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Item 4 (g) (iii) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters for consideration or action by the Conference
of the Parties: financial resources and mechanism:
review of the financial mechanism**

**Report of the second review of the financial mechanism,
covering the period August 2019–July 2022**

Note by the secretariat

The report of the second review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury is set out in annex I to the present note. The annex is reproduced as received from the external consultant. Annex II of the note contains the only submission received from parties. Annex III sets out the information received from the Global Environment Facility secretariat in accordance with article 13 of the Convention. Annex IV sets out the information received from the co-chairs of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. Annex V sets out the information received from the chair of the Global Mercury Partnership Advisory Group. The report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on strengthening the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance, as submitted to the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention at its fourth meeting, is available in document UNEP/MC/COP.4/13. All the annexes are presented without formal editing.

* UNEP/MC/COP.5/1.

Annex I*

Second review of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

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This report has been prepared by an external consultant and is a product of the office of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (MC). The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the MC Secretariat.

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The reviewer hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in this document will contribute to the success of the *Second review of the financial mechanism* by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury at its fifth meeting.

* The present annex has not been formally edited.

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List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
ASGM NAP	National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining
ASGM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CET	Country with Economy in Transition
CI	Conservation International
COP	Conference of the Parties
EA	Enabling Activity
EHPMP	Environmental Health and Pollution Management Program
FSP	Full-Sized Project
GEB	Global Environmental Benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF-IEO	GEF Independent Evaluation Office
GMP	Global Mercury Partnership
GOLD+	Global Opportunities for Long-Term Development of ASGM Sector Plus
ISLANDS	Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Country
MC	Minamata Convention on Mercury
MIA	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP	Medium-Sized Project
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIP	Specific International Programme
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Executive Summary

1. Article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (MC) defines a mechanism for the provision of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources aimed to support developing-country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention.
2. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of Article 13, the financial mechanism shall include: the *Global Environment Facility* (GEF) Trust Fund and a *Specific International Programme* (SIP), to be operated under the guidance of, and be accountable to, the Conference of the Parties (COP). In decision MC-1/6 on the Specific International programme to Support Capacity-building and Technical Assistance, as finalized by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting (November 2018), the COP decided that the hosting institution referred to in paragraph 9 of Article 13 had to be provided by the United Nations Environment Programme.
3. Article 13 further requires the COP to review, on a regular basis, the level of funding, the guidance provided by the COP to the entities entrusted to operationalize the mechanism and their effectiveness, and their ability to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. The COP is also required, based on such review, to take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.
4. The first review of the financial mechanism was presented by the MC Secretariat at the third meeting of the COP. The Terms of Reference for the second review were adopted at the COP fourth meeting and the draft review was prepared, by an external consultant, between November 2022 and April 2023, based on the available documentation, the results of a survey targeting all MC National Focal Points and the GEF Operational Focal Points of eligible countries, and a series of interviews of key relevant stakeholders.
5. This second review covers the activities of the MC financial mechanism for the period from August 2019 to July 2022; its findings are reported in the main body of this document and are followed by conclusions, lesson learned and recommendations, based on the analysis of the results, and intended to suggest possible ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism in meeting the objective of the Convention.
6. According to the data provided by both the GEF and the MC Secretariats, the GEF and the SIP provided funding, in the period under review, to 135 active projects for a total disbursement of about 524 million USD. However, the GEF programming, informed by the guidance provided by the COP at COP-1, also covered, in some instances, larger areas of activities (such as those related to persistent organic pollutants and harmful chemicals). A more accurate estimation of the funding used for activities specifically related to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, is calculated in the order of 331 million USD, of which about 325 million USD disbursed through the GEF (98.2%) and about 6 million USD disbursed through the SIP (1.8%).
7. The GEF funding covered, in the period under review, 70 Enabling Activities (EA, about the 8% of the total GEF funding) mainly focusing on the *Minamata Convention Initial Assessments* (average cost of the EAs for the projects under review: about 460 thousands USD per project) or the *National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining* (average cost of the EAs for the projects under review: about 800 thousands USD per project); 8 Medium Size Projects (MSP, 3% of the funding)¹, 31 Full Sized Projects (FSP, 58% of the funding) and 2 Programs (31% of the funding). Most of non-EA funded activities focused on phasing-out of specific mercury-added products or the strengthening of environmentally sound management of mercury and other hazardous chemicals and, in particular, most of the FSPs and one of the Programs funded activities under the *Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining* (ASGM) initiative.
8. The SIP financial support covered, in the period under review, 24 projects, with an average funding of about 200 thousand USD. All funded projects focused, as for SIP mandate, on capacity-building and technical assistance. In particular, some of the main objectives of these projects were: the inventory, monitoring and/or phasing-out of mercury-added products; the environmentally sound management of mercury, technical assistance and technology transfer; the

