



Concept note for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership 3rd Waste Management Partnership Area meeting

Note by the Secretariat

This concept note was developed by the Mercury Waste Management Partnership Area, led by the Ministry of Environment, Japan and chaired by Professor Masaru Tanaka, and was developed in consultation with the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership secretariat at UNEP Chemicals branch DTIE. This concept note sets out the objectives and expected outcomes of the third Waste Management Partnership Area meeting that will take place in Manila, the Philippines on 9 to 11 December 2013.

Progress made at the 2nd Partnership Area meeting

The second Waste Management Partnership Area meeting was held in Tokyo, Japan on 9-10 March 2010. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Environment, Japan and was attended by 41 participants, consisting of representatives from twelve countries, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, Japanese organizations as well as experts. Professor Masaru Tanaka of Tottori University of Environmental Studies, lead of the Waste Management Partnership Area, chaired the meeting.

The meeting was aimed at effective promotion of the Waste Management Partnership through information exchange on relevant activities, development of a Draft BAT/BEP Guidance Document for the reduction of mercury releases from waste management, sharing updated information on business plan, and seeking effective ways to contribute to the intergovernmental negotiations for a global legally binding instrument on mercury.

Participants shared challenging issues faced by not only developing countries but also developed countries and exchanged information about their activities to reduce mercury releases from waste management. Participants also identified increasing people's awareness on the effects of mercury on human health as an important factor to promote actions to reduce mercury releases from waste management.

Participants identified possible collaboration schemes with other partnership areas, including priority actions as follows:

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- Coordinate activities (e.g. input to and utilization of the then-Draft Basel Convention Technical Guidelines and the then-BAT/BEP Guidance Document (currently called “Good Practice Document”))
- Identify and design joint projects to meet objectives of the two Partnerships
- Enhance communication (attending meetings)

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- Input to and usage of the then-Draft Basel Convention Technical Guidelines and the then-BAT/BEP Guidance Document (Good Practice Document)
- (Identification of gaps of two Partnership areas)

Regarding the then-“Draft BAT/BEP Guidance Document” (former name of the ‘Good Practices for Management of Mercury Releases from Waste’ (so-called ‘Good Practice Document’)), participants agreed that the involvement of the whole chain (not only manufacturers but also importers, retailers, and municipalities), inclusion of diverse cases of BAT/BEP, and coordination with other partnership areas, especially the Mercury-Containing Products sector, are the key issues for developing this document. Based on further comments provided by participants after this meeting, the first draft of the ‘Good Practices Document’ was developed in January 2011.

Preparation for PAG5

For the preparation of the fifth meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group of UNEP Global Mercury Partnership held on 27 July 2013 in Edinburgh, each partnership area was encouraged to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and key upcoming, planned future efforts or activities that will support governments address the measures set out in the Minamata Convention on Mercury. According to the comments and inputs provided by partners, this partnership area submitted following SWOT elements and priority activities.

● SWOT elements of this partnership area

Strength of this partnership area is learning from experiences in the reduction of mercury releases from waste management through several tools such as ‘Good Practices Document’, ‘Basel Convention Technical Guidelines’, ‘Information on Implemented Projects listed in the Business Plan’. Such information would enable partners to choose relevant measures suitable for their situation, and would provide Partners with ideas to improve existing projects and develop new projects. A further strength of this partnership area is the identification of experts in mercury waste management, summarized as the Resource Person List. The objective of this list is to provide information about the resource persons that could give advice from their technical standpoint. Currently, there are 27 resource persons registered on the list.

Weakness of this partnership area is limited reporting about the achievements made by each partner. Some partners promptly respond to the request to update the project information but some do not. There is lack of delivery of information about activities/results of other partnership areas; this could possibly be addressed by increasing collaboration among partnership areas and expanding membership, such as common planning and implementing concrete projects with other partnership areas in exercising the “lifecycle” approach.

