

Inception Workshop
Norway ODA Mercury Storage and Disposal Project in the Caribbean
(Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago)
12-13 August, Port of Spain

CONCEPT NOTE AND DRAFT AGENDA

A. Objectives of the Inception Workshop:

- (a) The meeting is aimed at gaining a better understanding and role clarification on the mercury storage and disposal project objectives, design, outputs and outcome. The project aims to promote the environmentally sound storage and disposal of surplus mercury in Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago. The main outcome of the project is a national action plan on mercury storage and disposal in Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.
- (b) UNEP Chemicals and the international consultant will present the key steps in the environmentally sound storage and disposal of mercury waste: inventory of mercury waste, warehouse facilities, legislative/regulatory infrastructure; assessments of management options; contents of the "Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal"; guidelines in drafting a national action plan and other relevant information needed to implement the project.

B. Operating Details:

- (a) Participants: representatives from the 3 Governments, NGOs, industry, and other relevant stakeholders in Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago ; CARICOM secretariat
- (b) Secretariat: BCRC Trinidad and Tobago; the international consultant and UNEP Chemicals; UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC)

Methodology: A chair will be nominated by the participants. The project will be guided by the " Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal" which is based on the updated technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing, or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds', recently adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention. An open discussion will take place after every agenda item to be presented, where each country will have the opportunity to present their related national circumstances. Action points after every item will be noted and will be further discussed and summarized in the afternoon of day 2.

C. Draft Agenda:

Day 1 12 August		
Time	Item	Description of the presentation and discussion points
9.00	1. Opening	Opening and welcoming of the participants (BCRC-Trinidad and Tobago, CARICOM secretariat, UNEP Chemicals, UNEP ROLAC)
9.30	2. Overview of the mercury process	Context of the project, Global Mercury Partnership, Minamata Convention status of ratification (UNEP Chemicals)
10.00	3. Mercury projects and initiatives	Past (including mercury inventories) and current activities related to mercury pollution reduction
	3.a. in Jamaica	Jamaica (representative)
	3.b. in Suriname	Suriname (representative)
	3.c. in Trinidad and Tobago	Trinidad and Tobago (representative)

10.45	Break	
11.15	4. Project mandate, background, objectives, activities relevance to ratification process; expected outcome	Project activities and expected output, illustration of examples from previous projects (UNEP Chemicals)
12.00	5. Overview of the "Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal"	Presentation and discussion (Consultant)
13.00	Lunch	
14.00	6. A suggested framework for decision making for the safe management of redundant mercury	Concept developed by the Integrating Knowledge to Inform Mercury Policy (IKIMP) Initiative; Figure 18 in the "Sourcebook" (UNEP Chemicals)
14.30	7. Types, identification and sources of mercury wastes; inventory of major mercury waste streams; sources of mercury waste	"Sourcebook" Chapter 1: Classifying waste streams and sources; How to do an inventory of mercury waste streams using the mercury toolkit (Consultant)
15.30	Break	
16.00	8. ESM of mercury waste for the main waste streams; Storage; Recovery and Recycling	"Sourcebook" Chapters 2 and 3: ESM of mercury waste under the Basel convention; handling, packaging, transport, collection, traceability (Consultant)
17.30	9.a. Survey and analysis of possible temporary storage locations in the country	"Sourcebook" Chapter 4: An inventory of current mercury or hazardous waste management facilities. Examples may include hazardous waste treatment and disposal facilities, mercury recycling facilities, and gold mining/zinc smelting by product operations generating mercury. The survey will include waste management practices (including waste reduction, collection, treatment, storage and disposal). Sector-specific (health care, chlor alkali, ASGM) data and information from the mercury inventories will be utilized. Capacity needs for storage and disposal will be defined. (Consultant)
18.30	9.b. Review of regulatory framework	A standard matrix for the review of the regulatory framework will be presented. May include national and regional policies on hazardous substances and waste management. This covers review of existing national and local legislation/regulatory measures that may affect the storage and disposal of mercury. Examples include legislation on hazardous substances, on waste, trade, products phase-out, and others. (Consultant)
19.00	Closure of Day 1	(Chair)
Day 2 13 August		
9.00	Recap of day 1 discussion	(BCRC Trinidad and Tobago)
09.30	9.c. Establishing decision-making process	Creating or strengthening existing national interagency coordinating bodies (government, NGOs, industry). Countries will identify stakeholders, their roles will be defined and the nature of their engagement. At the end of the dialogue process, the objectives of the national mercury waste management will be agreed upon. (UNEP Chemicals)
10.00	9. d. Assessing basic management	"Sourcebook" Chapters 5: Presentation of global