¹ MSPs are funded at up to 2M in GEF resources, According to GEF Secretariat, in GEF 7 have been rarely used by countries as they are working on implementation which requires larger amounts of resources resulting in the MSP not being used widely (Source: GEF Secretariat).

development/strengthening of the institutional and regulatory framework; and the strengthening of the health sector and health risk control of mercury exposure.

9. The GEF project co-financing, required for all FSPs, MSPs and Programs, and encouraged for enabling activities, was reported at 2.7 billion USD², received partially in-kind from governmental agencies and partially in cash, mostly from the *Private Sector*, but also from *GEF Partner Agencies* and *Donor aid agencies*. The SIP project co-financing, not required by the SIP guidelines for the project implementation, was reported at 2.7 million USD, all received in kind from governmental agencies.

10. The review includes an analysis of the guidance provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP and its findings confirm the adherence, of the activities funded by both entities, to the guidance received.

11. In looking at the efficiency and effectiveness of the GEF and the SIP, in their capacity as the entities comprising the financial mechanism, a general and extensive appreciation of the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism has emerged from all the inputs received by this review. A list of performance criteria, provided in the Terms of Reference of the review specifically for this assessment, was used in both the survey and the interview questioning, and all respondents offered a generally positive feedback, together with important suggestions to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism.

12. By the closing date of this review, most of the projects under review were still under implementation³; reporting from ongoing projects, however, confirmed the positive feedback, in particular from countries participating in structured regional and global projects or programs, where collaboration and learning among different projects enhanced the projects activities with important synergies. The main problems in accessing the funds, as reported by focal points and stakeholders, referred to the language-barriers and the lack of dedicated resources, at national level, able to follow up the project application process.

13. The sustainability of the MC financial mechanism is also addressed, in this review, with a special focus on the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. Notwithstanding the incremental progression of GEF allocation between GEF-6 and GEF-8, to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, it is noted that the Convention is entering in a more mature phase of its implementation and that the initial requests for EAs, will be soon replaced by more expensive needs for MSPs and FSPs that will have an important impact on the level of funds needed by the eligible countries for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.

14. An additional consideration on sustainability comes from taking into account that while there have been full size projects addressing a range of obligations (e.g. on discrete products, processes, supply sources, and emissions sources), during the review period these did not have the broad reach of the programmatic approach as for the ASGM initiative; however new deadlines are fast approaching under the Convention and new categories of projects activities, and related funding, will be consequently needed by the eligible Parties to face the new challenges of implementing the Convention objectives.

Conclusions

15. A first important conclusion of this review is that, in the period under consideration, the financial mechanism established under Article 13 of the Minamata Convention has proven effective in the provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources for supporting developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention.

16. A second conclusion is that, at this stage of the operations of the Convention, the MC financial mechanism is in need of both a substantial increase of financial resources and a more specific guidance to the entities entrusted to its operationalization, in order to face the present and the impending challenges of implementing the Convention.

² The Minamata Convention, in Article 13.7, directs the GEF to provide “resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities” which is the source of requiring co-financing for MSPs, FSPs and PFDs. Consistently with this convention text, enabling activities are not required to provide co-financing (Source: GEF Secretariat).

³ The usual implementation period of GEF projects is 5 years and the length of implementation in the period under review was skewed by the Covid-19 pandemic which stopped or significantly slowed project activities (Source: GEF Secretariat).