One challenge of the waste partnership is to ensure environmentally sound management (ESM) of collected waste products and treated residues for the countries that have established waste collection systems. There is a need to increase the accessibility to affordable environmentally sound technology for mercury waste management and to enhance capacities of managing municipal waste, of which banning and stopping ‘open burning’, a common practice in many developing countries, is a priority. Measures like changing open dumping to sanitary landfills with periodical surface coverage are necessary. Another challenge is to raise awareness of the public and political leaders - this is considered key to changing people’s behavior and secure resources to implement necessary actions. Further challenges include capacity building to increase the number of specialists with sufficient knowledge to implement projects; fund raising for future activities and projects, and promoting global recognition of progress made by the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

● **Priority activities of the partnership area**

One of the priority activities is supporting the update, revision, dissemination and implementation of the Basel Convention ‘Technical Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management of Mercury Wastes’. The Government of Japan serves as a lead country on the guidelines and works with the small intersessional working group, based on the decision adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its eleventh meeting.

Another priority activity is supporting UNEP to develop a ‘Practical Sourcebook on Mercury Storage and Disposal’. The waste partnership also plans to finalize the first draft of the Good Practices for Management of Mercury Releases from Waste in collaboration with UNEP Chemicals and other Partnership areas.

Objectives of this meeting

Objectives of this meeting are as follows.

- Promoting the Waste Management Partnership effectively through exchanging information on past and future activities especially on how the Partnership activities can support countries in their efforts to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury
- Seeking effective ways to collaborate with other partnership areas, local authorities, and private sectors
- Identifying ways to utilize existing schemes and capacities, and to arrange additional tools and schemes that contribute to promotion of activities of this area

Major topics for discussion

Major topics for the discussion of this meeting are as follows.

- Session 1: Directions of activities under the Waste Management Partnership Area towards ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
 - Discussion on future direction of activities under the Waste Management Partnership Area to facilitate each Party's ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention
 - What are specific needs of developing countries to ratify and implement Article 11 (Mercury Waste) of the Minamata Convention? How could the Waste Management Partnership meet such needs? What activities could be implemented under the Waste Management Partnership to assist countries?
 - How do we adjust existing priority activities and indicators for evaluation of future activities in terms of supporting Partners to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention?
 - How should we utilize the 'Resource Person List' for meeting the developing countries' needs?
- Session 2: Collaboration possibilities with other partnership areas, local authorities and private-sectors
 - Discussion on collaboration scheme with other Partnership Areas
 - What areas should be targeted for effective collaboration with other Partnership areas? What activities could be implemented for such areas?
 - What scheme could serve best for such collaboration?
 - Discussion on collaboration scheme with local authorities and private-sectors
 - What resources and experiences of local authorities and private sectors could be mobilized for ESM of mercury waste?
 - What areas could be targeted in order to promote ESM of mercury waste for effective collaboration with local authorities and private-sectors?
 - What activities could be implemented for such areas? Is developing a list of effective technologies by private-sectors useful?
- Session 3: 'Good Practices for Management of Mercury Releases from Waste (Good Practice Document)' and relevant documents
 - Discussion on revising the 'Good Practice Document' and the development of UNEP's 'Practical Sourcebook on Mercury Storage and Disposal'
 - What scopes of the Good Practice Document and the Practical Sourcebook would be suitable to implement the principles indicated in the Basel Convention Technical Guidelines?
 - What items could be included in the Good Practice Document and the Practical Sourcebook?
 - How shall we develop the Good Practice Document and the Practical Sourcebook in terms of collecting, scrutinizing and integrating necessary information and of schedule? Who plays what role?
- Session 4: Implementation of the Waste Management Partnership Area's future activities
 - Discussion on Waste Management Partnership Area's 'Wish List'
 - What criteria could be used for prioritizing the proposed projects?
 - How could we proceed on development of the wish list in terms of schedule and specific works?
 - Discussion on funds and schemes for project implementation
 - What sources of funds and schemes were useful for implementing projects in the past?
 - What information would be useful to identify available sources of funds and schemes for implementing the projects under the Waste Management Partnership?

Expected outcome of this meeting

Identification of following issues would be the expected outcome of this meeting.

- Effective ways to support countries to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury
- Effective ways to collaborate with relevant partnership areas, local authorities, and private sectors
- Priority activities and ways to address major challenges of this partnership area
- Effective tools, schemes, source of funds to implement future projects of this partnership area
- Practical activities and schedules for revising and developing relevant documents (Good Practice Document, Practical Sourcebook on Mercury Storage and Disposal, Business Plan, Resource Person List) under this partnership area