	options: Disposal operations	management options, including recent developments. Concrete management options will be identified based on the survey and inventory. This may include review of technology status. The country may proceed with defining a site pre-selection criteria and technology for storage and disposal. (Consultant)
11.00	Break	
11.30	10. Export of mercury waste; clean-up of sites contaminated with mercury waste	"Sourcebook" Chapters 6 and 7 (Consultant)
12.00	11. Developing national mercury storage and disposal action plan	Based on the inventory results and assessment of basic management options, a national mercury storage and disposal plan will be developed based on multi stakeholder engagement. The consultant will present guidelines on how to develop national action plans dealing with mercury storage and disposal. (Consultant)
13.00	Lunch	
14.00	12. Drafting of project work plan by country	The workplan will outline the project activities, resources and persons responsible for the next 12 months of project implementation (UNEP Chemicals)
15.30	Break	
16.00	13.00 Presentation of project work plan by country ⁱ	Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago
17.00	Country reports	A standard format for the country reports will be presented (Consultant)
17.30	Closure of the meeting	(Chair)

D. Project Background and Mandate:

1. Identifying environmentally sound storage and disposal solutions for mercury is recognized by the international community as a priority. Mercury supply is exceeding demand in many parts of the world as a result of the movement towards use of mercury-free alternatives. This surplus must be managed and stored properly, thereby preventing its re-entry into the global market. In the region, underground facilities, i.e. removal from the biosphere, do not constitute a feasible solution in the near future. Hence, the use of appropriate above-ground warehouses, i.e. removal from the market, may be more suitable for ensuring the environmentally sound management of surplus mercury. For this purpose, it is crucial to ensure the existence of necessary expertise and infrastructure. There is a need to improve both technical standards for environmentally sound management and institutional capacity.

2. This project is a follow-up to the 2009 Norway- funded project "Reducing Mercury Supply and Investigating Safe Long Term Storage Solutions", also known as "UNEP Mercury Storage Project". The current project is during the period of ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and will serve as a catalyst in the action towards ratification of the Convention. This project is also part of the continuing work to provide technical assistance to countries in search for environmentally-sound storage and disposal for mercury, identified as a priority of governments.

3. The project is patterned after the mercury storage and disposal project initiated in Uruguay and Argentina in June 2011. A results workshop was carried out in April 2012. A similar project was also implemented in Mexico and Panama with results available in 2013. Both projects were funded by Norway ODA. Given the successful outcomes, it was decided to replicate the project. This will allow participants to draw on the valuable lessons learnt and take advantage of the gained experience. More information is available at

<http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/PrioritiesforAction/SupplyandStorage/Activities/LACMercuryStorageProject/MercuryStorage2CountriesProject/tabid/79070/Default.aspx>

4. The Chemicals Branch of UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics implemented the Mercury Storage Projects in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) and in the Asia-Pacific Regions in March 2009. The projects were aimed at reducing the release of mercury into the environment by initiating regional processes that will support the sequestration of excess mercury in these regions, thereby preventing its re-entry into the global marketplace. More information about the project can be found at the <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/InterimActivities/Partnerships/SupplyandStorage/LACMercuryStorageProject/tabid/3554/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

5. The project builds on GC 25/5 III decision that requested “UNEP Executive Director working through the Global Mercury Partnership and concurrently with the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop a legally-binding instrument on mercury, to continue and enhance as part of international action on mercury the existing work, including enhancing capacity for mercury storage”.

