#5, September 2024

Annual Progress Report

for

Project for Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan's Knowledge and Experiences

(Reporting Period: July 2023 – June 2024)

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1 Project Information

Project title	Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan's Knowledge and Experiences
Participating countries	Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar[1], Nepal, Palau, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam
Project outcome	Countries increasingly generate and apply information on how to monitor and reduce mercury emissions and releases in their legislations, policies or action plans.
Executing agency	UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch[2]
Project period	July 2019 – June 2025 (72 months)[3]
Reporting period	July 2023 – June 2024
Total budget	US$2,999,990

2 Summary

Project for 'Promoting Minamata Convention on Mercury by making the most of Japan's knowledge and experiences' has turned around the key cornerstone to focus more on illegal mercury trade issue which was highlighted at Minamata COP 4.2 in Bali, Indonesia in 2022. Revised workplan was submitted to and endorsed by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ), which included the extension of the project period for another 12 months.

New partnership with **World Customs Organization** (WCO) has been explored to address the immediate needs of the Minamata Convention requesting the information on illegal trade in mercury. New training programme on illegal mercury trade is under preparation. The compilation of information on illegal mercury trade is added as a new activity under Output 3.

Among the participating laboratories in the past 2 rounds of the laboratory **proficiency testing** (PT), institutions from **Indonesia**, **Philippines**, **Thailand**, and **Vietnam** obtained 'Satisfactory' performance for both PTs. The third-round PT has concluded its call for participation and sampled will be shipped for analysis. It is organized by National Institute for Minamata Disease (NIMD) with logistical support provided by UNEP. This arrangement will increase the sustainability of the exercise even after the project closure. Networking webinars among the past participants to the lab PT continues to deepen the knowledge on mercury issues and analytical skills.

The engagement with **Nepal** on gold plating survey has been delayed due to the frequent changes of national government but will be resumed as soon as its internal endorsement is obtained. The supports for the research plan have been obtained from Ministry of Agriculture and Health while waiting for the endorsement of Ministry of Forests and Environment. **Palau** has completed the human hair survey to assess the mercury exposure to general public where fish is their main diet. The result of assessment will serve the basis to develop dietary advisory. Human hair survey in

[1] The participation to the project activities has been suspended since February 2021.
[2] Transferred from UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in January 2024.
[3] Project extension for 12 months is approved in April 2024.

Maldives will also be resumed as the samples collected by regional hospitals throughout country have finally arrived at the mercury laboratory in AIT, Thailand.

Under the Output 3, the Project held a series of online networking webinar for laboratories on mercury analysis in approx. 2-month interval to learn each other and work together. The Project information is uploaded to the website (https://www.unep.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/our-projects/promoting-minamata-convention-mercury) and publicly available.

Responding the revision of the Project workplan endorsed by MOEJ., the Result Framework was also adjusted to fit to the new activities while keeping the same Outcome and Outputs. One Output indicator was added, and two Outcome indicators were revised to align with the new focus. The status of adjusted indicators is still at the initial stage, but the consultation and stocktaking will be conducted, and necessary action will be determined. Most of the Outputs are in good state towards the achievement.

Administratively, the Project was fully transferred to the Industrial and Economy Division on 1 January 2024. The Project staff was also transferred to Knowledge and Risk Unit (KRU), which is directly in charge of the Project.

Based on the one-year extension with the particular focus on illegal mercury trade issues, the workplan for July 2024 – June 2025 is presented. Under the Output 1, a training programme and a series of online webinars on mercury trade will be organized in collaboration with WCO. The Output 2 will expect the progress work in Nepal and Maldives, and completion of the third-round of laboratory PT. It also includes a workshop at ICMGP 2024 in collaboration with NIMD. Output 3 will include the preparatory work of national workshops on illegal mercury trade and the compilation of related data.

Project risks are regularly monitored and updated in a semi-annual basis. Positive change to the chemical management at global level is seen in September 2023 by the adoption of new Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste.

3 Annual report July 2023 – June 2024

3.1 Overall progress

In this reporting period, new partnership with World Customs Organization (WCO) has been explored. This is based on the immediate needs of the Minamata Convention requesting the information on illegal trade in mercury highlighted as the **Bali Declaration** at COP4.2 in Bali, Indonesia in 2022. The workplan was revised and endorsed by the Government of Japan which included the extension of the Project for another 12 months.

New training programme on illegal mercury trade under Output 1 is under preparation. The activities under Output 2 (monitoring component) were reviewed and some of them were cancelled in order to re-focus on the illegal mercury trade issue. Under the Output 3, a new activity on the compilation of information on illegal trade has been added.

The engagement with **Nepal** on gold plating survey has been delayed due to the frequent changes of national government but will be resumed as soon as its internal endorsement is obtained. The research plan has developed and initiated in collaboration between Nepal and Japanese research

institutes, i.e., Prefectural University of Kumamoto (PUK) and National Institute for Minamata Disease (NIMD). The supports for the research plan have been obtained from Ministry of Agriculture and Health while waiting for the endorsement of Ministry of Forests and Environment.

Palau has completed the human hair survey to assess the mercury exposure to general public. The level of mercury is not an imminent threat, but the safety margin is very narrow, particularly for the female in childbearing age. It is recommended to develop advisory materials for fish selection prior to and during pregnancy. Human hair survey in **Maldives** will also be resumed as the samples collected by regional hospitals throughout country have finally arrived at the mercury laboratory in AIT, Thailand. The survey was initiated by the participants of the trainers' training conducted in 2022. Then, Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy, Maldives organized a local training on hair sampling to hospital staff in country.

The second-round laboratory **proficiency testing** (PT), which was organized by National Institute for Minamata Disease (NIMD), supported by UNEP, has been completed and the final report is published at NIMD website. For the second round, the proficiency of both total mercury and methylmercury analysis was assessed, and the geographic focus was extended from Asia-Pacific region to invite more participating laboratories globally. Among the laboratories participating in the past 2 PTs, several institutions have obtained 'Satisfactory' performance, which included **Indonesia**, **Philippines**, **Thailand**, and **Vietnam** from the Project countries. The third-round PT has concluded the call for participation and samples will be shipped to analysis. The first-round PT was initially led by UNEP, but the main organizing role is transferred to NIMD from second-round PT onward with logistical support provided by UNEP. Promoting international mercury research is one of the NIMD's mandate, thus, the arrangement will greatly increase the sustainability of the exercise even after the project closure.

Under the Output 3, the past participants to the lab PT were invited to a series of **networking webinars** to deepen the knowledge on mercury issues as well as analytical skills. The networking webinars are conducted in approx. 2-month intervals with variety of topics on mercury monitoring and analysis.

The Project information is uploaded to the website (https://www.unep.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/our-projects/promoting-minamata-convention-mercury) and publicly available, which includes the final reports for the 2nd round laboratory PT and hair mercury assessment report in Palau. Also, the compilation of information on illegal mercury trade has been initiated under Output 3. The information which is useful for frontline customs officers will be extracted from available literatures.

3.2 Activities implemented

The activities implemented in this period are reported below. The progress rates in percent indicate the cumulative percentages of the completed work against total work in each activity. For those activities which do not have discrete values, e.g., number of trainings, etc., relative progresses were estimated by the Project Management UNIT (PMU).

(Activity 1.3.2) Formulate and implement training/visit programmes upon the special requests from network partners.

Progress: 40%

New training programme on illegal mercury trade is considered in revised workplan. The frontline law enforcement officers particularly national customs in countries with ASGM activities will be the target participants. A series of meetings with World Customs Organization (WCO) have been conducted for the possible partnership. The programme will include both online and in-person trainings.

(Activity 2.1.2) Provide advice to improve sampling.

Progress: 60%

Based on the finding from capacity assessment (Activity 2.1.1) conducted in **Nepal**, a research plan on mercury pollution from gold plating sector was developed in collaboration between Nepal and Japan. After the pre-survey mission on 26-28 March 2023, a research plan was developed and shared with Nepali counterpart for formalise the activity. The plan must be approved by the National Health Research Council under the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP).

Due to the frequent changes of national government in **Nepal**, the research plan on mercury pollution from gold plating sector has been suspended until the endorsement and support by current administration. The survey includes environmental monitoring and human biomonitoring, which was initially develop as a one research plan. Due to the complicated process of Nepali Government, the plan is now divided to simplify each proposal. The supports for the plan have been obtained from Ministry of Agriculture and Health while waiting for the endorsement of Ministry of Forests and Environment. Ministry of Forests and Environment is in the process of submitting the application.