17. A third and last conclusion of this review is that a higher level of definition, in terms of the indicators used in the monitoring and reporting of the activities funded through the MC financial mechanism, could greatly increase its efficiency.

Lesson Learned

1. *A dedicated team makes the difference between an activity and a successful one.* This is to say that the support and availability of committed teams, such as the MC Secretariat, the GEF Secretariat and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP), have been catalyzing important resources in terms of knowledge and coordination which resulted in significant assets for the implementation of many projects.
2. *South-South cooperation is an important source of investments into promoting green economies.* GEF funded regional and global programs, such as PlanetGOLD and ISLANDS, demonstrated that structured activities programs greatly favour collaboration and learning among child projects and encourage important synergies, often unreachable by traditional types of projects managed on a smaller scale of activities.
3. *Co-financing is an essential and effective component of the interventions funded by the MC financial mechanism.* The impressive rate of co-financing in the projects under review (6.8/1 ratio between the co-financing of GEF projects and the GEF funding) has proved very effective in both the larger assets made available to the project activities and the number and quality of the stakeholders participation (and the consequent higher level of country ownership) to the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism.
4. *National Focal Points of the Convention are often subject to a high turnover and, when appointed, should be assisted with fast-learning tools to better approach the Convention and its financial mechanism.* This lesson has come from multiple sources during this review and also extends to the needs of training activities on how to submit an application to the MC financial mechanism or directed to the persons in charge of designing a project compatible with the standards requested by the two entities entrusted to its operationalization.

18. It is suggested that the COP could improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the MC financial mechanism in meeting the objective of the Convention by considering the following recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Providing a more defined guidance, to the entities entrusted to operationalize the MC financial mechanism (*recommendations 4-11 below include suggestions to this purpose*).
2. Developing a larger standard set of mercury-related indicators, consistent with the Convention objectives, which might be used in the reporting of all new projects funded under the MC financial mechanism and possibly extended to all Parties through the format of the national report required by Article 21.
3. Planning future reviews of the financial mechanism with a view to achieve better synchronization with the GEF replenishment cycles and with a focus to analyze all final reports of a closing cycle and all the approved project documents of the following one.
4. Request the GEF to prioritize the funding of coordinated regional and global activities targeting specific objectives of the Minamata Convention, such as the reduction of mercury in waste, storage, products, trade, emissions, releases, etc., and in line with the priorities and the deadline set by COP decisions.
5. Request the GEF to provide, through its implementing agencies and in collaboration with stakeholder groups, global components for the coordination of the regional and global activities of the funded projects, acting as knowledge hubs developing and disseminating knowledge products, including tools, guidance, methodologies, and training materials; and favouring experts interchange and consultation at the regional level.
6. Request the GEF, GEF agencies, and Parties in their applications to the GEF to introduce, to a feasible extent, mercury-related project components in multifocal area

- projects, with objectives related to those of the Convention and the intent to produce synergisms and economies of scale.
7. Request the GEF to introduce, in its *result framework*, new mercury-related sub-indicators. In particular, new sub-indicators about quantity of mercury reduced by GEF funded activities for mercury-added products, mercury wastes, emissions, releases, etc. (under sub-indicator 9.2) and mercury-containing materials and products directly avoided (under sub-indicator 9.6).
 8. Request the SIP Governing Board to prioritize the funding for the capacity building of governmental agencies in developing or enhancing mercury-related national legislation and guidelines in order to align the recipient Parties priorities to those of the other Parties of the Convention in facing the main challenges of its implementation.
 9. Request the GEF and MC Secretariat, in their reports to the COP, to provide more detailed information on all project applications received and relevant information on the rejection of project proposals.
 10. Request the GEF and MC Secretariat, to make further efforts in providing guidelines to *their* funding application in different languages and to integrate these guidelines with ad hoc, online, multi-language tools (e.g. Q&As, chat-box, webinars) aimed to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in their applications to the MC financial mechanism, also taking into account the high turnover of National Focal Points.
 11. *Request* the MC Secretariat, to develop, and launch in partnership with stakeholder groups, a SIP resource mobilization strategy based on the widest sharing of information extracted from project reports, applications received, projects funded, problems addressed and project results of SIP funded activities, with a view to attracting a broader range of donors, including donors from the private sector, donor aid agencies and civil society organizations.

