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**UNEP Global Mercury Partnership**

**Overall progress of the United Nations Environment  
Programme Global Mercury Partnership from July 2010  
to June 2012**

# **UNEP Global Mercury Partnership**

## **Report on overall progress**

**July 2010 – June 2012**

### **Introduction**

The Operational Guidelines of the Overarching Framework of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership specify that one of the responsibilities of the Partnership Advisory Group is to report on overall progress to the Executive Director. Related to this, UNEP is to facilitate reporting on progress to governments, including the UNEP Governing Council or its subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, and the partnership areas are to report biennially to UNEP in accordance with the UNEP reporting format.

Reporting is to include tracking of partnership activities and partner contributions as well as assessing effectiveness, and measuring the impact of partnership activities on the achievement of the overall goal. The reports are to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

The first report on progress was prepared for the period of January 2009 to June 2010 and is available on UNEP's web-site.

This document is a report of overall progress of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership for the period July 2010 to June 2012. It has been developed by UNEP and reflects input received from within the partnership areas.

A separate report on activities undertaken from July 2010 to June 2012 under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is available at:

<http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/GlobalMercuryPartnership/PartnershipAdvisoryGroup/PAG4meetingdocs/tabid/104422/Default.aspx>

## **Section I: Assessment of overall progress:**

### **Membership**

Overall interest in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is strong. The number of official partners is steadily growing:

- As of 1 July 2010, there were 70 official partners in the Global Mercury Partnership, including 15 governments, 4 intergovernmental organizations, 31 non-government organizations, and 20 others.
- As of 30 June 2012, there were 111 official partners in the Global Mercury Partnership, including 24 governments, 5 intergovernmental organizations, 44 non-government organizations, and 38 others.

Some of the partners are global associations that represent industry sectors or global civil society consortia. These represent a large number of national associations that extend the reach of the Partnership. In addition, the Partnership works with a number of stakeholders that have not yet officially joined.

### **Endeavouring to secure adequate funds**

Financial support for the Partnership provided through UNEP is made available from

- (i) The Environment Fund;
- (ii) Voluntary unearmarked contributions to UNEP for its Programme of Work and subprogrammes;
- (iii) Voluntary extra budgetary contributions provided to UNEP for particular activities within the Programme of Work and subprogrammes;
- (iv) Funding mechanisms such as the SAICM QSP and the GEF.

Total financial support for the Partnership had amounted to about \$ 10.5 million provided through UNEP of which the Environment Fund provided about \$ 1.5 million; almost \$ 1 million from unearmarked contributions; almost \$ 6 million from extra budgetary contributions from a number of donors; and about \$2 million had been received from the GEF.

UNEP direct costs relating to the secretariat amount to about \$ 1 million per year, principally for staffing. Two professional staff members are supported by the Environment Fund, other staff from the voluntary contributions. The balance of about \$ 7.5 million had been made available for a variety of Partnership activities.

The figures above do not represent the total resources mobilized for the Partnership nor the breadth and balance of activities supported because only funding made available through UNEP was considered. Considerable funding continued to be available directly from other partners and donors but could not be included as there was no mechanism to gather and report on these sums.

UNEP had provided about 38% of its total project expenditure to work of the supply and storage partnership area – in particular for continuing work to assist Kyrgyzstan to move away from primary mercury mining, and to enhance capacity for mercury storage and disposal in Asia and Latin America. A further 21% of funding had been for work on mercury emissions from coal – particularly through the EU-funded USEPA-supported work with the International Energy Agency in China, Russia, South Africa and India. UNEP had provided about 10% of its total project expenditure to support the artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnership area – in particular building national strategic planning capacity, holding the Global Forum, and developing guidance and communications materials. In addition, smaller amounts had been provided to support work on products – in particular examining the economics of conversion and demonstration projects related to the phase down of dental amalgam; and to support work to reduce mercury use in vinyl chloride monomer production in China. UNEP is working with

GEF and two projects have been delivered and been approved by the GEF and a number are in development for submission during 2013.

About a quarter of total project expenditure had been used more generally to support assessments – in particular the so-called ‘Paragraph 29 study’ and the updating of the Global Mercury Assessment both requested by UNEP Governing Council in its decision 25/5; and to support the preparation of national inventories, including through the continued development of the UNEP mercury inventory toolkit.

## Overview of the partnership areas

During the reporting period, business plans have been updated for the following seven partnership areas: artisanal and small-scale gold mining; mercury cell chlor-alkali production; mercury air transport and fate research; mercury in products; mercury releases from coal combustion; mercury waste management; and mercury supply and storage.

A new partnership area business plan has been developed for mercury releases from cement industry. The business plans provide clarity and accountability for partnership area efforts and timelines.

The current business plans for all the partnership areas are available on the UNEP Mercury Programme website. The partnership area leads and objectives are set out Annex 1 to the current document.