(Activity 2.1.3) Provide advice to improve analysis.

Progress: 60%

Mercury laboratories in Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), **Thailand** is expanding its scope of mercury analysis to methylmercury. The local capacity building training will be conducted in late 2024 for laboratory staff.

(Activity 2.3.3) Undertake inter-laboratory data quality assessment for continual improvement

Progress: 80%

The second round of the laboratory proficiency testing (PT), which was organized by NIMD with UNEP support, has been completed and final report was uploaded in October (http://nimd.env.go.jp/english/activity/international_contribution/promotion/doc/Report_on_2nd_proficiency_testing.pdf). 55 laboratories expressed interest and 48 of them sent the analytical results. Among them 19 laboratories also indicated that they would conduct methylmercury analysis. Finally, 17 laboratories submitted the analytical result results (See Annex 5.2).

The first PT was organized by ROAP, but it was agreed that NIMD took lead to organize the second round. This is aligned with the long-term sustainability of this exercise. Due to this change, the geographic focus of the PT was extended to the entire globe. In the first round, approx. 80 % of the participating laboratories were from Asia and the Pacific region, but the proportion was reduced to 55 % in the second round. The number of the laboratories was also increased from 26 to 48.

In the past two PTs, some laboratories have demonstrated sustained proficiency on mercury monitoring. In total, 61 institutions participated in the PT, among which 20 institutions participated

in both PTs. One institution registered more than one laboratory to both PTs which made total number of participating laboratories up to 89. Among the 20 institutions, 13 institutions have obtained 'Satisfactory' performance for both PTs, which included **Indonesia**, **Philippines**, **Thailand**, and **Vietnam** from the Project countries.

The third round of the PT (PT3) was developed and announced in October 2023. In total, 43 laboratories are registered. PT3 also asked the laboratories to choose total mercury analysis or methylmercury analysis or both (See Annex 5.3). The number of participating laboratories is smaller than PT2 but greater than PT1. The samples have been distributed and the final report will be prepared by the end of 2024.

Registration	PT3	PT2	PT1
Total mercury	43	55	34
Methylmercury	15	19	Not called

(Activity 2.4.1) Participate in the activities of other programmes and invite other programme parties for collaborative activities.

Progress: 70 %

The Project is regularly communicating with Asia Pacific Mercury Monitoring Network (APMMN) since the project inception and exploring possible collaboration including its annual workshop.

The Project will join NIMD Forum as a part of the workshop of the ICMGP 2024 to be held in July 2024 in Cape Town. The Forum, organized by National Institute for Minamata Disease is an annual conference for networking and socialization of mercury researchers. The results of the Project will be presented as a contribution from UNEP.

(Activity 2.4.2) Mathematical modelling, research and environmental studies

Progress: 80 %

In **Palau**, the Project has concluded a human hair survey and the Government has officially published the final report in October 2023 (https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/Mercury-exposure-level-for-citizens-in-Palau-due-to-high-level-fish-consumption-in-daily-diet.pdf). The level of mercury was assessed against the WHO Provisional Weekly Intake (PTWI) for women in childbearing age. WHO guidance also indicated that for adults, intakes of up to two times higher than the existing PTWI would not pose any risk. Also, for children, they are clearly not more sensitive than the embryo or fetus, they may be more sensitive than adults.

About 18 % of the surveyed participants exceeded the WHO reference values, but no participant exceeded the No-observed adverse effect level (NOAEL) value set by WHO. The level of mercury in general public is not an imminent threat, but the safety margin is very narrow, particularly for the female in childbearing age. Thus, any further increase of mercury levels in fish cannot be tolerated. Fish contains many useful nutrients for such as polyunsaturated fatty acids; therefore, simple avoidance of fish consumption may negatively impact human health. It is recommended to develop advisory materials for fish selection prior to and during pregnancy. Such campaign will improve the understanding of maternity health as well.

Human hair survey is conducted for **Maldives**, where demonstration and training were provided to local hospital staff who will undertake sample collection. After the training, they undertook the sample collection (approx. 100 samples from entire country) and shipped to the mercury laboratory in AIT, Thailand for analysis.

(Activity 3.1.2) Convene periodic stakeholders' meetings to share project results

Progress: 75%

The Project held a series of online networking webinar for laboratories in ministry/agency, university, research institute or consulting. They are the participants to the past lab PT organised by the Project. Six (6) webinars were held in approx. 2-month interval to enhance the networking of mercury laboratories to learn each other and work together. It also introduces basic mercury science to deepen the understanding of global mercury issues. The summary is included in the Annex 5.1.

(Activity 3.2) Accumulate and compile technical data and make it publicly available online

Progress: 80 %

The Project-dedicated webpage has continuously updated, and new information was added in prompt manner. The final reports for the 2nd round laboratory PT, **hair mercury assessment report** in Palau have been added. Also, the final **report of periodic ambient mercury monitoring** at Niigata-Maki acid deposition monitoring station has been added. All information is available at https://www.unep.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/our-projects/promoting-minamata-convention-mercury.

(Activity 3.3.4) Compile technologies to estimate illegal mercury trade and estimate a few pilot countries.

Progress: 10 %

New activity added to the workplan is the direct response to the Decision MC-5/2 of the Minamata Convention. This activity focuses on the Bali Declaration on combating illegal trade in mercury. COP5 invited the parties to submit information on activities related to the Declaration. A consultant will be engaged to undertake stocktaking surveys for key countries with ASGM activities. The collaboration with WCO is also anticipated.

3.3 Results achieved

The implementation plan sets out three (3) Outputs that will contribute towards the direct project Outcome. Responding the revision of the Project workplan, the Result Framework was also adjusted to fit to the new activities while keeping the same Outcome and Outputs. The revised Framework is attached as Annex 5.5 to this report. One Output indicator was added, and two Outcome indicators were revised to align new focus. The project results are evaluated against the established indicators and target values set out in the revised Result Framework.

(Output 1) Comprehensive capacity building programme based in Minamata developed and implemented.

Output 1 is to strengthen the capacity of the participating countries to monitor and reduce mercury emissions and releases.

Indicator 1.1: Number of capacity building programme package for specific subjects developed and implemented.

Baseline: 0, Target: 2, Status: 2

Narrative note: Achieved: Already reported in Annual Progress Report #4.

Indicator 1.2: Local coordination structure in Minamata developed.

Baseline: 0, Target: 1, Status: 2

Narrative note: Achieved: Already reported in Annual Progress Report #2.

Indicator 1.3: Percentage (%) of trained participants who successfully apply the knowledge and skills on mercury management in their work disaggregated by gender and age range.

Baseline: 0, Target: 50%, Status: Total 47%, Female 53%, Male 41% in 2022

Narrative note: On target: A questionnaire survey indicated that approx. half of the respondents have used the information for themselves. Female participants applied the obtained knowledge more than male participants.

(Output 2) A regional monitoring institution network in Asia and the Pacific established.

Output 2 supports national mercury monitoring activities. A few countries will be selected, and the monitoring capacity will be enhanced. The activities are organized from two angles, i.e., assessment and assistance, thus, the output indicators are set for each of them.

Indicator 2.1: Number of countries with national institutions on the network that meet international standards on mercury analysis.

Baseline: 0, Target: 3, Status: 4

Narrative note: Achieved: Laboratories in Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam demonstrated satisfactory performance in both the first and the second rounds of PT.

Indicator 2.2: Number of existing regional networks establishing partnership with this programme.

Baseline: 0, Target: 2, Status: 1 (anticipating 2)

Narrative note: On target: Collaboration with the Asia Pacific Mercury Monitoring Network is undertaken.

(Output 3) Outreach of qualified information in support of early implementation of the Convention implemented.

Output 3 enhances generation and accumulation of monitoring data and other scientific information. It also promotes the visibility of the project by enhancing the outreach activities at local, regional, and global levels.

Indicator 3.1: Number of countries submitting information to the information portal

Baseline: 0, Target: 6, Status: 2 (anticipating 4)

Narrative note: In progress: Engagement of Project partner countries has been progressed. A hair mercury assessment and a periodic ambient mercury monitoring report are uploaded to the Project website.

