

**MINAMATA  
CONVENTION  
ON MERCURY**

Distr.: General

15 July 2021

English only

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**Conference of the Parties to the  
Minamata Convention on Mercury  
Fourth meeting**

Online, 1–5 November 2021 \*

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**International cooperation and coordination****Joint report on cooperation and coordination between the  
secretariats of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and of the  
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions****Note by the secretariat**

As is mentioned in the note by the secretariat on international cooperation and coordination (UNEP/MC/COP.4/23), the annex to the present note sets out a joint report prepared by the secretariats of the Minamata Convention and of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions<sup>1</sup> on the main cooperative activities undertaken between the secretariats in areas of mutual interest, as well as other activities conducted jointly by Parties to the Minamata Convention and to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. The report has not been formally edited.

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\* The resumed fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury is to convene in person in Bali, Indonesia, and is tentatively scheduled for the first quarter of 2022.

\*\* UNEP/MC/COP.4/1.

<sup>1</sup> “Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions” is understood to mean the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions administered by UNEP, which are under joint management.

## Annex

### **Joint report on cooperation and coordination between the secretariats of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. At its third meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention adopted decision MC-3/11 on enhancing cooperation between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. In that decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Director of UNEP, in the performance of secretariat functions for the Minamata Convention and mindful of the legal autonomy of the respective secretariats, to support the secretariat of the Minamata Convention in its efforts to enhance cooperation with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, including through the regular use of the task force comprising the secretariats and the Chemicals and Health Branch of UNEP as a stable framework for cooperation and for the sharing of relevant secretariat services. In the same decision, the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention was requested to continue the purchase of relevant services from the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on a cost recovery basis, as appropriate and in accordance with the programme of work and budget, and to establish, with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and under the overall steering of the task force, inter-secretariat working groups to cooperate on relevant matters as identified in the decision.
2. The present report summarizes the main cooperation and coordination activities undertaken by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (BRS Secretariat) in areas called for in decision MC-3/11 and as further identified and mapped by the abovementioned task force.
3. A report by the joint task force on its work is available in the note by the secretariat on enhanced cooperation between Minamata Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (document UNEP/MC/COP.4/20). Overall information on the cooperative activities between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions is provided in the note by the secretariat on international cooperation and coordination (UNEP/MC/COP.4/23).
4. Further details on the cooperative activities carried out in relevant programmatic areas are provided under part II of this report, while part III of the report sets out an update on sharing of relevant secretariat services from the BRS Secretariat to the Minamata Convention Secretariat.

#### **II. Programmatic cooperation**

##### **A. Outreach, communication and event coordination**

5. Several awareness-raising events have been jointly organized between the Secretariats, such as the briefings to permanent missions in Geneva that are facilitated by the Geneva Environment Network. The Secretariats joined forces to deliver joint statements in high level meetings on issues of relevance to the four conventions. For instance, the Secretariats made a joint statement with UNEP Law Division during the 45th session of the Human Rights Council, on 18 September 2020 on matters related to human rights, the environment, the environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and COVID-19, as well as the necessity to protect the health of the most vulnerable; this joint statement was delivered on the occasion of the Interactive Dialogue with the new UN Special Rapporteur on 'human rights and toxics' who presented his report that focused on the duty to prevent exposure from COVID-19, highlighting good practices and key recommendations for both States and businesses.<sup>2</sup>
6. The Secretariats continue to plan for the organization of joint regional preparatory meetings, or of information sessions back-to-back to regional preparatory meetings, in advance to the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the conventions, as appropriate.