## Summary of activities of the partnership areas

The partnership areas have identified objectives that are meant to reflect desired outcomes of the partnership area. It is difficult to assess the overall effectiveness of the partnership areas, in particular because there is a general lack of information available and lack of resources available for assessing. For example, without a robust field programme for the artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnership area it is not feasible (nor necessarily helpful at this stage) to be tracking detailed progress in this area.

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Nevertheless to demonstrate the types of activities undertaken by the partnership areas, a short list of highlights of partnership activities undertaken from July 2010-June 2012 is provided in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Highlights of partnership area activities for July 2010-June 2012**

Partnership area	Highlights of activities implemented
Artisanal and small-scale gold mining	<p>i) Global Forum on ASGM, 7-9 December 2010 in Manila, Philippines, to discuss and formulate pragmatic options for policy and decision makers to consider the development of the UNEP mercury treaty was convened in December 2010. Some 100 participants, representing 17 Governments and a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, attended the forum. It is believed that the Forum has helped to support constructive negotiations on this topic throughout the intergovernmental negotiation process.</p> <p>ii) Development of the following three key documents, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reducing Mercury Use in Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining: A Practical Guide;</li> <li>ii. A revised version of the Guidance Document on developing a National Strategic Plan. This document is in English, Spanish and</li> </ul>

	<p>French;</p> <p>iii. Analysis of formalization approaches in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector.</p> <p>iii) The Mercury Watch Database (<a href="http://www.mercurywatch.org">www.mercurywatch.org</a>), a project of the Artisanal Gold Council (AGC), is dedicated to collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information needs about mercury use and emissions around the world in ASGM. The website is the only global data-base and includes up to date current inventory information including estimated number of miners, mercury use and ASGM gold produced in a country.</p> <p>iv) An increase in field projects since the previous reporting cycle indicates increased level of interest and will to contribute to results.</p>
Mercury cell chlor-alkali production	<p>i) In 2010-2011, the Partnership compiled a comprehensive inventory of mercury-cell facilities throughout the world that was presented as a meeting document at INC2. This inventory helps identify countries and organizations that could benefit from technical exchanges.</p> <p>ii) Draft paper on the economics of conversion of mercury-cell chlor-alkali facilities to non-mercury technology.</p> <p>iii) Project that assesses the applicability of WCC guidance on best practices for chlor-alkali facilities in Uruguay.</p>
Mercury air transport and fate research	<p>i) Cooperation with the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (TF HTAP) of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (UNECE-CLRTAP) in developing the 2010 Report "Part-B: Mercury." This Report was released in July 2010 has been provided as input to the preparation of the report for the Paragraph 29 study.</p> <p>ii) Partners were involved in several special sessions of the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant (ICMGP), held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in 2011.</p> <p>iii) The Partnership area is actively involved in a 5-year research project (2010-2015) funded by the European Commission aiming to build a Global Mercury Observation System (GMOS). GMOS will support the evaluation of the effectiveness of international control measures on mercury in the future.</p>

Mercury in products	<p>i) “Economics of Conversion” case studies of two firms involved in the transitioning from mercury-added to mercury-free products (medical devices and button cell batteries) in the EU and United States. The studies reveal that transitioning to mercury free products is feasible with favourable return of investment provided there is the appropriate regulatory or legislative framework and increased market demand.</p> <p>ii) Completion of a multi-year initiative to develop products/emissions inventories and risk management plans in Latin America (Chile, Ecuador, and Peru), Asia (Mongolia), and Africa (South Africa) currently being implemented.</p> <p>iii) Demonstration that mercury-free devices are safe, cost-effective, accurate, efficient, and available to support introduction/use in health care settings in Nepal and Tanzania.</p> <p>iv) Provision of technical support to the GEF “en. lighten project” advocating for low mercury content in compact fluorescent lamps while transforming the market to efficient lighting.</p> <p>v) Publication of the “Future use of Materials for Dental Restoration”, report of a meeting convened by WHO and supported by UNEP in 2009. The meeting recommended a planned approach in the phase down of dental amalgam.</p>
Mercury releases from coal combustion	<p>i) A Process Optimisation Guidance (POG) prepared for mercury control at coal-fired facilities outlining how changes in plant performance and efficiency can reduce emissions of all pollutants in an effective and economic manner, as well as promoting technologies to reduce emissions of other pollutants such as particulates, SO<sub>2</sub>, and NO<sub>x</sub> since many of these technologies provide co-benefit reduction of mercury. The POG is available in English, Russian, and Mandarin from both the UNEP and IEA Clean Coal Centre websites. Furthermore, an interactive calculation tool (iPOG) based on the POG has been developed, that allows users to provide coal and plant specific data to study mercury behavior on a plant-by-plant basis. The iPOG is available as a free download via the Coal Partnership and IEA CCC webpages.</p> <p>iii) As part of the project “Reducing mercury emissions from coal combustion in the energy sector”:</p> <p>a) A study evaluating the mercury contents of coals in China and to estimate current and future emissions from the coal utility sector has been developed. Similar studies have been produced in South Africa and Russia. The reports are available from the UNEP Coal Partnership website.</p> <p>b) Two projects demonstrating mercury reduction at two coal-fired power plants are being implemented in Russia. The work will be completed soon and the final reports will be made available on the UNEP Coal Partnership website.</p>
Mercury waste management	<p>i) Preparation of a “Resource Person List” that will provide technical expertise and guidance on activities that will reduce mercury releases from waste.</p> <p>ii) Provision of assistance in the finalization of the “Basel Convention Technical Guidelines on Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes Consisting of Elemental Mercury and Wastes Containing and Contaminated with Mercury” which was adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties of the Basel Convention in October 2011.</p> <p>iii) Preparation of Good Practices for Management of Mercury Releases from Waste (Good Practices Document).</p>