Indicator 3.2: Number of countries outside of the project partners that received information through project activities.

Baseline: 0, Target: 30, Status: total 56 as of 2023 (24 in 2021, 36 in 2022, 22 in 2023)

Narrative note: Achieved: The dissemination events were announced through the global platform such as the Minamata Convention Secretariat, Global Mercury Partnership, International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant, and other networking means. It resulted in more participation from countries other than the Project partner countries.

Indicator 3.3 (new): Number of countries that assessed their status of mercury trade.

Baseline: 0, Target: 3, Status: 0 (anticipating 3)

Narrative note: Initiated: A series of discussions with World Customs Organization in ongoing for collaborative works.

(Project outcome) Countries increasingly generate and apply information on how to monitor and reduce mercury emissions and releases in their legislations, policies, or action plans

The achievement of the Project Outcome is evaluated against three (3) indicators set out in the result framework. The two indicators and targets were revised to reflect the changes of the Project workplan.

Indicator 1: Number of countries that develop project proposals to donor agencies.

Baseline: 0, Target: 3, Status: 0 (anticipating 3)

This indicator is revised from 'embed scientific data collection in their mercury management policies' because the policy development requires additional activities in addition to the data collection. The Project will provide a good baseline for the countries to prepare proposals towards the development of national mercury policies.

Narrative note: Preliminary: Stocktaking will be conducted for project partner countries.

Indicator 2: Number of countries that submit information on mercury trade to Minamata Convention.

Baseline: 0, Target: 3, Status: 0 (anticipating 3)

This indicator is revised from 'regularly put information on mercury monitoring available via the information portal' to be more specific and targeted the immediate needs of the Convention. COP5 Decision MC-5/2 invites parties to submit information on activities undertaken in relation to the Bali Declaration on combating illegal trade in mercury by March 2025.

Narrative note: Initiated: The results of mercury trade assessment will be submitted by the respective governments.

Indicator 3: Number of new, adequate policies and legislation in effect on mercury management.

Baseline: 0, Target: 3, Status: 0 (anticipating 3)

Narrative note: In progress: Two countries (Nepal and Maldives) indicated their plan for ratification of the Minamata Convention. One country (Palau) is preparing national dietary advisory for high-risk population.

Summary of the outcome and output indicators

The Project has made some adjustment to address the immediate needs of the Convention. The status of adjusted indicators is still at the initial stage, but the consultation and stocktaking will be conducted, and necessary action will be determined. Most of the Outputs are in good state towards the achievement.

Outcome	1	Preliminary	2	Initiated	3	In progress
Output 1	1.1	Achieved	1.2	Achieved	1.3	On target
Output 2	2.1	Achieved	2.2	On target		
Output 3	3.1	In progress	3.2	Achieved	3.3	Initiated

Colour codes	Achieved or good progress towards the achievement	Slow progress or insufficient data to assess the progress	Failed or difficult to be achieved

3.4 Risk management

(Risk log #2) Attention on chemicals and waste decreases.

The establishment of Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste demonstrated new global commitment to sound management of chemicals.

(Risk log #10) Nepali coalition government may increase frequent turnover of high-level officers.

Nepali counterpart agency (Ministry of Forests and Environment) has communicated with relevant ministries and agencies to get the supporting statements/letter for the project activities.

3.5 Lessons learned

(Lessons learned log #8) New opportunity to collaborate with World Customs Organization.

The Project has extended its scope to illegal mercury trade suggested by Government of Japan and supported by the PSC. New opportunity to collaborate with World Customs Organization (WCO) for engaging the frontline customs officers to the Project activities. UNEP Chemicals and Health

Branch and WCO has discussed and agreed to explore the possibility of a funding agreement to implement capacity development activity by WCO.

3.6 Financial status

The total amount of USD2,999,990 has already been transferred to UNEP, which is sufficient for all project activities in the implementation plan.

Preliminary sum of the total expenditures[4] were USD2,140,113, which is approx. 71.3 % against total project budget of USD2,999,990 (see Annex 5.7).

Category	Income (USD)	Expenditure (USD)			Delivery Rate (%)
	Received	Committed	Actual	Total	
Project cost	2,980,188	-	2,118,495	2,118,495	71.1
Exchange loss/gain	-	-	1,816	1,816	-
UN Levy (1%)	19,802	-	19,802	19,802	100.0
TOTAL	2,999,990	-	2,140,113	2,140,113	71.3

The annual delivery in 2023-24 was lowered to approx. USD200,000 while project has moved to new arrangement and shifted to new focus area. The transition has completed and project extension was approved to resume the project activities in the next reporting period.

Reporting period	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Annual expenditure (USD)	69,681	398,054	651,913	822,689	197,642
Cumulative (USD)	69,681	467,735	1,119,782	1,942,471	2,140,113
Delivery rate (%)	2.3	15.6	37.3	64.7	71.3

3.7 Management progress and results

Transition to new UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2022-25

New UNEP Medium-term Strategy has already started since January 2022. Under the new delivery model, the Project was transferred to the UNEP Economy and Industry Division on 1 January 2024. The Project staff was also transferred to Knowledge and Risk Unit (KRU), which is directly in charge of the Project.

Revision of Project workplan and extension

Responding the request from Government of Japan to focus on the Bali Declaration on illegal mercury trade, the Project workplan was revised and the budget was reallocated to address the new and revised activities. The re-orientation of the Project direction without changing the overall outcome resulted in the cancellation of some activities which were previously planned. The revised workplan including the extension of the Project period by 12 months was submitted to and endorsed by the Government of Japan.

Project steering committee

[4] Certified amount will be finalized by UNON.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) is composed of the representatives of UNEP ROAP, Minamata Secretariat, UNEP Chemicals & Health Branch and MOEJ with the ROAP to serve as the chair. PSC held the sixth dialogue webinar on 21 August 2023 and the seventh on 15 January 2024 for providing the strategic direction to the project towards expected the project outcome. New ROAP Deputy Regional Director took office and assumed the role of the PSC chair during this period. The PSC reviewed project progress and new arrangement to address mercury trade issue. They agreed to adjust the workplan to reflect the immediate needs of the Convention. Based on the transfer of the Project to the UNEP Industry and Economy Division, the PSC agreed to change the chair from ROAP to the Division. Knowledge and Risk Unit (KRU) is directly in charge of the Project.

Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

The Project has developed a monitoring and reporting process with seven (7) types of monitoring reports. The seventh semi-annual report was prepared in July 2023 for the PSC meeting. The eighth semi-annual report was prepared in April 2024 which was not able to be tabled at the PSC meeting as the seventh meeting was held in January. The report was distributed after the meeting.

4 Workplan in July 2024 – June 2025

Based on the one-year extension with the particular focus on illegal mercury trade issues, the workplan for July 2024 – June 2025 is presented. (See Annex 5.4)

The Project has entered the period of one-year extension approved by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan. In this implementation period, the conclusion of the ongoing activities will be focused. Some activities are cancelled to divert the efforts on illegal trade. The dissemination of the project results and outreach will be enhanced.

Activities under output 1

Remaining activity in the Output 1 is the specific training on mercury trade (Activity 1.3.2), particularly to organize and implement the training programme on illegal mercury trade, which responds the Bali Declaration launched at the Minamata COP4 in March 2022. The programme will include a series of online and face-to-face trainings. In consultation with World Customs Organization (WCO) the workplan will be further refined and target countries with illegal mercury trade will be identified.

Activities under output 2

Engagement to the participating countries continues in Output 2. Under Activity 2.1., capacity strengthening of the environment laboratory in Ministry of Forest and Environment in Nepal will be conducted. Particularly, field survey skills for mercury contamination in gold plating sector is the focus of the support (Activity 2.1.2). As for the AIT laboratory in Thailand, analytical skills of laboratory technicians and researchers will be enhanced (Activity 2.1.3).

As for the Activity 2.3.3, the third round of laboratory proficiency testing (PT) will continue its process in this reporting period, which will be concluded by Q3-4 2024. At the same time the fourth round of the PT will also be developed in collaboration with National Institute for Minamata Disease (NIMD).

Activity 2.4 covers a workshop at ICMGP 2024 in collaboration with NIMD and APMMN annual workshop (Activity 2.4.1). The hair samples from Maldives will be analysed and the mercury exposure risks will be assessed, which will lead to the development of dietary advisory and follow up survey for high-risk populations (Activity 2.4.2).