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<sup>2</sup> The report of the Human Rights Council on its 45th session (A/HRC/45/2) is available at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session45/Pages/45RegularSession.aspx>

7. In order to ensure sound planning of meetings in the chemicals and waste cluster, the Secretariats exchange information on their planned meetings and events on a monthly basis through the BRS joint meeting calendar. UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch also takes part in this internal information sharing and planning exercise.
8. Together with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), the Secretariats have initiated monthly meetings on communications and knowledge management with a view to improving public awareness on the technical approaches and results of GEF investments in the Chemicals and Waste focal area.
9. Regarding the new areas of programmatic cooperation that contribute to the broader environmental agenda, namely, biodiversity and climate change, the Secretariats designed a common communication strategy that included publications' design and translation, joint statements, press releases to the media, social media messaging, interactive landing pages, and an email marketing campaign. For example, on the occasion of the UN Summit on Biodiversity, a joint statement of the Minamata, Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions was released on 30 September 2020. The statement focuses on sound management of chemicals and waste as a prerequisite for turning the tide on biodiversity loss and protecting human health.<sup>3</sup> The email campaigns were aligned with the International Biodiversity Day (22 May 2021) and the World Environment Day (5 June 2021), and were amplified by UNEP and other MEAs and agencies.

## **B. Financial resources**

10. The Secretariats cooperate and coordinate on procedures and approaches established under the respective financial mechanisms of the Minamata Convention and the Stockholm Convention. As part of the cooperative activities undertaken, joint discussions between the GEF, the BRS Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Secretariat of SAICM are being organized on a regular basis. In addition, the Secretariats participated in regular meetings of the Chemical and Waste focal area task force organized by the GEF Secretariat.
11. The Secretariats have continued cooperation under the implementation of the Special Programme on institutional strengthening for the chemicals cluster for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM. Cooperation on issues pertaining to the Special Programme takes place as part of an internal task team consisting of representatives from the secretariats of the BRS conventions, the Minamata Convention, SAICM and the GEF to assist the Special Programme secretariat to undertake an appraisal of the applications received.

## **C. Implementation and compliance**

12. The Minamata Convention Secretariat and the Chair of the Minamata Convention's Implementation and Compliance Committee participated as observers in the fourteenth meeting of the Basel Convention's Implementation and Compliance Committee, more specifically during a dialogue session with other multilateral environmental agreements on illegal traffic organized by the BRS Secretariat during the second part of the meeting which was held from 21 to 25 September 2020.
13. The experience and practice of the Basel Convention's Implementation and Compliance Committee were a valuable source of guidance for the preparation of the third meeting of the Minamata Convention's Implementation and Compliance Committee, which was held online on 7 and 8 June 2021, in particular with respect to the issue of national reporting. The exchange of information between the Secretariats is expected to continue in this area in the future, including in view of the mechanisms and procedures on compliance adopted in 2019 under the Rotterdam Convention, which establish a Compliance Committee whose members will be elected in July 2021.

## **D. Technical assistance (including regional centres)**

14. The Minamata Convention Secretariat has cooperated with many of the Basel and Stockholm conventions regional centres in the design and delivery of capacity-building and technical assistance activities, including those conducted through the financial mechanism. More information on this cooperation is found at UNEP/MC/COP.4/14. The Secretariats also cooperate in the context of a UNITAR project, funded by the Government of Switzerland, to support the ratification of the

<sup>3</sup> The press release is available at <http://www.brsmeas.org/Implementation/MediaResources/PressReleases/UNSummitonBiodiversity/tabid/8573/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Minamata and BRS Conventions is certain countries. With respect to delivery of technical assistance, the BRS Secretariat participated in sessions of Minamata Online organized by the Minamata Secretariat in November 2020, providing an overview of environmental sound management of mercury wastes under the Basel Convention and linkages with the Minamata Convention in that regard.

## **E. Gender**

15. The Minamata Convention Secretariat was guided by the experience of the BRS Secretariat with respect to the activities undertaken to mainstream gender within the programme of work of the Minamata Convention. In particular, the BRS secretariat was consulted during the development of an internal gender roadmap, which analysed current initiatives undertaken by other MEAs and UN bodies in the field of gender and identified priority actions to be undertaken by the Minamata Secretariat with the objective of mainstreaming gender within the programme of work. The roadmap is included in document UNEP/MC/COP.4/22 presented for consideration by the meeting of the Conference the Parties at its fourth meeting. In addition, the BRS and Minamata Secretariats both participate in a multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) gender focal points network convened by UNEP Law Division to promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

## **F. Mercury wastes**

16. Decision MC-3/5 on mercury waste thresholds extends the mandate of the group of technical experts on mercury waste thresholds until the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and calls upon the secretariat to cooperate with the BRS secretariat to facilitate cooperation between the members of the technical expert group and the small intersessional working group (SIWG) established under the Basel Convention to update the technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds.