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Introduction

The financial mechanism

19. The Minamata Convention on Mercury (MC) entered into force on 16 August 2017 with the objective *to protect the human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds*.

20. A *financial mechanism* is established under Article 13 of the Minamata Convention to provide *adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources* aimed to *support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention*.

21. The *MC financial mechanism* comprises two entities: a) the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund, *to meet costs in support of implementation of the Convention*; and b) the Specific International Programme (SIP), *to support capacity-building and technical assistance*.

22. Article 13 also requires the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP) to *review, no later than at its third meeting, and thereafter on a regular basis, the level of funding, the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties to the entities entrusted to operationalize the Mechanism established under this Article and their effectiveness, and their ability to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition*. The COP is also required, based on such review, *to take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the Mechanism*.

The COP deliberations

23. At its third meeting, the COP was presented a note by the Secretariat on the *First review of the financial mechanism*⁴. The note summarized the activities of the GEF and the SIP under the MC financial mechanism and included two annexes containing the information received from the GEF Secretariat and the SIP Governing Board in accordance with Article 13. The COP in its decision MC-3/7⁵ welcomed the above mentioned note and requested the Secretariat to *prepare draft terms of reference for the second review for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting*.

24. At its fourth meeting, the COP was presented a note by the Secretariat on the *Review of the financial mechanism*⁶. The note included considerations relevant to the terms of reference for the second review and with respect to its timing; it also included two annexes containing a draft decision for the COP and a draft terms of reference for the Second review of the MC financial mechanism.

25. The COP, in its decision MC-4/7⁷, adopted the Terms of reference (ToR) for the Second review of the financial mechanism (also available in Annex 1 of this document); invited *Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders to submit information, consistent with the terms of reference for the review and organized by the listed performance criteria, on their experience gained through their interactions with the financial mechanism as soon as possible and not later than 30 September 2022*; and requested the MC Secretariat *to compile information relevant to the Second review of the financial mechanism and submit it to the COP for consideration at its fifth meeting*.

The review

26. As per the adopted ToR, the MC Secretariat advertised a consultancy vacancy in September 2022 and, following the assessment of candidates, hired an expert consultant to prepare a draft report on the information provided.

27. The ToR received by the consultant reflected those approved by the COP and set, as the purpose of the consultancy, *to develop the draft report which will form the basis of the Conference of the Parties' second review of the financial mechanism at its fifth meeting*.

28. The review was requested to *cover the activities of the MC financial mechanism for the period from August 2019 to July 2022 and inclusive of the first three rounds of applications to the Specific International Programme, with special emphasis on the activities concluded during that period*.

⁴ UNEP/MC/COP.3/11

⁵ In document UNEP/MC/COP.2/19

⁶ UNEP/MC/COP.4/12

⁷ In document UNEP/MC/COP.4/28/Add.1

29. The ToR specified: a) the main elements of the analysis; b) a list of the main sources of information (among others), inclusive of reference to interviews to key relevant entities and stakeholders and, upon mutual agreement between the Secretariat and the consultant, the possibility to supplement this information with one or more surveys; c) a list of the required elements of the report; and d) a list of performance criteria against which to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism. The consultant was also required to work under the overall responsibility of the Programme Management Officer for Capacity Building and Technical Assistance of the MC Secretariat.

30. In line with the ToR received, three lines of enquiry were identified in order to gather the information on which to base the review: a) the available documentation, b) a survey, and c) interviews.