Activities under output 3

Activities in Output 3 will be reformulated to accommodate emerging needs on illegal mercury trade. At national level, a workshop on illegal mercury trade will be planned in collaboration with relevant customs and law enforcement agencies (Activity 3.3.2). In addition, the technologies to estimate illegal mercury trade will be compiled (Activity 3.3.4). Besides the illegal trade, awareness events and networking webinars will be organized to promote mercury monitoring and flow analysis including trade analysis (Activity 3.1.2). The Project continues to upload information to the dedicated website (Activity 3.2).

Project coordination, monitoring for workplan

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting will be held in every 6 months to inform project the strategic direction towards expected project outcome. It could meet either physically or virtually.

PMU will continue to monitor the project progress, results, financial status, and risks. Prior to the PSC meetings, semi-annual reports (this report) will be prepared and shared to the PSC members in Q3, 2024 and Q1, 2025.

5 Annex

5.1 Networking webinar series for mercury analytical laboratories

Outlines of the webinar series

Date & venue	#1: 22 August, #2: 26 October, #3: 12 December 2023, #4: 15 February, #5: 19 April, #6: 24 June 2024, Virtual
Title	Enhancing collaboration and communication among mercury analytical laboratories.
Objective	To enhance the networking of mercury laboratories to learn each other and work together. It also introduces basic mercury science to deepen the understanding of global mercury issues.
Programme	A series of short webinars will be provided on a regular interval. The programme is to enhance the communications among participating laboratories on their skill up and collaboration. A session is focused on one topic and info sharing for about 45 minutes including Q&As.
Participants	Laboratories in ministry/agency, university, research institute or consulting company which undertake mercury monitoring and analysis. For promoting free exchange of the communication, participant profiles are not disclosed. Number of participants: #1: 34 from 10 countries #2: 48 from 15 countries #3: 25 from 9 countries #4: 45 from 15 countries #5: 51 from 17 countries #6: 36 from 18 countries

Programme detail

On 22 August 2023 the first webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

- (Lecture) Laboratory proficiency testing.
- (Info sharing) AIT IDEA EEM Laboratory.
- Q&A

On 26 October 2023 the second webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

- (Lecture) Training package on mercury monitoring.
- (Info sharing 1) Environmental Quality Standardization Centre, Indonesia.
- (Info sharing 2) Announcement of 3rd round PT.
- Q&A

On 12 December 2023 the third webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

- (Lecture) Mercury monitoring and the Minamata Convention.
- (Info sharing) VNUHCM-University of Science, Vietnam.

- Q&A

On 15 February 2024 the fourth webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

- (Lecture) Methylmercury analysis.
- (Info sharing 1) A high throughput procedure for methylmercury analysis in human hair.
- (Info sharing 2) LEMA—Environmental Mercury Speciation Lab, Brazil.
- Q&A

On 19 April 2024 the fifth webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

- (Lecture) Human biological sample analysis.
- (Info sharing) Simple analysis of total mercury and methylmercury in seafood using heating vaporization atomic absorption spectrometry.
- Q&A

On 24 June 2024 the sixth webinar was conducted with the following agenda:

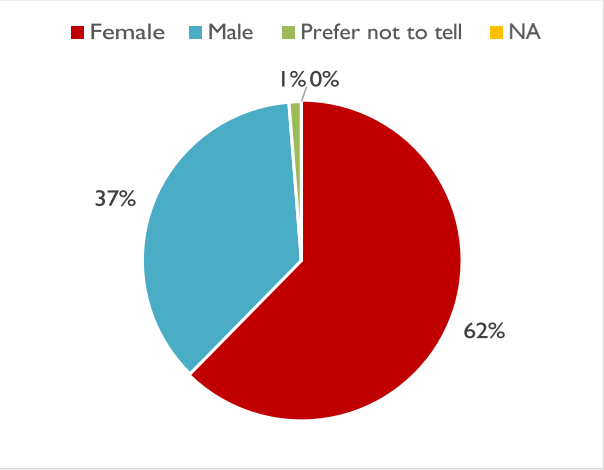
- (Lecture) Mercury standard and guideline values.
- (Info sharing) Workshops at ICMGP 2024.
- Q&A

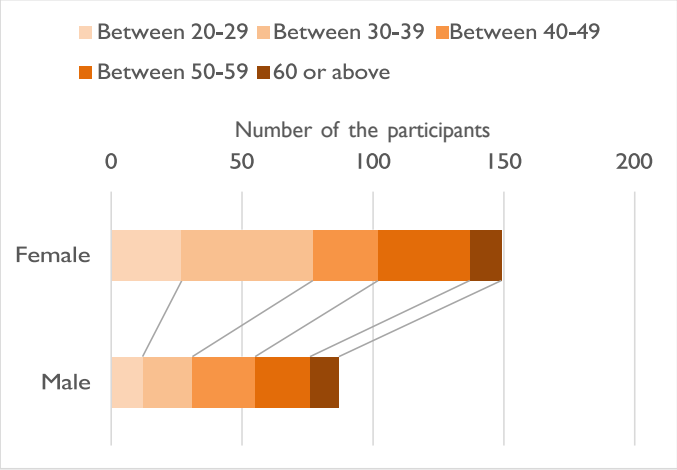
The webinars were organized similar to Chatham House rule so that the participants can express their views freely. The invitation was sent to the past participants to the Proficiency Testing (PT) only and no external announcement was made by the Project. The participants can extend the invitation to their colleagues and those who were interested in the topics. With this arrangement, the participants to the networking webinar were able to focus on the laboratory analysis of mercury.

Results analysis

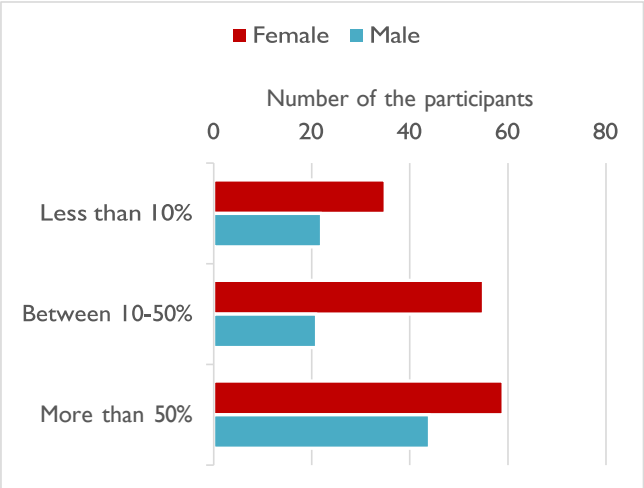
Total of 107 participants attended in the first 3 sessions of the networking webinar in 2023, which was increased by approx. 20% to 132 participants in the next 3 sessions in 2024. Overall, 239 participants attended in all 6 sessions. Out of these participants, 71 participants submitted post-session questionnaire.

The female participants outnumber the male participants with 62 % of total participants. This trend continues throughout the period. There was no particular age group predominantly occupied the venue. There was relatively higher participation of Female below age 39 in comparison with male participants.

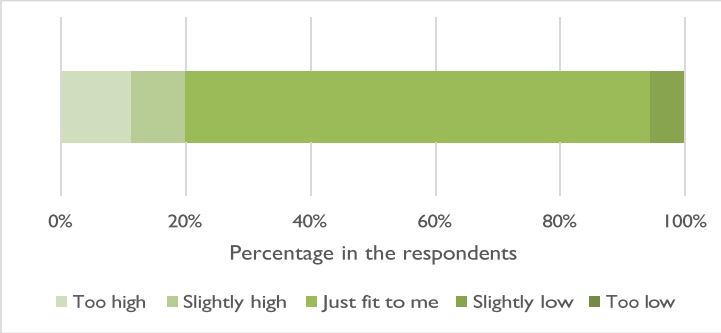




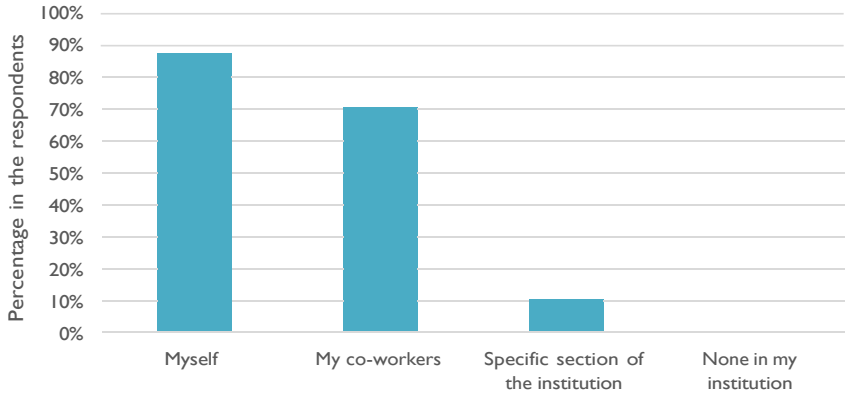
There was a clear trend that this networking was attended by the people more engaged in the mercury works. By inviting only for PT participating lab, the majority of the audience was connected to some extent the mercury works.



