNEP convened a scientific and technical meeting to review a feasibility study conducted in Senegal which identified a core set of indicators, along with processes and arrangements necessary for the designing of an integrated health and environment integrated observatory on chemicals. Further to recommendations made on technical and scientific matters, the meeting also agreed on a scale-up plan towards an integrated health and environment observatory to predict, prevent and reduce chemicals risks. This will be presented at the Third Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa in October 2014.

Third Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa

UNEP, WHO and the Government of Gabon are joining their effort to organize the Third Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa to be held in Libreville, Gabon from 20-23 October 2014. The objective of this Conference is to take stock of progress achieved by countries since Libreville in 2008, in order to define a strategic agenda for accelerating the joint contribution of the health and environment sectors to sustainable development in Africa.

Update on the SAICM Chemicals in Products (CiP) project:

- Progress continues on drafting the CiP programme (to be proposed to ICCM4);
- Through a GEF project UNEP, China's Ministry of Environmental Protection and textile industry, brands representing 40% of the global apparel and footwear market and others will pilot chemicals information exchange in Chinese supply chains in 2014-2016.



United Nations Environment Programme

UNEP Chemicals Branch Newsletter

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Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

The health aspects of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Protection of human health is at the very heart of the Minamata Convention. Its objective is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. To that end, the Convention contains provisions covering the entire life cycle of mercury, and as the only multilateral environmental agreement on chemicals and waste, has a dedicated article on “health aspects”.

The World Health Assembly reinforced global action on mercury by adopting the resolution on «Public health impacts of exposure to mercury and mercury compounds: the role of WHO and ministries of public health in the implementation of the Minamata Convention» on 24 May 2014 in Geneva. Amongst others, the resolution highlights the need for multi-sectoral action including the health sector, as well as the involvement of health ministries with respect to Article 16 dedicated to health aspects, but also in a range of activities across other articles to ensure the protection of human health related to mercury.



potentiarities on the Minamata Convention on Mercury
October 9, 2013 Tree-planting ceremony

Nobuteru Ishihara, Minister of Environment, Japan, Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, Ikuo Kabashima, Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture, and Katsuaki Miyamoto, Mayor of Minamata, displayed a plaque commemorating the Conference of Plenipotentiaries

The Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury is continuing to strengthen its collaboration with WHO as part of its ongoing work. WHO has been actively engaged in the recent UNEP ratification and early implementation sub-regional workshops and is working with UNEP in the development of outreach and awareness raising materials on health related issues.

Support for ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Following the adoption of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in October 2013 in Kumamoto, Japan, UNEP was requested by governments to host the Interim Secretariat of the Convention.

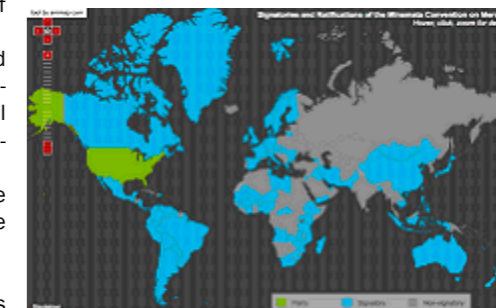
The Interim Secretariat currently has three main areas of work:

- a programme of capacity building, through the organization of a series of sub-regional and regional workshops to assist countries in preparing for ratification and early implementation of the Convention and the development of outreach and awareness raising materials;
- technical work required by the Convention and requested by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, including support to the group of technical experts to develop guidance relating to provisions on emissions;
- and preparations for the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC6) later this year.

The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and its partners continue to play a very active role as one of the main mechanisms for delivering immediate actions on mercury.

The interim secretariat is also collaborating with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention secretariat, the World Health Organization, the Global Environment Facility and other key intergovernmental organizations involved in mercury.

The Convention will be opened for signature at the United Nations Headquarters in New York until 9 October 2014. As of early June 2014, the Convention has one Party and 98 signatories.



