

UNEP Global Mercury Partnership
Mercury Waste Management Area Meeting 2020
Friday 27 November 2020, 12:00-14:00 (CET)
-Summary-

Overview

1. The Mercury Waste Management Area (WMA) of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (UNEP-GMP) held the first segment of its 2020 annual meeting online on 27 November 2020, from 12:00 to 14:00 (CET). The meeting was organized by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan, one of the co-leads of the WMA, with the support of the Secretariat of the UNEP-Global Mercury Partnership. The meeting was attended by 35 participants including representatives from governments, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector and academia.
2. The objectives of the WMA meeting 2020 are to:
 - review ongoing WMA activities and consider future activities;
 - identify technologies and services on mercury waste management that Partners could provide as well as challenges on mercury waste management that countries were facing in order to promote matchmaking; and
 - develop the WMA Activity Plan.

Opening

3. Dr. Misuzu Asari, Associate Professor of Kyoto University, one of the co-leads of the WMA, opened the meeting with warm welcome to all participants, including new Partners of the area. Ms. Yuri Kato, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, noted that she wished to agree on the way forward for the WMA at this meeting. She also invited all participants to express their needs to the WMA.
4. The participants adopted the agenda as per the version circulated in advance of the meeting.
5. The Secretariat of the WMA (Secretariat) presented the overview of the WMA meeting 2020 including the objectives and expected outcomes. The Secretariat also outlined the schedule for developing the WMA Activity Plan by March 2021.
6. The Secretariat of the UNEP-GMP then provided an overview of the GMP, which currently brings together over 200 partners from Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry and academia. She shared recent developments under the GMP in follow up to the tenth meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group (PAG-10, November 2019, Geneva), including work initiated on mercury from oil and gas as well as from non-ferrous metals mining and smelting, the launch of a series of GMP webinars, the revision of the Partnership Overarching Framework, as well as contributions by the GMP and its Partnership Areas to several Minamata Online events. With respect to outreach, she highlighted the launch of a GMP Newsletter, which

represented an opportunity to feature highlights by Partnership areas and partners, past and upcoming events, new tools, resources and publications available. Finally, she informed participants about and the forthcoming eleventh meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group (PAG11) to be held on 15-16 December 2020¹.

Session 1: Identification of needs on mercury waste management technologies and services

7. The Secretariat noted that although several countries had identified management of mercury waste is one of the most prominent challenge to be prioritized for action, further understanding and analysis on specific needs in those countries would be necessary to provide corresponding solutions for challenges they face and to identify possible future activities of the WMA. In this regard, the Secretariat indicated its willingness to conduct a questionnaire survey to better understand these challenges and invited all participants to provide feedback on the format and content of the questionnaire.
8. One participant suggested modifications to the format of questionnaire and indicated readiness to circulate it through the network of his organization.
9. One participant suggested that the questionnaire should be administered to the national focal points in countries that are Parties to the Minamata Convention which, in most countries, would be the ministry of environment. The participant suggested that perhaps UNEP could facilitate that.
10. The Secretariat requested all participants to provide further comments on the format of questionnaire by the mid-December. The questionnaire survey would subsequently be conducted between January and February 2021, and the outcome of the survey would be presented at the next WMA meeting.

Session 2: Needs and seeds matchmaking

11. The Secretariat introduced proposals on the future activities of the WMA, including updating the information tools and organizing online technical sessions and face-to-face training/workshop for capacity building on mercury waste management. The Secretariat invited all participants to provide feedback on the types of activities that could be further considered or elaborated to promote the matchmaking of needs and seeds.
12. The participants suggested that the WMA:
 - implement capacity building and trainings pertaining to the interim storage of medical devices containing mercury or organize a such webinar as part of the Minamata Online² in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention;

¹ <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/partnership-advisory-group-meeting-11>

² <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Meetings/MinamataOnline/tabid/8527/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

- organize a virtual or face-to-face event on the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of mercury waste (in case the revised version is adopted at the next Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention) with invited experts from the small-intersessional working group;
 - develop specific guidance on the management of certain types of mercury waste, possibly in the form of a factsheet, which could complement the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of mercury waste under the Basel Convention; and
 - seek opportunities to share experiences and best practices related to mercury management with interested stakeholders.
13. One participant emphasized that the WMA should provide a fora to foster matchmaking. He suggested, for example, organizing webinars on a regular basis, where Partners listed in the Catalogue of Technologies and Services on Mercury Waste Management (Catalogue) could introduce their technologies and services and attendees could exchange directly with them.

Session 3: Possible collaboration with other Partnership Areas and contribution to the ongoing consultations under the UNEP-GMP

14. The Secretariat presented ongoing and future collaboration of works between the WMA and the Chlor-alkali Partnership Area and the Mercury in Products Partnership Area.
15. The Secretariat of the UNEP-GMP introduced the work undertaken in follow up to a request by the Partnership Advisory Group at its tenth meeting with respect to mercury from oil and gas and from non-ferrous metals mining and smelting, with the organization of experts consultations in April 2020 and the preparations of study reports on these two topics currently ongoing. She thanked the members of the WMA for their very valuable contributions to this work and indicated that further consultations would be taking place in the coming months before the expected finalization of the reports in April 2021.
16. Then, the Secretariat invited all participants to provide feedback on possible collaborations between the WMA and other partnership areas.
17. The participants suggested that the WMA collaborate with:
- the Supply and Storage Partnership Area with respect to the management of mercury wastes associated with decommissioning of chlor-alkali manufacturing facilities in Uruguay; and
 - the Cement Partnership Area, particularly on macro-encapsulation of end-of-life fluorescent lamps using leftover cement.
18. One participant noted the importance of providing a training for the general public on the handling of mercury waste in households. Another participant showed an interest in providing information on technologies on mercury recovery from end-of-life mercury-added products waste, which could be reflected to the Catalogue

19. One participant suggested organizing special 10th year anniversary meeting of the WMA in March 2021, inviting Dr. Masaru Tanaka, the first WMA's chairperson.

Closing

20. Dr. Asari Misuzu summarized the meeting and requested all participants to provide comments and feedbacks and Ms. Yuri Kato also requested to fill out the questionnaire accordingly. The Secretariat announced that the second segment of the WMA meeting 2020 would be held by the end of March 2021, and that the meeting would amongst others consider the result of the questionnaire survey and discuss the WMA Activity Plan.