

Summary of Waste Management Area Meeting 2019

1. Overview

The Waste Management Area (WMA) of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership held its 2019 annual Meeting in Bilbao, Spain on 6th October 2019, from 13:30 to 17:00. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, one of the leads of the WMA. It was attended by 10 participants including representatives from Government, private companies, academia, and inter-governmental organizations (IGOs).



The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- To review activities undertaken after the area meeting held in 2018, and discuss ways to enhance them
 - To seek effective ways to collaborate with other frameworks relevant to chemicals & waste
 - To identify ways to utilize existing fora and capacities and to arrange additional tools and schemes that contribute to promoting activities of the WMA.
- i. In the opening session, Dr. Misuzu Asari, one of the leads of the WMA, welcomed participants and stated that the objectives of the meeting were to discuss progress made since the WMA meeting held in 2018 in Vienna, and to identify future priority actions to be implemented under the WMA.
 - ii. The remarks by the lead were followed by a round of introduction by participants. The Secretariat of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership provided an overview of the Partnership, highlighting its mandate, objective, membership, functioning and priorities, and the WMA Secretariat introduced the key results of the WMA meeting 2018 as well as the objectives of the WMA meeting 2019.
 - iii. The WMA Secretariat then explained briefly past and current activities carried out under the WMA. Through sessions 1 and 2, participants reviewed the achievements and challenges of each activity and discussed possible actions of interest to partners.
 - iv. Under session 3, following an overview provided by the Secretariat of the Partnership, participants discussed work conducted under the Minamata and Basel

conventions (in particular the technical expert group on waste thresholds under the Minamata Convention and the update of the technical guidelines on mercury wastes under the Basel Convention), as well as the possible contribution of the WMA to such work.

- v. In the closing session, Dr. Asari briefly summarized the outcomes of the meeting.

2. Results of the Discussion

The below is a summary of the discussion with regard to future activities under the WMA.

- **Activities to promote information sharing**
 - The WMA will continue to utilize the mailing list (ML) as a main tool for information sharing among partners
 - The leads/secretariat will continue to act as a clearinghouse, review and summarize as necessary information before sharing it with partners
 - The WMA will seek effective ways of using the ML as well as the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership website. For example:
 - Sharing information via the ML on a regular basis
 - Sharing information regarding ongoing work under the Minamata and Basel conventions (e.g. the Small Intersessional Working Group (SIWG) for the update of the Technical Guidelines on mercury wastes under the Basel Convention is open to observers. Partners who are interested are encouraged to participate in this process)
 - Encouraging the use of the Partnership website as a tool for partners to share/access relevant information
 - The WMA will continue to strive holding future face-to-face meetings in the margins of the following events:
 - ISWA World Congress: chance to collaborate with potential waste partners, also noting that the chemicals & waste is an important issue for ISWA
 - International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant: chance to collaborate with other mercury stakeholders including other areas under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership
 - Meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COPs) to the Minamata Convention: with opportunities to also present/share information at the exhibition booth or side event(s)

- **Activities to disseminate technical information**

Regarding the further development of the “*Catalogue of Technologies and Services on Mercury Waste Management*,” the following actions were proposed:

- Since the information available in the current version of the catalogue is limited to technologies/services provided by the private sector, the WMA will encourage other partners, especially from NGOs, IGOs, individual experts, to also provide information on their expertise/services on mercury waste management for inclusion in the updated version
- The Resource Persons List (RPL) can be revised (to also include useful information on contact details, organization, or experience, which can be added). Some parts of the RPL can be integrated into the catalogue.
- The catalogue has been updated on an annual basis so far, however, it could be updated more frequently so that up-to-date information is shared among partners in a timely manner (it could be an incentive for partners to provide information)

- **Matching technical knowledge and needs/problems**

- It is necessary to consider the strategic approaches to match technical knowledge owned by partners and actual needs/problems in relation to mercury waste management, especially in developing countries
- It would be useful to upgrade and update the catalogue and Resource Persons List, which may serve as tools to disseminate information on partners’ technologies/knowledge and areas of expertise
- It would be worthwhile to consider ways to collect information on needs/problems faced with respect to mercury waste management, especially from developing countries. Mercury inventories developed in the context of Minamata Initial Assessments could also be a useful information source
- The WMA will explore the possibility to organize meetings during the COPs or other relevant events and encourage the participation of partners, in particular from developing countries to discuss this issue

- **Outreach activities:**

- In order to share information on their activities with stakeholders beyond the WMA, partners are encouraged to conduct outreach activities (e.g. by creating a link to the WMA webpage on their website)
- It is important to consider how the WMA can contribute to the environmentally sound management of different types of mercury wastes, including waste which

falls outside the scope of the Minamata Convention, as well as how to contribute to or collaborate with other issues on the global agenda such as SDGs.

- The WMA will continue to discuss the possible link with other fora relevant to chemicals and waste, such as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

3. Sharing the WMA meeting 2019 Results at the ISWA World Congress 2019

The WMA meeting was held back to back with the ISWA World Congress held from 7 to 9 October 2019 in Bilbao, Spain. A lead introduced the WMA, including its activities and results of its 2019 meeting at a session entitled “Chemicals and waste: *a key topic for circular economy. The global policy framework and the case of mercury waste*”. This session explored the global policy framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste to and beyond 2020, presented how it could support circularity, with a deep dive into the issue of Mercury waste.