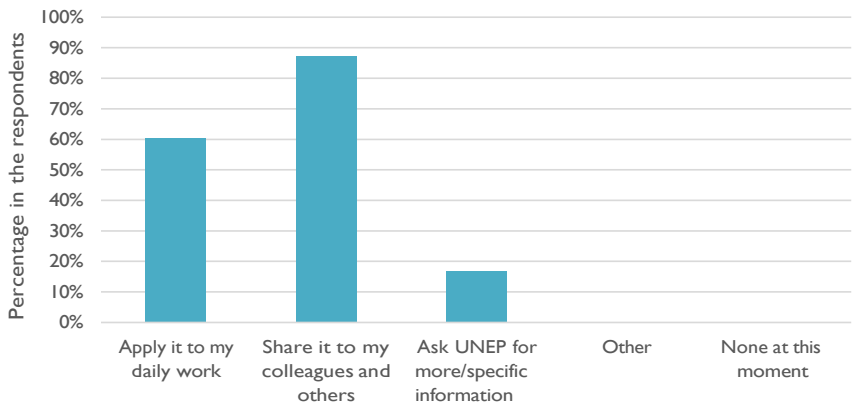
Post-session questionnaire asked the overall level of the presentations in comparison with the personal competency. Majority of the respondent felt that the level of the presentations just fitted to them.



The question also asked about the most suitable people/section in the participants' institution to participate at this webinar (multiple answers). More than 80 % of the respondents believed that the webinar was suitable for themselves, and approx. 70 % of them recommended it to their co-workers.



The questionnaire also asked about what the participants would do themselves about the information received at this webinar (multiple choices). Over 80 % of the respondents answered that they would share it with their colleagues and others, whereas approx. 60 % would apply it to their daily work.

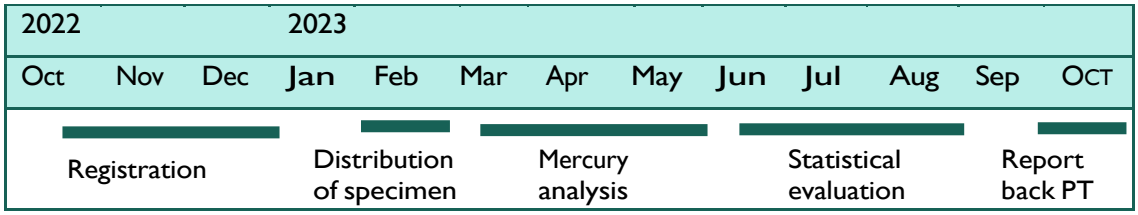

Percentage in the respondents
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Apply it to my daily work
Share it to my colleagues and others
Ask UNEP for more/specific information
Other
None at this moment

5.2 Second-round Laboratory proficiency testing

Objective of the laboratory proficiency testing (PT)

The Proficiency Testing (PT) aims at evaluating the performance of mercury analyses conducted by the laboratories. It provides their individual proficiency levels and collective mercury monitoring capacity relative to the participating laboratories. Public laboratories and laboratories in universities that undertake mercury for monitoring, survey, or research purposes in anywhere in the world are welcomed to participate in the PT.

Timeframe



Outlines

Target parameter: total mercury and/or methylmercury (participating laboratory can choose preferred option)

Specimen: biota media

Institutional arrangement:

- NIMD: responsible for overall PT design and compiles and prepares the report.
- UNEP ROAP: supervises project implementation.
- AIT RRCAP: organises laboratory engagement and sample distribution.

Participant profiles

Out of the laboratories identified an invited to participate in the second round of the Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT2), 55 registered and confirmed participation increasing from 34 for the first round as the invitation was extended from Asia Pacific to global. Specimens of fish sample was prepared and shipped to registered laboratories for the PT Lab exercise scheduled for the first quarter of 2023. However, only 52 samples were successfully delivered due to logistical challenges. A total of 48 participating institutions successfully conducted their analysis and submitted their results. Among the registered laboratories, 19 were governmental institutions, 26 were universities and academic institutions, and 10 were NPOs.

Number of participating laboratories

	2nd	1st
Registered	55	34
Sample received	52	31
Result submitted	48	26

As for the regional profile, Asia and the Pacific region still keeps the largest share, but the number of participations from other regions are significantly improved. This is largely due to the global announcement made through the Global Mercury Partnership and by the Minamata Secretariat.

Regional profiles (total mercury)

	Registered	Sample received	Result submitted	
			2nd	1st
Africa	6	6	6	2
Asia and the Pacific	27	27	26	21
Eastern Europe	4	3	1	0
Latin America and Caribbeans	9	8	7	2
Western Europe and others	9	8	8	1
Total	**55**	**52**	**48**	**26**

The 2nd round PT has extended the analytical parameter to methylmercury. Less laboratories are able to analyse mercury but altogether 17 laboratories submitted the results.

Regional profiles (methylmercury)

	Registered	Sample received	Result submitted	
			2nd	1st
Africa	3	3	2	-
Asia and the Pacific	9	9	9	-
Eastern Europe	1	1	1	-
Latin America and Caribbeans	2	2	2	-
Western Europe and others	4	3	3	-
Total	**19**	**18**	**17**	**-**

Overall results

The median data of all laboratories was applied as the agreement value. Performance of the results was evaluated by the robust z score, which was calculated from the median and normalized interquartile range (NIQR). Z score of each participant was calculated from the following equation.

$z = [(\text{average of reported result}) - (\text{median of all participants})] / \text{NIQR}$

Performance of the result is classified by z score as follows:

- $|z| \leqq 2$: Performance is satisfactory (satisfactory)
- $2 < |z| < 3$: Performance is questionable (caution)
- $|z| \geqq 3$: Performance is unsatisfactory (action)

Z score	$z \leq -3$	$-3 < z < -2$	$-2 \leq z \leq 2$	$2 < z < 3$	$z \geq 3$
Total mercury	3	2	40	3	0
Methylmercury	1	1	14	1	0

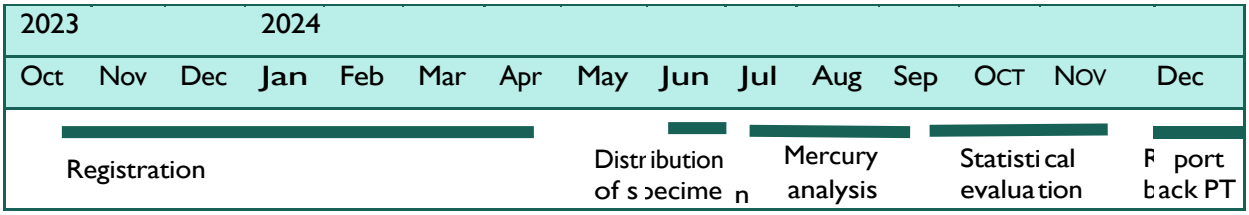
In total mercury, 40 out of 48 laboratories (83 %) performed satisfactorily, which is better than the 1st round PT result on 18 out of 26 (69 %). As for the methylmercury, 14 out of 17 laboratories (82 %) performed satisfactorily. Among them, 12 laboratories (including national institutions in Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay) participated in both 1st and 2nd rounds of PT and performed satisfactorily for both rounds.

5.3 Third-round Laboratory proficiency testing (preliminary)

Objective of the laboratory proficiency testing (PT)

The Proficiency Testing (PT) aims at evaluating the performance of mercury analyses conducted by the laboratories. It provides their individual proficiency levels and collective mercury monitoring capacity relative to the participating laboratories. Public laboratories and laboratories in universities that undertake mercury for monitoring, survey, or research purposes in anywhere in the world are welcomed to participate in the PT.

