

PRACTICAL SOURCEBOOK ON MERCURY WASTE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL



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ABOUT THE SOURCEBOOK

How was the Sourcebook prepared?

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council (GC), in decision 25/5, requested UNEP to enhance capacity for mercury storage and provide information on the sound management of mercury and mercury wastes. The project for the preparation of the 'Practical Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal' (hereinafter referred to as the 'Sourcebook') is one of UNEP's responses to this request. The project is a joint initiative of UNEP Chemicals Branch, Division of Technology Industry and Economics (DTIE), UNEP's International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC), and the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. Drawing on existing work within the Global Mercury Partnership (notably the Partnership areas on waste management, supply and storage, products, and chlor-alkali), including studies, guidance and information material disseminated by the Partnership, as well as other relevant documents, reports and publications, the Sourcebook has been prepared in a consultative process, involving experts from governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Selected experts were partners of the Global Mercury Partnership, other experts UNEP Chemicals has worked with under the Partnership umbrella, and members of ISWA's Working Group on Hazardous Waste. Their role was to provide input for preparation of the Sourcebook and to give feedback on the various drafts, including at a face-to-face meeting held in Vienna in August 2014.

Who is the audience?

The main target audience of the Sourcebook are technical

What is the purpose?

The overall objective is to enhance the capacity of governments – but also industry and the general public – to store and dispose mercury wastes in an environmentally sound manner. The Sourcebook aims to do so by providing information on commercially available storage and disposal technologies. This document is envisaged to address practical questions such as: What are mercury wastes? Where are they generated? How can mercury wastes be recovered and recycled? Which options and experiences exist for the storage and disposal of mercury wastes? The Sourcebook synthesizes existing knowledge in the field of storage and disposal to provide answers to these questions. It will thus allow relevant stakeholders to make informed choices and ensure the environmentally sound management (ESM) of mercury wastes.

What is the format?

The Sourcebook is a practical introduction to mercury waste storage and disposal. The Sourcebook should not be used as guidance. Other sources, such as the 'Updated Technical Guidelines for the Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes Consisting of, Containing, or Contaminated with Mercury or Mercury Compounds'¹ (hereinafter referred to as Basel Technical Guidelines) provide greater detail regarding mercury waste storage and disposal and are cross-referenced in this document. The updated Basel Technical Guidelines were adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Basel Convention at its twelfth meeting in May 2015.

What is the scope?

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