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION

31. The initial assessment of the available sources of information, made it clear that, some sources of information, listed in Para. 3 of the ToR adopted by the COP, were not available while others were, as follows:

- Only one Party submitted info on its experience gained through interactions with the financial mechanism;
- The GEF Secretariat submitted its report to each COP; similarly the MC Secretariat submitted its report on the SIP to each COP and the SIP Governing Board made available the final reports of its first six meetings;
- Among the other reports listed in the ToR, the GEF Secretariat submitted its contribution for the Second review (inclusive of a table listing the GEF funded projects under the Minamata Convention and links to some of the progress and/or evaluation reports); the SIP Governing Board had been invited and encouraged, by the Secretariat in their 7th meeting, to provide its contribution to the Second review, but by the time of closing this review this contribution had not been submitted; out of the 24 approved SIP Projects 22 legal agreements, 15 project summaries, 4 final reports and 1 terminal review were made available by the MC Secretariat (by the time of closing this review only five SIP projects had been completed and of these, three were undergoing terminal evaluations);
- With reference to the relevant reports and information submitted by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, stakeholders and other entities, two documents were submitted: one from the *Special Programme*⁸ and one from the *UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP)*⁹;
- National reports on the implementation of the Minamata Convention (as submitted by Parties in 2021 for the second reporting cycle and pursuant to article 21 of the Convention) are available on the Secretariat website from 118 Parties; the report template foresees three general questions referring to Art. 13 and one of those specifically refers to the financial mechanism;
- The Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme entitled *Strengthening the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: enhancing the effective functioning of the Programme*¹⁰.

32. In addition to the above main sources of information, the review also drew on other relevant COPs documents, awareness material produced by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention, other documents shared by the GEF and MC Secretariats and the information available on the GEF Projects Database¹¹. During the time allocated for the review, the MC Secretariat also shared with the reviewer the Summary Preliminary Findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Specific International

⁸ The Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (at <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/special-programme>)

⁹ At <https://www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/>

¹⁰ UNEP/MC/COP.4/13

¹¹ At <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/database>

Programme as drafted by another consultant. A list of the key documents consulted for this review is contained in Annex 6.

33. In considering the analysis of the *efficiency and effectiveness* of both GEF and SIP *as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism* (an analysis specifically requested in point “d” among the review outputs listed in the ToR), a specific request was also put forward by the consultant to the MC Secretariat for accessing additional existing documentation of the SIP Governing Board (in particular: the background documentation provided by the MC Secretariat for the first six Board meetings - covering the first three rounds of applications - and any other documents containing details on the methodology used and the final evaluation resulting in the assignment and/or prioritization of funding to the selected projects). Such request was denied by the MC Secretariat on the basis that the requested material are Governing Board internal deliberations, not requested by the COP for the review, and, as such, *would not be appropriate to share*. The MC Secretariat also informed the reviewer that *should the need for additional documentation arise and be identified, and the specific type of documentation be identified, the consultant and the Secretariat will discuss further, in consultation if needed with the SIP Governing Board, the GEF Secretariat, or other relevant stakeholders*.

SURVEY(S)

34. As envisioned by the ToR, it was agreed, in consultation with the MC Secretariat, to prepare and launch a survey aimed to all the National Focal Points (NFPs) of the Minamata Convention and to the GEF Operational Focal Points (or in their absence the GEF Political Focal Points) of all countries differently eligible for funding under the MC financial mechanism¹².

35. The survey aimed to gather information mainly on direct experience from Parties using the MC financial mechanism by identifying the respondents by countries and sorting them in 3 groups according to the entities (GEF and/or SIP) of the MC financial mechanism for which they were (or not) eligible for receiving funding. All National Focal Points from countries eligible for funding were asked questions about whether they had requested funding through the mechanism and, in case of an affirmative answer, about their specific experience in the application phase and, for those receiving funds, in the implementation phase with the component(s) of the MC financial mechanism (GEF and/or SIP) they had dealt with. All participants to the survey were also asked general questions about the MC financial mechanism and given the possibility to request a direct interview with the consultant.

36. The survey platform used was SurveyMonkey.com, a commercial platform already used by various other UN agencies for surveys; the invitations to participate in the survey were sent by the MC Secretariat via e-mail to the MC-NFPs and GEF Operational Focal Points on January 11, 2023 (followed up by two reminders plus one final recommendation to participate in the survey directly signed by the Executive Secretary of the MC).