Interactive map recording the actual status of signature and ratification of the Convention available at www.mercuryconvention.org/Countries/tabid/3428/Default.aspx

UNEP / C. Siéwé

Ms. Fatoumata Keita-Ouane,
Head, Chemicals Branch, DTIE, UNEP

Ms. Fatoumata Keita-Ouane, was appointed Head of Chemicals Branch in January 2014. Fatoumata is a scientist, she graduated from the Louvain Catholic University (Belgium), with a specialisation in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Toxicology. Fatoumata began her international career in Geneva at WHO before moving to UNEP in the mid-1980s. She was responsible for chemical management activities and supported countries with the negotiations of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, where she was later appointed Senior Scientific Affairs Officer and led the establishment of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee and the Effectiveness Evaluation Programme for the Convention. From 2010 to 2013, Fatoumata worked in the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) where she held the post of Chief of the Scientific Assessment Branch, ensuring the overall development and the coordination of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO5). In addition to her DEWA functions as Chief of Branch, Fatoumata was instrumental in fostering UNEP work on the development of indicators for the post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. As Head of Chemicals Branch, she is instrumental in moving the chemicals and waste agenda forward and achieving the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals. Fatoumata is a citizen of Mali.

Regional Workshops and Resolutions on Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)



Animals such as seals and Polar bears with higher PCBs, DDT, PBDEs and other persistent chemicals have lower thyroid hormone levels (Braathen et al., 2004, Skaare et al., 2001)

UNEP led a series of regional workshops on EDCs, which were well received by the respective regions (LAC, CEE, Africa and Asia-Pacific). They were recognized as a helpful support to awareness raising and a forum for important dialogue. Awareness raising on EDCs is UNEP's commitment and part of the IOMC (with WHO and OECD) workplan in response to the call of the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM3). At their workshops, the LAC and African regions adopted resolutions inviting UNEP and WHO to develop a report on EDCs targeting the needs of the regions and to also conduct a series of robust awareness

raising on EDCs in regional languages. Regional resolutions were put forward, affirming the call made by ICCM 3 on EDCs. Some examples of needs expressed in responses to the questionnaire provided in advance of the regional workshops include: awareness raising; information on health effects and exposures, including combination effects of mixtures; research; prioritization of chemicals; classification criteria for EDCs; better test methods; capacity building; institutional strengthening and coordination; strengthened legislation; and scientific integration at international level. UNEP strives to address the concerns expressed by the regions at the workshops by strengthening the UNEP website on EDCs as a repository of information and interactive database of chemicals known to be EDCs.

Sound management of chemicals and waste in sustainable development goals

The Environment Management Group (EMG), as the UN system wide coordination body on environment, is engaging with the support of the IOMC, the UN system to the sound chemicals management (scm) agenda. Senior officials agreed the importance of raising the profile of scm within all relevant organizations of the UN System. An Issue Management Group (IMG) has been created to position scm as a vital element which underpins the complementary approaches of sustainable development and a green economy and will maintain a political and technical focus on the importance of scm within the context of the implementation of the Rio+20 agenda.

The IMG builds on the existing contributions of its members and puts forward an indicative list of targets and indicators in the field of

chemicals and waste management to be embedded, as appropriate, into relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) focal areas. The list was submitted to the Co-Chair of the Open ended Working Group, and with the Task Team, co-leads in the respective clusters. The list, reflecting the common position of the UN system in the field of chemicals management, is expected to bring convincing evidence to policy decision makers involved in the SDG process that, although not selected as a focal areas, scm remains an essential condition in the achievement of the SDG. Its integration into the investment and development frameworks is critical and its funding a determining factor to the successful implementation of a sustainable development agenda.

Overall Orientation & Guidance (OOG) towards sound management of chemicals by 2020

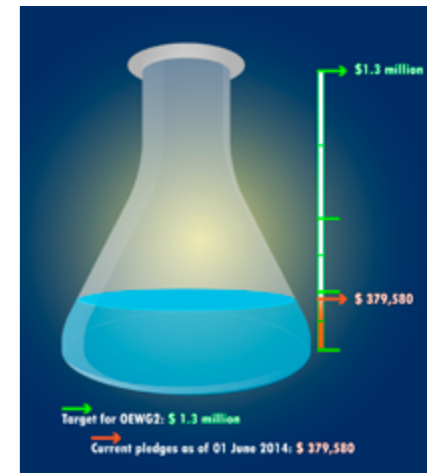
The SAICM secretariat is working with the regions at priority setting workshops attached to the SAICM regional meetings to identify a core set of basic elements required for the sound management of chemicals. The 12 basic elements identified include: legal frameworks; enforcement and compliance mechanisms; implementation of chemicals conventions; strong institutional systems and cooperation; collection, management