Timeframe



The samples have been distributed to the participating laboratories and the analytical works are ongoing. The result return is due in August and the final assessment report will be ready by December.

Outlines

Target parameter: total mercury and/or methylmercury (participating laboratory can choose preferred option)

Specimen: sediment

Institutional arrangement:

- NIMD: responsible for overall PT design and compiles and prepares the report.
- UNEP ROAP: supervises project implementation.
- AIT RRCAP: organises laboratory engagement and sample distribution.

Participant profiles

Total 43 laboratories registered the third round of the Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT3), which is smaller in number than that in the second round (55) but greater than that in the first round (34). PT3 also asked the laboratories to choose total mercury analysis or methylmercury analysis or both. 15 laboratories chose both and 29 laboratories chose total mercury only. As for the regional profile, 20 came from Asia Pacific Region followed by Latin America and Caribbean (13), Western Europe and other Region (5), Africa (4), and Eastern Europe (1). Although Asia Pacific still keeps the largest share, the number of participating laboratories in other regions are significantly increased. This is mainly due to the global announcement made through the Global Mercury Partnership. As for the types of the laboratories, 15 laboratories came from government agencies, 21 from academia, and 7 from NPOs.

5.4 Annual workplan

Output	Activity	Sub activity	Timeline[5] 2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	Deliverables	Progress and Planning
			3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2		
1	1.1 Assess and compile available resources and facilities in and around Minamata and establish partnerships to implement project activities.	Planned									A list of local partners in Minamata, Japan providing support for the project.	1.1.1 : Compiled in Annual Progress Report #1 as Local resource survey. 1.1.2 : Partnership with Minamata City and NIMD concluded (Annual Progress Report #2)
		1.1.1 Assess local human resources, facilities, programmes, and activities that may benefit the project implementation.					Completed					
		1.1.2 Establish partnership/collaboration for implementing project activities.					Completed					
1	1.2 Develop relevant capacity building programmes under the Minamata Convention.	Planned									Sets of training materials (agenda, presentations, reference materials), data books, and technical handbooks, etc.	1.2.1 and 1.2.2: Training materials, data books, technical handbooks are merged into 'Training Package' and uploaded in the Project website.
		1.2.1 Develop standard training materials and menus for scientists and technicians that are available for training courses and self-studying.					Completed					
		1.2.2 Develop data books or technical handbooks that compile assessed information for government officers and practitioners.					Completed					
1	1.3 Formulate and implement trainings based on regional priorities and identified needs.	Planned									2 face-to-face trainings and series of online trainings implemented per year[6].	1.3.1 : Two trainers' trainings organized (Annual Progress Report #4). 1.3.2 : Organize on-line short training series and one in-person training on mercury trade.
		1.3.1 Formulate and implement skill up training/visit programmes based on the needs and regional priorities.					Completed					
		1.3.2 Formulate and implement training/visit programmes upon the special requests from network partners.										
1	1.4 Undertake follow-up assessment of the effectiveness of the	Planned									Annual reports published.	1.4: Final assessment to be

[5] Solid lines are implemented, dotted lines are planned timelines.
[6] Frequency will be adjusted depending on the COVID-19 situation.

Output	Activity	Sub activity	Timeline[5] 2023 3	4	2024 1	2	3	4	2025 1	2	Deliverables	Progress and Planning
	training programmes and publish annual reports.											conducted in 2025.
1	1.5 Develop institutional coordination structure to sustain capacity building programme based in Minamata.	Planned									Agreement on local coordinating structure beyond the project implementation.	NA
								Cancelled				
2	2.1 Develop in-country capacity for sampling and analysing mercury and mercury compounds from multiple media.	Planned									Laboratory assessment reports for all partner countries.	2.1.1 : Lab assessments were conducted in Nepal, Philippines (Annual Progress Report #3), and Vietnam (Annual Progress Report #4). 2.1.2 : Assist mercury survey skills for Environment lab in Nepal. 2.1.3 : Assist mercury analysis skills for AIT lab in Thailand.
		2.1.1 Capacity assessment of existing laboratories in the region on the basis of technical assistance menus.						Completed				
		2.1.2 Provide advice to improve sampling design and field sample collection capacities and skills.										
		2.1.3 Provide advice to improve sample handling, pre-treatment and instrumental analysis capacities and skills.										
2	2.2 Undertake continuous data collection and analysis based on national/regional monitoring plans.	Planned									Mercury monitoring plans in participating partners that are harmonized.	2.2.2: Monitoring data is uploaded in the Project website.
		2.2.1 Develop and/or harmonize methodologies and standard operating procedures of mercury monitoring among network partners.						Cancelled				
		2.2.2 Undertake continuous data collection and analysis based on national/regional monitoring plans.						Completed				
2	2.3 Provide technical advice and tools to strengthen a harmonized system for data processing and quality	Planned									A QC/QA guidebook published; inter-laboratory quality assessment conducted.	2.3.1: List of technical advisors is uploaded in the Project website. 2.3.3: Organize laboratory
		2.3.1 Establish a technical advisory body for backstopping the regional institution network partners.						Completed				
		2.3.2 Develop a QC/QA guidebook for mercury monitoring customized for the network.						Cancelled				

Output	Activity	Sub activity	Timeline[5] 2023 3	4	2024 1	2	3	4	2025 1	2	Deliverables	Progress and Planning
	assurance for the regional institution network.	2.3.3 Undertake inter-laboratory data quality assessment for continual improvement among network partners.										proficiency testing (PT).
		2.3.4 Develop a start-up assistance menu for inviting new network partners for its expansion.					C: nce led					
2	2.4 Undertake partnership activities/ collaborations with other monitoring programmes to promote science-based policy making.	Planned									Collaborative activities with other monitoring networks.	2.4.1 : Participate in APMMN and ICMGP. 2.4.2 : Conduct mercury exposure survey in Maldives.
		2.4.1 Participate in the activities of other programmes and invite other programme parties for collaborative activities.										
		2.4.2 Conduct mathematical modelling, research, and environmental studies for enhancing science-policy interaction.										
3	3.1 Convene stakeholders' meetings on project planning and result dissemination.	Planned									Meeting reports; increasing list of partners joining.	3.1.1 Report of inception workshop compiled in Annual Progress Report #1. 3.1.2: hold a series of online networking webinar for laboratories. Organize awareness event in the margin of international conferences in Q4 2024.
		3.1.1 Convene an inception workshop for project launch.					Comple ed					
		3.1.2 Convene periodic stakeholders' meeting to share project results.										
3	3.2 Accumulate and compile technical data and make it publicly available online.	Planned									A dedicated web page of the project serving as an information portal.	3.2: Upload Project information to dedicated project website. Compile mercury monitoring data and develop a download page.
3		Planned										

Output	Activity	Sub activity	Timeline[5] 2023 3	4	2024 1	2	3	4	2025 1	2	Deliverables	Progress and Planning
	3.3 Strengthen national capacities to utilize mercury data for risk assessment and policy development through the provision of technical advice and knowledge exchange.	3.3.1 Provide technical advice to partners to include national mercury monitoring plan into national development plans.					C	nce	led		List of services provided, web stories on impact.	3.3.2: Organize 3 national workshops on illegal mercury trade by Q2 2025. 3.3.4: Compile technologies to estimate illegal mercury trade by Q2 2025.
		3.3.2 Conduct country level technical workshops for scientists and practitioners.										
		3.3.3 Prepare national inventories and national report with the mercury data obtained by national monitoring plan.					C	nce	led			
		3.3.4 Compile technologies to estimate illegal mercury trade and estimate a few pilot countries.										