6. The project is recognized as an activity under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership on Supply and Storage, currently led by the governments of Spain and Uruguay. The partnership area’s objective as set out in the business plan is “to contribute to the minimization and, where feasible, elimination of mercury supply, considering a hierarchy of sources, and the retirement of mercury from the market as a result of environmentally sound management”. It recognizes that “mercury supply and trade are priority areas for the intergovernmental negotiating committee and aims to halve the global supply of mercury by 2013”. The full partnership on supply and storage business plan is available at <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/InterimActivities/Partnerships/SupplyandStorage/tabid/3546/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

7. The safe long term storage of mercury is seen as a requirement or obligation as countries implement legislation leading to excess mercury supply. A number of countries and regions have already passed legislation or enacted regulatory measures to reduce mercury supply both nationally and regionally. Worth noting are the mercury export ban which came into force for the European Union by 2011, the US export ban for 2013, and the export bans in Sweden and Denmark. Information on developments and progress of mercury storage in other countries is available at <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/PrioritiesforAction/SupplyandStorage/Reports/tabid/4508/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

8. The legislative frameworks in place regarding mercury use, phase-out, trade, and storage in the various countries of the GRULAC region is generally rather limited, fragmented and differs considerably across countries. With regard to trade legislation, almost all countries¹ in the region restrict the import of hazardous substances, both for recovery and for final disposal. Exemptions are generally allowed for but subject to certain conditions (i.e. licensing, payment of a fee, adequate insurance etc.). El Salvador, for example, obliges importers to obtain an environmental permit. Brazil and Ecuador have relatively comprehensive prohibitions in place. Restrictions on the transit of hazardous wastes are in place for most countries in the GRULAC, with Brazil and Venezuela being noteworthy exceptions. Meanwhile, export restrictions are in place only in a small, albeit growing number of countries: Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico and Nicaragua restrict the export of hazardous waste, while Bolivia is currently preparing a regulation restricting export for the purpose of recovery. As regards implementation of the amendment to the Basel Convention, the record is mixed, with a slight majority of countries having implemented it². It is thus possible to identify two broad groups: Those countries having restrictions or bans on both imports and exports and those with restrictions or bans on imports but not on exports. In any case one a growing tendency towards more stringent restrictions can be observed.

This is a welcome development further limiting the amount of mercury in the global marketplace and decreasing developing countries vulnerability vis-à-vis hazardous substances. Meanwhile, it should be kept in

¹ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia, Venezuela. Barbados, by contrast have no restrictions in place in either category. Cuba allows imports for the purpose of recovery (but not final disposal).

² Argentina, Barbados, Cuba, Guatemala, and Venezuela are examples of countries not having implemented the Amendment. In contrast, countries such as Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Saint Lucia have already implemented the Amendment.

mind that this limits options available to countries for dealing with surplus mercury: Developing countries in particular often lack appropriate facilities for environmentally sound storage. In such cases, export to a country with adequate infrastructure might constitute the only feasible option. Import and export restrictions and bans should therefore allow for exceptions subject to the approval of the responsible national authority and in line with international requirements such as those stipulated by the Basel Convention.

9. The project will be in collaboration with the BCRC in Trinidad and Tobago, UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/ROLAC), and the CARICOM secretariat.

10. The project will pilot test the "Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal". The Sourcebook is an informative tool that aims to enhance the capacity of Governments and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the environmentally sound storage and disposal of the major types of mercury wastes. It was developed in close collaboration with the International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) under the umbrella of the Global Mercury Waste Management partnership led by the Government of Japan. The content of the "Sourcebook" is based on the 'updated technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of waste consisting of, containing, or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds', recently adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention.

ⁱ Country road maps towards ratification could be used as reference for the project action plans