



Web Story #1

October 2022

Japan Mercury Project supported mercury management practitioners online

'Project for Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan's Knowledge and Experiences' has faced the most serious challenge on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has restricted the international travel since 2020. However, the Project has employed novel internet technologies to conduct its activities in remote mode. Between December 2020 to March 2022, the Project has organized 4 online training programmes with 429 participants in total. The number of participants is more than that initially expected, which indicated the benefit of the online programme that can provide learning opportunities to more people. The outline of each training is as follows:

Online training programme #1: Role of monitoring laboratory for national mercury management

The first online training programme was held on 2 – 4 December 2020 in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic that restricted international travel. The objectives of this training programme were to initiate a series of skill-up training for national monitoring laboratories that are monitoring (or will monitor) mercury levels in the country and to help each institution locating its own monitoring capacity among regional counterparts. The programme was structured from start-up level to advance level to fit to the levels and needs of the participants. It was attended by more than 100 participants, most of which had environmental backgrounds. More than half of them replied that the lecture level just fit to their competency while approx. 40% of the participants felt that the level was slightly high.

Online training programme #2: Mercury inventory and material flow analysis

The second online training programme was held on 2, 4 and 12 March 2021 with its objective to support the improvement of national mercury inventories by compiling various types of information and to introduce a comprehensive mass flow concept to outline the national mercury situation throughout its life cycle. It included practical training/group exercise to develop mercury material flows per country. 85 participants from 9 partner countries formed 5 groups and elaborated the flow diagrams from different viewpoints. Approx. 60% of the participants were female and 40% were between 30 and 39 years old. This is the similar profile to the ones in the first programme. The

majority of the participants came from the environmental sector but the other sectors such as academia and NGOs sent some participants to the programme.

Online training programme #3: Laboratory management for mercury survey and monitoring

The third online training programme was held on 7 – 9 December 2021 with its objective to provide enabling support to the efforts of laboratories wishing to participate in the forthcoming proficiency testing (PT) under the project and to strengthen their readiness to participate in the PT. The training programme was also part of a continual improvement of quality data collection and analysis on mercury. The invitation was extended beyond the project partner countries for the first time and attended by more than 130 participants from over 30 countries. There is continuous trend that more female (57%) is participating in the training programme, which suggests the project benefits female more than male. The programme fits their expectation and approx. 80% of the participants responded that they were the most suitable persons in the institution to participate in the programme.

Online training programme #4: Developing and updating mercury mass flow and inventory

The fourth online training programme was held on 19, 20 January and 08, 09 and 17 February 2022 and attended by approx. 100 participants with diverse backgrounds from environmental to industrial while environmental ministries and NGOs took the largest portion. The objective of this workshop was to support the improvement of national mercury inventories by compiling various types of information. It also introduces a comprehensive mass flow concept to outline the national mercury situation throughout its life cycle. A post-training questionnaire showed that the participants had a different level of understanding. Approx. half of the respondents felt that the programme fitted their level of competency and 40% felt that the programme provided lectures higher than the level of their personal competency.