5.5 Result framework

Intended Project Outcome *(linked to UNEP POW 522.3 Outcome and Output 8*[7] up to December 2023. In January 2023 onward, POW Outcome 3.13[8]*):* Countries increasingly generate and apply information on how to monitor and reduce mercury emissions and releases in their legislations, policies or action plans.			
Outcome indicator	**Baseline and target**	**Means of verification and assumption[9]**	**Updated Result Status**
Indicator 1: Number of countries that develop project proposals to donor agencies[10].	Baseline: 0, Target: 3	Communication notes with the Project partner countries.	Status: 0 (anticipating 3) **Preliminary**: Stocktaking will be conducted for project partner countries.
Indicator 2: Number of countries that submit information on mercury trade to Minamata Convention[11].	Baseline: 0, Target: 3	Submission record reported by the Minamata Convention Secretariat.	Status: 0 (anticipating 3) **Initiated**: The results of mercury trade assessment will be submitted by the respective governments.
Indicator 3: Number of new, adequate policies and legislation in effect on mercury management.	Baseline: 0, Target: 3	Instrument of ratification of the Minamata Convention, Official gazette on relevant law, regulation, management and monitoring plan, etc. by the Project partner countries.	Status: 0 (anticipating 3) **In Progress**: Two countries (Nepal and Maldives) indicated their plan for ratification of the Minamata Convention.

[7] UNEP PoW 522.3 Outcome: Countries address priority chemicals and waste issues using information, assessments, guidance and tools provided by UN Environment. Outcome indicator: (iii) Increased number of civil society organizations addressing priority chemicals and waste issues under the chemicals multilateral environmental agreements through the use of knowledge and tools provided by UNEP, baseline 0 target 6. Output 8: Generation and use of information for science-based policy development on mercury management are enhanced at regional level. Output indicator: Number of Countries that regularly put information on mercury monitoring available via the information portal, baseline: 0, target: 2, Number of countries with national institutions that meet international standards on mercury analysis, baseline: 0; target: 2. Milestones to the PoW 522.3: by Dec. 2021, Annual seminar to disseminate the progress and results of the activities to wider audiences convened and reported, by Jun. 2022, Capacity building programme packages to strengthen science-based information collection are developed and available, by Dec. 2022, Analytical proficiency for mercury laboratories is assessed and documented.

[8] UNEP PoW 2022-2023: Sound science, data and statistics, analysis, information and knowledge are generated and shared.

[9] Means of verification and assumption are suggested as they were not included in the initial result framework.

[10] Revised indicator included in the revised workplan submitted and endorsed by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ) in April 2024.

[11] Revised indicator included in the revised workplan submitted and endorsed by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ) in April 2024.

		As the Project activity was low in 2019-2020, the results after 2021 are considered.		
Result	**Result (Output) Indicator**	**Baseline and target**	**Means of verification and assumption**	**Updated Result Status**
Output 1: Comprehensive capacity building programme based in Minamata developed and implemented.	Number of capacity building programme package for specific subjects developed and implemented.	Baseline: 0, Targets: 2	Availability of material in Project website, progress record in Annual Project Reports.	Status: 2 **Achieved**: Project has published two (2) capacity building programmes on mercury mass flow and monitoring. Trainers' trainings have been conducted to partner countries, which has started local training programmes utilising the materials. Evidence: Uploaded training packages on the Project web. Annual Progress Report #4.
	Local coordination structure in Minamata developed.	Baseline: 0, Target: 1	Progress record in Annual Project Reports.	Status: 2 **Achieved**: Local coordination structure with Minamata City and National Institute for Minamata Disease established. Evidence: Annual Progress Report #2
	% of trained participants who successfully apply the knowledge and skills on mercury management in their work disaggregated by gender and age range.	Baseline: 0, Target: 50%	Follow-up assessment of the effectiveness of the training programmes under Activity 1.4.	Status: Total 47%, Female 53%, Male 41% in 2022 **On target**: A questionnaire survey indicated that approx. half of the respondents have used the information for themselves. Female participants applied the obtained knowledge more than male participants. Evidence: Mid-term review report.
Output 2: A regional monitoring institution	Number of countries with national institutions on the network that meet	Baseline: 0, Targets: 3	Qualified as 'satisfactory' multiple times in participating PTs.	Status: 4 **Achieved**: Laboratories in Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam demonstrated

network in Asia and the Pacific established.	international standards on mercury analysis.		Name of individual institutions will not be disclosed.	satisfactory performance in both the first and second rounds of PT. Evidence: Annual progress report #5.
	Number of existing regional networks establishing partnership with this programme.	Baseline: 0, Target: 2	Progress record of collaboration activities in Annual Progress Reports.	Status: 1 (anticipation 2) **On target**: Collaboration with Asia Pacific Mercury Monitoring Network is undertaken. Evidence: Annual progress report #5.
Output 3: Outreach of qualified information in support of early implementation of the Convention implemented.	Number of countries submitting information to the information portal.	Baseline: 0, Targets: 6	Availability of materials in Project website. Submission from partner countries and other stakeholders in the region.	Status: 2 (anticipating 4) **In progress**: Engagement of Project partner countries has been progressed. A hair mercury assessment and a periodic ambient mercury monitoring report are uploaded to the Project website. Evidence: Annual progress report #5.
	Number of countries outside of the project partners that received information through project activities.	Baseline: 0, Target: 30	Progress record of dissemination events in Annual Progress Reports.	Status: total 56 as of 2023 (24 in 2021, 36 in 2022, 22 in 2023) **Achieved**: The dissemination events were announced through global platform such as the Minamata Convention Secretariat, Global Mercury Partnership, International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant, and other networking means. It resulted in more participation from countries other than the Project partner countries. Evidence: Annual Progress Report #5.

	Number of countries that assessed their status of mercury trade[12].	Baseline: 0, Target: 3	Progress record of the assessment in Annual Progress Reports.	Status: 0 (anticipating 3) **Initiated**: A series of discussions with World Customs Organization in ongoing for collaborative works.

[12] New indicator included in the revised workplan submitted and endorsed by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ) in April 2024.

5.6 Project budget

Item		Budget (USD)
Output 1: Comprehensive capacity building programme based in Minamata developed and implemented.		50,500
1.1 Assess and compile available resources and facilities in and around Minamata and establish partnerships to implement project activities.	-	
1.2 Develop relevant capacity building programmes under the Minamata Convention.	-	
1.3 Formulate and implement training based on regional priorities and identified needs.	50,500	
1.4 Undertake follow-up assessment of the effectiveness of the training programmes and publish annual reports.	-	
1.5 Develop institutional coordination structure to sustain capacity building programme based in Minamata.	-	
Output 2: A regional monitoring institution network in Asia and the Pacific established.		269,000
2.1 Develop in-country capacity for sampling and analysing mercury and mercury compounds from multiple media.	120,000	
2.2 Undertake continuous data collection and analysis based on national/regional monitoring plans.	-	
2.3 Provide technical advice and tools to strengthen a harmonized system for data processing and quality assurance for the regional institution network.	100,000	
2.4 Undertake partnership activities/ collaborations with other monitoring programmes to promote science-based policy making.	49,000	
Output 3: Outreach of qualified information in support of early implementation of the Convention implemented.		243,411
3.1 Convene stakeholders' meetings on project planning and result dissemination.	77,411	
3.2 Accumulate and compile technical data and make it publicly available online.	32,000	
3.3 Strengthen national capacities to utilize mercury data for risk assessment and policy development through the provision of technical advice and knowledge exchange.	134,000	
Project Coordination		300,686
Project staff personnel	260,250	
Project M&E	26,636	

Item		Budget (USD)
Office rent and common costs	13,800	
Sub-Total		863,597
PSC (13%)		112,268
Total Project Cost		**975,865**
Cumulative expenditures in 2019 to 2023		2,004,323
Cumulative Total Project Cost		**2,980,188**
UN Levy (1%)		19,802
TOTAL		**2,999,990**

5.7 Financial report (preliminary sum[13])

Income Category	Received (USD)	Expenditure Category	Expenditures in 2019 to 2023 (USD)	Budget (USD)	Expenditure by June 2024 (USD)			Delivery Rate (%)
					Committed	Actual	Total	
2019 Contribution	1,000,000	010 Staff Personnel	760,705	306,886	-	853,190	853,190	79.9
2020 Contribution	1,000,000	160 Travel	93,537	61,500	-	103,503	103,503	66.8
2021 Contribution	999,990	120 Contractual Service	13,442	4,411	-	13,442	13,442	75.3
		135 Equipment and Furniture	5,826	-	-	5,826	5,826	100.0
		125 Operational Costs	39,982	21,800	-	40,107	40,107	65.2
		and 130 Supplies	462		-	462	462	
		140 Grant to IP	858,244	469,000	-	858,244	858,244	64.7
		Sub-Total Project Cost	1,772,198	863,597	-	1,874,774	1,874,774	71.1
		155 UN PSC (13%)	227,720	112,268	-	241,104	241,104	71.1
		and 150 IP PSC	2,617		-	2,617	2,617	
		Total Project Cost	2,002,535	975,865	-	2,118,495	2,118,495	71.1
		Exchange loss/gain	1,788	-	-	1,816	1,816	-
		UN Levy (1%)	19,802	-	-	19,802	19,802	100.0
TOTAL	2,999,990	TOTAL	2,024,125	975,865	-	2,140,113	2,140,113	71.3

Note: Amounts are rounded at one dollar.

