



31 October 2023

Jacqueline Alvarez
Chief of the Chemicals and Health Branch, Industry and Economy Division,
United Nations Environment Programme,
International Environment House I, Chemin des Anémones 15, 1219 Châtelaine-Geneva

Dear Jacqueline Alvarez, Chief of the Chemicals and Health Branch, Industry and Economy Division, United Nations Environment Programme

APPLICATION TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE UN GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP IN THE FIELD OF MERCURY WASTE MANAGEMENT

I am writing seeking your kind consideration of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation's (ANSTO) enclosed application to become a member of the UN Global Mercury Partnership (GMP) in the field of mercury waste management.

ANSTO is Australia's landmark infrastructure in nuclear science and technology. We partner with scientists and engineers and apply new technologies to provide real-world benefits. Our work improves human health, saves lives, builds our industries, and protects the environment. ANSTO conducts and enables inter-disciplinary research using nuclear and isotopic techniques to address some of Australia's and the world's most challenging environmental problems, focusing on water resource sustainability, climate change, and the impact of contaminants.

We understand ANSTO's leading research in mercury waste management in marine environments could make a valuable contribution to the UN GMP.

ANSTO is currently researching the fate and potential impact of mercury from contaminated subsea infrastructure associated with the offshore oil and gas industry. While Australian legislation requires full removal of all infrastructure at the end of production life for the Australian gas and oil industry, there may be opportunities for industry to leave certain infrastructure on the seabed, if industry can demonstrate a net environmental benefit. This requires a comprehensive assessment of any contaminants within the infrastructure and their potential detrimental effects on the marine environment. Key contaminants of primary concern within production infrastructure include Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORM) and mercury. Mercury may accumulate on the surfaces of subsea gas pipelines as metacinnabar (βHgS) or elemental mercury (Hg^0) and it is this contamination ANSTO seeks to assess via our leading research.

I enclose ANSTO's completed GMP Partner application for your kind consideration. If you require further information, you are most welcome to contact Dr Tom Cresswell, Principal Research Scientist in Environmental Toxicology (Tom.Cresswell@ansto.gov.au).

We look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Shaun Jenkinson
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation



UNEP GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP

INFORMATION ON BECOMING A PARTNER

This information sheet provides an overview of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Mercury Partnership for prospective partners. Further information is available at:

www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/

GOAL OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The overall goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is to protect human health and the global environment from the releases of mercury and its compounds by minimizing and, where feasible, ultimately eliminating global, anthropogenic mercury releases to air, water and land.

PARTNERSHIP AREAS

The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is a voluntary and collaborative relationship between various parties, governmental, non-governmental, public and private, in which all participants agree to work together in a systematic way to achieve its goal.

Initiated in 2005¹, the Partnership today focuses its work on supporting timely and effective implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury; on providing state of the art knowledge and science on mercury; and on delivering outreach and awareness raising towards global action on mercury.

¹ UNEP Governing Council Decision 23/9

The Partnership is structured around eight areas:

- Artisanal and small-scale gold mining
- Mercury cell chlor-alkali production
- Mercury air transport and fate research
- Mercury in products
- Mercury releases from coal combustion
- Mercury waste management
- Mercury supply and storage
- Mercury releases from the cement industry

OUR PARTNERS

Over 240 partners from governments, IGOs, NGOs, private sector and academic institutions:

- Support the overall goal of the Partnership.
- Contribute resources or expertise to the development and implementation of Partnership activities.
- Network with other organizations, agencies, entities and individuals addressing mercury issues.

BECOMING A PARTNER

To become a partner, interested entities or individuals should submit a letter to UNEP signifying their support for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and their commitment to achieving its goal. The letter should also specify how they will contribute to meeting the goal of the Partnership.

Together with this letter, UNEP requests interested entities or individuals to also complete and submit the registration form (see reverse). Participation in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership will be confirmed by UNEP. Partners' letters of support will be made public through the UNEP's website.

SUPPORT LETTER AND REGISTRATION FORM SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO:

**Head, Chemicals and Health Branch
Industry and Economy Division
United Nations Environment Programme**
Palais des Nations
8-14 avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
E-mail: metals@un.org

