

SAY NO TO MERCURY

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Head, Chemicals and Health Branch
Industry and Economy Division
United Nations Environment Programme
Palais des Nations
8-14 avenue de la Paix
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By E-mail: metals@un.org

Dear UNEP,

Say No to Mercury wishes to formally join the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Programme to support its objective of protecting human health and the environment from mercury emissions to air and mercury releases to water and land, specifically those generated from the dental sector.

Say No to Mercury is a non-government organisation formerly known as Australians for Mercury Free Dentistry.

Say No To Mercury was founded in 2011 in Melbourne, Australia, by Dr Lisa Matriste to address the protectionist policies of the dental industry and to provide a balanced, alternative viewpoint to government policymakers.

Say No to Mercury's mission is to end the mercury age in dentistry and to be the voice for the dental workers of the world in protecting them from hazardous occupational exposure to mercury.

Mercury dental amalgam contains approximately 50% mercury. The dental profession has used mercury dental amalgam for 200 years to treat decayed teeth.

Mercury dental amalgam amounts to about 20% of global mercury consumption. The principal human exposure to mercury is from mercury dental amalgam in countries that still practice mercury-based dentistry. Mercury dental amalgam is a primitive, poisonous, polluting product and is the only mercury-added product listed in the Convention that is directly implanted into a living person. Mercury dental amalgam has the greatest

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mercury concentration of all products listed in Article 4 Annex A of the Convention text and has no phase-out date.

Say No to Mercury has three primary objectives:

1. Lobby governments to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury
2. Lobby for a global phase-out date for mercury dental amalgam
3. Lobby for a worldwide ban on the sale of recycled mercury

As a Minamata Convention on Mercury stakeholder, Say No to Mercury is committed to supporting the timely and effective implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury by providing state-of-the-art knowledge and science and raising awareness towards global action on mercury. In addition, Say No to Mercury has a network of experts that can assist all governments with information exchange, technical assistance, capacity building and technology transfer to develop a national plan to phase out mercury dental amalgam. Say No to Mercury can provide expertise to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership in the following areas:

- Mercury in products: Mercury dental amalgam
- Mercury in waste management: Mercury dental amalgam
- Mercury Supply and Storage: Mercury dental amalgam

Say No to Mercury has developed a pragmatic and straightforward roadmap that addresses the various challenges of both the point and diffuse sources of mercury releases and emissions from the dental sector. A collaborative approach is needed to provide complete solutions to address the health and environmental impacts of mercury pollution from the dental industry. The proposed comprehensive roadmap begins by setting a new standard for best environmental practices, utilising the best available technology to permanently abate mercury pollution generated by the dental sector. The roadmap addresses the current practices of open burning of mercury-contaminated waste, dumping waste into landfill and reselling recycled mercury back to the dental amalgam manufacturers where it can be diverted to ASGM and other covert activities such as the manufacturing of illicit drugs like crystal Meth/Ice/ Methamphetamine and the manufacturing of detonators and switches in anti-personnel landmines.

The ideal endpoint in the lifecycle of dental mercury follows the recovery and stabilisation of the dental mercury, which is then directed into safe long-term storage. The roadmap summary of the solutions for ending the mercury age in dentistry comprises of:

- Source reduction: access to cost-effective, mercury free and BPA-free dental filling materials

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- Waste management: introducing cost-effective best available amalgam separators.
- Recovery, stabilisation, and disposal of dental mercury being fated to long-term storage.
- Awareness-raising: dental experts with specialised training in best management practices are available to assist governments with professional training programs for dental workers in handling mercury dental amalgam, including addressing the need for safe workplaces and protecting dental workers, predominantly women of child-bearing age, from occupational mercury exposure.

The contribution from Say No to Mercury as a UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Program member would add value to its projects related to mercury dental amalgam.

Say No to Mercury welcomes the opportunity of being included in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and continuing to form constructive, collaborative relationships between various parties, governmental, non-governmental, public and private stakeholders in which all participants agree to work together in a systematic way to achieve its goal: 'Make Mercury a History'.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Lisa Matriste
Director