17. Pursuant to MC-3/5, a member of the Minamata Convention Secretariat is a member of the SIWG and a member of the BRS Secretariat participates in the activities of the expert group to facilitate information exchange. Several members of the SIWG are also members of the expert group, which could enhance coherence between the two tracks of work.

18. Under the Basel Convention, draft technical guidelines are being updated by the Government of Japan, as the lead country, in consultation with the SIWG, for consideration by Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting. A first updated draft of the guidelines have been made available to the twelfth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-12) in which provisions of the Minamata Convention and the outcomes flowing from the work of the expert group, as adopted in decision MC-3/5, are made explicit. During the online segment of the OEWG-12 that took place on 1-3 September 2020, the Minamata Convention Secretariat provided input on the updated draft technical guidelines also highlighting that the guidelines presented an opportunity to further strengthen collaboration between the Minamata and Basel conventions, especially with regard to mercury waste.

19. The technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with mercury or mercury compounds have thus been updated by Japan, and the SIWG, for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention at its fifteenth meeting (face-to-face segment in June 2022).<sup>4</sup>

## **G. Effectiveness evaluation**

20. On 2 September 2020, during the online segment of the OEWG-12, the BRS Secretariat participated in the side event called “Evaluating the effectiveness of Conventions” organized by the Minamata Convention Secretariat. Experts from various MEAs and other organizations such as Regional Seas Conventions discussed the key question: “How can science support effectiveness evaluation?” by presentations on the experience in monitoring and effectiveness evaluation in different MEAs and moderated discussions. The BRS Secretariat also participated in the online sessions on the mercury monitoring guidance for effectiveness evaluation organized by the Minamata Convention Secretariat in March 2021 and in June 2021.

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<sup>4</sup> UNEP/CHW.15/6/Add.6.

## **H. Knowledge and information management**

21. The BRS Secretariat continued to host the website of the Minamata Convention.
22. With a view to preparing the online segment of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in July 2021 the executive secretaries have signed an internal collaboration agreement for the BRS Secretariat to provide registration management and information technology support services. Services included in the agreement are: security and authentication of attendees, quorum and attendance statistics, guidance and training materials for the use of the online platform and the authentication system, and support to participants before and during the Conference of the Parties on technical aspects. Further information on the secretariat services provided by the BRS Secretariat to the Minamata Convention Secretariat is described in part III below.

## **I. Joint exploratory studies on biodiversity and climate change**

23. Beyond those areas of cooperation, with a view to highlighting the contributions of the conventions to broader environmental agendas, two specific new areas of programmatic cooperation between the two Secretariats had been explored, namely a joint effort to draft an exploratory study on the linkages of the conventions to biodiversity and an assessment report on the linkages of the conventions to climate change. Both documents are submitted for the consideration of the respective Conferences of the Parties, as set out in the note by the BRS Secretariat on international cooperation and coordination with other international organizations<sup>5</sup> and in the Minamata Convention note on international cooperation and coordination.<sup>6</sup>

## **III. Administrative matters**

24. In accordance with decision MC-3/11, the Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention requested relevant secretariat services from the BRS Secretariat on a cost recovery basis for the organization of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention.
25. The services to be purchased from the BRS Secretariat for organizing of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will assist both the online segment of the meeting, to be held from 1 to 5 November 2021, as well as the in-person segment planned in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia. The type and extent of services to be provided are similar to those provided to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, covering areas such as registration, document management and information technology.
26. In future, the continuation of such a stable framework is needed to continue servicing future meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the Minamata Convention, including the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

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<sup>5</sup> UNEP/CHW.15/20–UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.10/16–UNEP/POPS/COP.10/20.

<sup>6</sup> UNEP/MC/COP.4/23.