[13] Certified financial statement is issued separately by UNON.

5.8 Risk log

Risk Description/ Analysis		Category	(I) Impact Severity 1-5	(L) Likely-hood 1-5	I x L Overall Risk rating	Risk Management Strategy & Actions	By When/ Whom?
1	Insufficient funding and human resources.	Economic	4	1	4	As this project is formulated under the contribution agreement already signed, the shortcoming of fund is unlikely. On 22 March 2021, the third instalment (USD999,990) was posted, which account for the total amount of the project budget. The funding enables proceeding the activities, so this risk has been resolved.	Closed.
2	Attention on chemicals and waste decreases.	Political	4	2	8	The engagement with partner countries through this project and other opportunities to show the relevance of the issue. New UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2022-2025 highlighted the 'chemicals and pollution' as one of three (3) pillars. UNEA5 also discusses the needs to strengthen science-policy interface on chemicals sector. Such global trends should be promoted at regional and national levels. The establishment of a science-policy panel on chemicals and waste was decided at UNEA 5.2. This will boost the	On regular basis/ Programme Officer, KRU.

Risk Description/ Analysis		Category	(I) Impact Severity 1-5	(L) Likely-hood 1-5	I x L Overall Risk rating	Risk Management Strategy & Actions	By When/ Whom?
						awareness of the chemicals management issues. The establishment of Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste demonstrated new global commitment to sound management of chemicals.	
3	The supporting group does not provide quality input or sufficient support.	Organization	4	2	8	Cooperation and engagement of local partner in Minamata will be confirmed at the initiation stage of project implementation. Cooperation from Minamata City reduces when focal persons of Minamata are replaced. Partnership between Minamata City and UNEP is maintained basically by the mutual trust at individual level. There is uncertainty if such trust is maintained when the Director General is replaced. The project sent a letter as the tangible evidence to demonstrate the benefit of this partnership. Thus, this risk has been resolved.	Closed
4	Low interest from decision makers at national level.	Organization	4	1	4	All partner countries are ratified or implemented MIA projects towards ratification, which indicates high interest at national level.	On regular basis/ Programme Officer, KRU.

Risk Description/ Analysis		Category	(I) Impact Severity 1-5	(L) Likely-hood 1-5	I x L Overall Risk rating	Risk Management Strategy & Actions	By When/ Whom?
5	Covid-19 pandemic persists for many years.	Social	5	5	25	UN policy to cope with COVID-19 pandemic is still active. Implementation modality without international travel is prepared as an alternative plan, which can be switch to normal mode when travel restriction is lifted. Project will monitor the resumption of physical/face-to-face activities accordingly. Minamata COP4 is divided into 2 parts and the face-to-face segment also limits physical representation at the venue, which reduces the opportunity to disseminate project information. Security phase of UN office in Bangkok returned to Phase III (low risk) in June 2022 and some in-person activities have resumed. The impact and likelihood are re-classified as the initial rating was too optimistic.	On regular basis/ UNEP senior management
6	Pro-democracy protest in Thailand leads social unrest.	Social	3	2	6	Pro-democracy protest against current military regime is put on pause. Local security situation is carefully assessed to evade demonstration campaign. General election in May 2023 resulted in the landslide victory of the opposition	On regular basis/ UNEP senior management

Risk Description/ Analysis		Category	(I) Impact Severity 1-5	(L) Likely-hood 1-5	I x L Overall Risk rating	Risk Management Strategy & Actions	By When/ Whom?
						parties. The risks of the political transition should be carefully assessed.	
7	Political instability in Myanmar continues.	Political	3	5	15	Political instability in Myanmar limits the engagement of the project. The Project Management Unit will continue to monitor the situation as well as guidance provided by the UN for engagement with the Government of Myanmar. The likelihood is re-classified as no positive sign in current government.	On regular basis/ Programme Officer, KRU.
8	(Merged with item 3)						
9	State bankruptcy in Sri Lanka slows down the implementation of mercury policy.	Political	2	3	6	Unprecedented economic crisis in Sri Lanka forces the country reshuffle the government. The mercury policy under new administration will be closely monitored.	On regular basis/ Programme Officer, KRU.
10	Nepali coalition government may increase frequent turnover of high-level officers.	Political	2	3	6	Following the general election, Nepal formed a coalition government. Ministers and high-level government official have been appointed/replaced in short cycle, which may interrupt the continuous engagement to the Project activities. Nepali counterpart agency (Ministry of Forests and Environment) has communicated with relevant ministries	On regular basis/ Programme Officer, KRU.

Risk Description/ Analysis		Category	(I) Impact Severity 1-5	(L) Likely-hood 1-5	I x L Overall Risk rating	Risk Management Strategy & Actions	By When/ Whom?
						and agencies to get the supporting statements/letter for the project activities.	

5.9 Lessons learned log

	Date	Description	Recommendation/ Action
1	2 September 2019	Local media (in Minamata and Kumamoto) valued this mercury project and published news articles in local newspapers. They asked more information on the project and requested participation to the workshop.	The project implemented by international organization such as UNEP has high news value to the local media so that it could increase visibility of the project. Press releases or other information may help more media coverage on this project.
2	2-4 December 2020	Online activities have limitation but could also provide opportunities to make tangible contribution to the project. Online programmes are open to more participants than that of face-to-face ones.	Online meeting tools such as Webex, Microsoft Team etc. are versatile applications, thus maximising their utility should be explored.
3	29 April 2021	Considering rapid development of new and emerging online technologies that enables real-time two-way communications, surveys without physical travel could be a prospective future methodology, not just an ad hoc measure but more effective and efficient survey technique.	But at the same time, such methodology cannot replace the traditional physical survey completely and still has some vulnerability in severe COVID settings that is beyond the control. Finding capable local coordinators and securing Internet connection are the key for such remote operation.
4	7-9 December 2021	Project activities attracted more attention to agencies beyond Asia-Pacific region and collaboration extended to other regions, which increased the impacts of the project.	Activity-based joint implementation and collaboration will be explored with organizations/agencies that interest the planned project activities. This approach is mutually beneficial and increase the visibility of the UNEP project.
5	21-25 March 2022	The second segment of Minamata COP4 completed successfully in hybrid modality. Good web platform is available to formulate events that involves both in-person and online participants. One disadvantage of online participation, however, is unavailability of side meetings with project partners participated in the COP on project-related discussions.	In-person meeting will be held more regularly to benefit the effectiveness of face-to-face communications. Online platform supplements and adds value of the meeting that can invite more participants and contributors who are not able to travel.

	Date	Description	Recommendation/ Action
6	29 November – 1 December 2022.	A joint promotion among 6 projects (including mercury) run by UNEP ROAP was arranged in collaboration of the Asian Institute of Technology. It is a new approach that different projects prepare information materials and disseminate altogether.	Most of the projects have outreach/promotion components but they have done so far individually. Development of a common promotion material that can be used by all projects will increase the opportunities for disseminating project information.
7	27 January 2023.	The Project has engaged Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) to implement mercury monitoring programme for support the Project partners. AIT decided to upgrade their own laboratory to extend the mercury monitoring capacity.	Private sectors, two manufacturer of mercury analysers and a monitoring consultant company, decided to invest AIT laboratory to strengthen the mercury monitoring capacity. It enables UNEP to utilise this capacity to undertake cooperative activities more effectively with Asian countries. Engagement with private sectors will be a good strategy for the sustainability of the Project results.
8	14 June 2024	The Project has extended its scope to illegal mercury trade suggested by Government of Japan and supported by the PSC. New opportunity to collaborate with World Customs Organization (WCO) for engaging the frontline customs officers to the Project activities.	UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch and WCO has discussed and agreed to explore the possibility of a funding agreement to implement capacity development activity by WCO.