

WORKSHEET

PARTNERSHIPS ON MERCURY IN PRODUCTS

Workshop to Reduce Mercury Use and Release in Products for the Asia Pacific 17-19 May 2007 Bangkok, Thailand

I. Background and Rationale:

Partnerships

Governing Council decision 23/9 IV urges Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to develop and implement partnerships, in a clear, transparent and accountable manner, as one approach to reducing the risks to human health and the environment from the release of mercury and its compounds to the environment.

Partnerships, as embodied in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21 and as further developed in the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety, are also included among the main principles and approaches that will guide the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), including implementation of the Global Plan of Action. Furthermore, promoting reduction of risks from mercury and other chemicals of global concern is one work area identified in the SAICM Global Plan of Action.

This workshop will focus on developing and implementing the partnerships on mercury in products.

Mercury in Products Partnerships

The UNEP Governing Council in its 24th session called for increased efforts to address the global challenges to reduce risks from releases of mercury by reducing the global mercury demand related to use in products and production processes

Objective of the products partnership is to reduce or eliminate mercury in products where effective and cost-efficient substitutes exist as well as to reduce releases during manufacturing, industrial processes and disposal. Work under this partnership includes efforts to reduce or eliminate mercury in products through exchanging information and expertise, transferring and applying best management practices, developing and improving mercury use and emission inventories, providing technical assistance in implementing mercury product substitution and reduction programs, and raising public awareness.

This workshop will build on the success of the “mercury in products” workshop conducted by the North American Commission for Environment Cooperation (CEC) for the United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA) in Mexico, last 21-23 February 2006, with UNEP participation. That workshop brought together participants from Latin American countries and resulted in national action plans aimed at reducing mercury in products.

It also builds on the UNEP Chemicals initial work on mercury in the Asia Pacific in particular, the awareness raising workshop for the Asia Pacific Region last 26-29 April 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand that brought together 40 participants from 17 Governments and 3 NGOs, as

well as the inception workshop on the mercury inventory toolkit conducted by UNEP in 10-12 April 2007 for five selected Asian countries.

In addition, this workshop also aims to promote a “buy in” of key players in the mercury in products partnership and will result in a formal organization with clearly defined objectives, strategies, and work plan.

II. Objectives:

The workshop aims to

1. Strengthen awareness on mercury toxicology, exposure pathways, use and release in products and processes
2. Gain an understanding of mercury flow in trade and on mercury inventories and databases
3. Promote the exchange of information on mercury product substitution and best management practices to reduce mercury from products
4. Promote the global partnership on mercury, particularly on products
5. Develop action plans aimed at reducing mercury use and release from products

III. Structure:

The workshop is organized with an overview of partnerships on mercury and a number of thematic sessions covering relevant issues relating to mercury in products. Generally, the sessions consist of plenary presentations followed by questions and panel discussions. Towards the end, the participants will be divided into sub regional groups and countries will have the opportunity to develop national action plans.

The aim and desired outcome for each session is as follows:

Session 1: Open the workshop; get to know the workshop participants; present the resource persons, secretariat and other organizational details; expectations of the workshop; GIVE THE participants an understanding of the policy context within which the workshop is taking place

Session 2: Present an overview of mercury toxicology and its exposure pathways

Session 3: Present an overview of the global mercury flow in trade and the main sources of mercury releases from products to the global environment

Session 4: Present methods and approaches for assessing mercury use and release in products such as mercury inventories and databases

Session 5: Present possible strategies and approaches on mercury product substitution and best management practices to reduce mercury in products

Session 6: Give participants an opportunity to discuss and review/develop action plans to address mercury pollution from products; identifying specific technical and financial needs and specific activities to address the needs

IV. Expected Output:

Knowledge and understanding of

1. UNEP Mercury Programme Governing Council mandates and its decisions relevant to mercury and the UNEP Mercury Programme
2. Mercury toxicology and exposure pathways
3. Mercury trade, supply and demand
4. Mercury inventory toolkit and other instruments for mercury release assessment
5. Strategies and approaches on mercury product substitution and best management practices to reduce mercury pollution from products
6. Global Mercury Partnership with focus on mercury in products

Developed action plans of countries addressing mercury pollution from products

V. Operating Details:

Date and venue:

This three day workshop will be conducted on 17-19 May 2007 and will be held immediately before the SAICM Asia Pacific Regional meeting scheduled on 21-23 May 2007 in Bangkok, Thailand

Target participants:

1. SAICM focal points/representatives from the 52 countries in the region, 10 NGOs
2. plus one Mercury focal point/Government representative from each of the 21 Asia mainland countries (Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia); letters of invitation will be sent to UNEP Official Contact Points in the respective countries. **NOTE: DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS 12 APRIL 2007**
3. NGOs and industry - one each from the Health and Dental Care associations, Dry cell batteries manufacturing sector, lamp manufacturing sector, Electrical switches and relay sector, Automotive vehicle and equipment manufacturing sector, thermostats manufacturing sector
4. IGOs- WHO, UNITAR
5. Other Governments- USA, Canada, Sweden

Resource speakers:

Local and international speakers to address specific issues will be tapped-Health Care without Harm (HCWH), Mercury Policy Project (MPP), Asia Pacific Association of Medical Toxicologists (APAMT), National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), and United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA)

Funding to support participants:

Funding would be available to support participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Major funding is being provided by the USEPA

Workshop Proceedings:

Proceedings, containing a report on plenary presentations and discussions, as well as national action plans will be published and made available to participants and others after the workshop has taken place. In addition, information on the global partnership of mercury in products will be made available in the UNEP Mercury Programme website.

For more information on the workshop, please contact Desiree M. Narvaez, Programme Officer, Mercury and other Metals Programme, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva, Switzerland at telephone no. +41 22 917 8865 OR Email: dnarvaez@chemicals.unep.ch