SAICM moving towards 2020

OEWG2: The international community is expected to agree on priority actions to accelerate implementation of sound chemicals management at a global scale at the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4) in 2015. Prior to ICCM4, the second session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG2) is planned in Geneva in December 2014. OEWG2 will be an important arena for discussions among stakeholders regarding necessary steps and priority actions for the last five years of SAICM. However, funds have yet to be secured so we appeal to all in a position to do so, to contribute to the convening of OEWG2, with an estimated budget of US\$1.3 million. As of 1 June 2014, SAICM received pledges

for US\$380,000, with thanks to Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

New Quick Start Programme (QSP) application round: At the 9th meeting of the QSP Executive Board, held in May 2014, the members of the Board agreed to launch the 14th QSP application round. With thanks to the Government of France, approximately US\$700,000 are available to fund non-chemical alternatives projects, opening a window for funding projects in sustainable agriculture, natural construction and alternative public health measures, among others. For more information, please visit www.saicm.org



Funds for convening OEWG2

Mercury Releases from Coal-Fired Power Plants in India

Coal combustion is a major source of anthropogenic mercury (Hg) emissions to the environment. India is one of the largest users of coal in the world. This is the background for a UNEP project (Assessment of the Mercury Content in Coal fed to Power Plants and Study of Mercury Emissions from the Sector in India, UNEP 2014. A report from the Coal Combustion Partnership Area of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership) conducted in cooperation with the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). This first-of-its-kind report presents current, detailed information about the Indian power sector, future electricity generation projections, the results of Hg measurements in coal and in flue gas, and

Hg emissions inventory for the sector, as well as Hg emission projections for the coal-fired power sector in India. Between 13% and 40% reduction of Hg content was measured for samples of washed coal. Hg concentration in Indian coal was comparable with Hg in coal used in other countries. Based on collected data, the Hg emissions from coal-fired power generation in India were projected to increase from about 60 metric tons in 2016 to around 96 metric tons in 2021. The project was funded by the EU. UNEP and the MoEF are currently discussing the possibility of technology demonstrations for low-cost Hg emission reduction from coal-fired power plants and cement kilns.

and sharing of information; industry participation, Globally Harmonized system of Classification and Labelling; mainstreaming; risk assessment; systems for sharing information; capacity to address poisonings and incidents; and monitoring of impacts. A public consultation period on the OOG will be launched for eight weeks, starting mid-July, as it is advanced as the key strategic outcome of ICCM4.

Global waste management outlook



In response to UNEP Governing Council decision GC 27/12 calling UNEP "to develop a global outlook of challenges, trends and policies in relation to waste prevention, minimization and management, ..., to provide guidance for national policy planning.", the International Environmental Technology Centre (UNEP-IETC) in collaboration with the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) is working on the development of the Global Waste Management Outlook (GWMO). The GWMO aims to set the scene on waste management and provide an authoritative overview and comparative analysis of policy and financing

models for waste management around the world. The GWMO will reinforce the need for a holistic approach and the concept of waste as a driver for sustainable development.

The target audience of the publication will be relatively high and non-technical level of a wide range of professionals and 'decision formers' both in Government and other groups of stakeholders, including NGOs, business, the waste industry, financial institutions and academia. A stand-alone Executive Summary will target the high level policy makers at national and municipal level.

The publication will be launched in June 2015.

Artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM) in Indonesia

UNEP implemented a project on reducing mercury use in artisanal and small scale gold mining in Indonesia. As a result of the project, mercury releases to the environment were reduced by an estimated 3,000 kg in a single year by training small-scale gold miners in Indonesia to use improved processing techniques. Ten sluices, ninety retorts and fifty water-box condensers were distributed to miners who had been trained in their use. In parallel with this technical training, a number of events were held to raise the awareness of miners and processors, health professionals, school teachers and NGO leaders, of the dangers of mercury use. Information materials were developed with local community leaders so that appropriate messages about mercury could be delivered to those at greatest risk of exposure.

The project, led by Blacksmith Institute and Yayasan Tambuhak Sinta, in collaboration with UNEP, and funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency, gathered data on mercury releases from the ASGM sector and brought together representatives from local and national Government, local mining offices, research institutes and mining NGOs, to develop a national strategic plan for the sector considering broader sustainable development objectives.



Gold miners in Indonesia