	<p>iv) Implementation of waste and storage projects in 3 settings: industry (guidance for on-site storage of elemental mercury for the chlor alkali sector in Uruguay), household or municipal (brochure on environmentally sound management of waste in China), and the health care setting (video on handling mercury spills)</p>
<p>Mercury supply and storage</p>	<p>i) Kyrgyz Republic Mercury Mining Phase Out Project: Small grants project promoting alternative to primary mercury mining Phase II completed with UNDP. Technical Feasibility study conducted. Proposals developed which attracted additional funds.</p> <p>ii) Workshop on Mercury Management in the Latin American and Caribbean Region (LAC). Governments of Spain, Brazil and Uruguay organized a workshop on mercury management in the LAC Region, 21-22 May 2012. The workshop stressed the relevance of adequate regulatory frameworks, technological innovation, and industry responsibility in the management of its own excess mercury.</p> <p>iii) Mercury Regional Storage projects: The projects were successfully brought to a close in July 2011 providing assessment reports on projected excess mercury supply in Asia Pacific and Latin America, and studies on various options which governments could use in the management of their excess supply</p> <p>iv) Mercury Storage and Disposal project in Argentina and Uruguay was completed in April 2012 and provided a better understanding of mercury and mercury waste issues at country level. The project resulted in national action plans as basis to promote the environmentally sound management of excess or surplus mercury.</p>
<p>Mercury releases from the cement industry (newly established in November 2011)</p>	<p>The Cement Sustainability Initiative (CSI), a group formed under the auspices of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), is co-chairing the new partnership area to reduce global emissions of mercury from the cement industry.</p> <p>The partnership area has drafted a Business Plan that outlines cost-effective approaches that the partnership area will undertake in order to achieve reduction in mercury emissions. The business plan addresses issues such as the establishment of global mercury inventories, development of techniques to reduce mercury emissions into the environment, and outreach efforts to raise awareness within the industry.</p> <p>The Partnership is currently soliciting members to join and participate in various projects including demonstration projects to prove the feasibility of abatement techniques.</p>

## Section II: Encouraging partnership areas in moving forward and assessing effectiveness of the overall UNEP Global Mercury Partnership

A number of areas for improvement have been identified and partially addressed throughout this reporting cycle. While there is room for improvement, this section attempts to elaborate upon some of the developments noted in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Efforts to improve effectiveness of the overall Global Mercury Partnership**

Area for improvement	Actions taken
1) Communication	A communication strategy was developed for the Global Mercury Partnership and a number of low-cost actions have been implemented as a result. Nevertheless, there is a general lack of funding capacity to improve Partnership communications.
i) There is a need to better communicate progress of the Partnership and further recruit key countries/stakeholders, to expand the sphere of influence of the partnership areas.	Partnership Story of the Month was initiated in January 2012 and has been undertaken on a monthly basis since. It is distributed to all partners and mercury networks for information. Although it is difficult to assess its impact overall, it consistently generates questions and offers of additional support for the Partnership. It was suggested to compile a list of environmental journals and include them on the distribution list for the 'Story of the Month'.
ii) Encourage partnership areas to continue to use the web-site for continued and increased outreach to partners and stakeholders	This is undertaken on an ad hoc basis given the limited availability of resources.  It has been noted that UNEP should support the continuing development and maintenance of the Partnership website, which is emerging as a platform for effective information sharing amongst partners. UNEP worked with GRID-Arendal to develop a publication on mercury, called 'Mercury: Time to Act' which provides brief and latest background information on mercury.  The Partnership 'Story of the Month', since January 2012, are compiled on the web site.
iii) There have been some difficulties with telecommunications platform	This issue has been explored but no action has been taken to solve it over the long term.  The ASGM partnership area has started to do regular

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