37. The survey remained open for three weeks and was closed on February 1, 2023; it received complete responses by 42 focal points (37 MC-NFPs and 5 GEF Operational Focal Point) representing 40 different countries (of which 35 MC Parties and 5 MC Signatories). The results and details of the survey are available in Annex 4.

INTERVIEWS

38. A third line of enquiry was a list of interviews of key relevant entities and stakeholders. The list of possible interviewees, defined in consultation with the MC Secretariat, included representatives of main donor countries, a number of National Focal Points from Parties having received funding by GEF or SIP under the MC financial mechanism, representatives of the GEF and MC Secretariat, selected members of the current and past SIP Governing Boards, a representative of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), representatives of the Special Programme and the Global Mercury Partnership, and National Focal Points having requested interviews through the survey. Most of the stakeholders answered positively to the invitation for an interview; however many MC-NFPs declined or did not responded to the interview invitation. A list of all persons interviewed for this review is available in Annex 5.

¹² As of 31 December, 2022 the Minamata Convention had 139 Parties and 120 countries were differently eligible for funding under the MC financial mechanism.

THE REVIEW OUTLINE

39. In consideration of the ToR adopted by COP, this review is articulated in four main elements of analysis of the findings, namely:

(a) **The Funding** mobilized through the MC financial mechanism, including the level and type of funding, the ability to mobilize resources, the identification of the resources mobilized directly by the mechanism, including in-kind contributions and co-financing, and, to the extent possible, quantitative and/or qualitative assessment of the resources mobilized indirectly by actions of the private sector and other stakeholders;

(b) **The Guidance** provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP to support capacity-building and technical assistance in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the MC financial mechanism, including considerations on the GEF and SIP responsiveness to it;

(c) **The Effectiveness and Efficiency** of the MC financial mechanism, and in particular of the GEF and the SIP, in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the mechanism, assessed against the performance criteria listed in the ToR; and

(d) **The Sustainability of the Resources and the Changing Needs**, including an assessment of the sustainability of the funding and available resources provided by the MC financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention, and considerations on the ability of the two entities of the financial mechanism to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition.

40. In following-up the above analysis, the review concludes by proposing some **conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations** based on the analysis of the results of the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism, during the period covered by the review, and intended to suggest possible ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism in meeting the objective of the Convention.

41. An advanced draft of the review was circulated by the MC Secretariat among the GEF Secretariat and members of the SIP Governing Board. All comments received and not included in the text of the review, are listed, together with the reviewer's responses in Annex 2.

I. The Funding

The total level of funding

42. According to the data provided by both the GEF and the MC Secretariats, the two entities comprising the MC financial mechanism, namely the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF) and the Specific International Programme (SIP), provided funding, in the period under review (August 2019 - July 2022), to 135 active projects focusing on activities related to the implementation of the Minamata Convention. Of these projects, 111 were funded through the GEF (though some of them covered multiple objectives, not all necessarily fully related to those of the Minamata Convention) and 24 through the SIP, and together involved 126 recipient countries for a total disbursement of about 524 million USD, of which about 518 million USD through the GEF (98.8%) and about 6 million US through the SIP (1.2%)¹³. Table 1 reports the breakdown of this funding by the disbursing entities and their related cycles or rounds; Annex 3 reports the whole list of projects under review.

43. All SIP funded projects focused on supporting recipient Parties in implementing their obligations under the Minamata Convention; on the other hand, the GEF funded projects covered, in some instances, also larger areas of activities, such as those related to persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and harmful chemicals.

44. The projects under the scope of this review that were approved under GEF-7 cycle (covering the period from July 2018 to June 2022) are estimated, by the GEF Secretariat, to have provided about 200 million USD for activities directly related to the objectives of the Minamata Convention (about 58% of the total cost of the GEF-7 projects under review).

45. The lack of the same level of details in MC-related projects approved under GEF-6 (covering the period from July 2014 to June 2018) makes the same calculation for this previous cycle, slightly

¹³ All funding reported, unless otherwise specified, are inclusive of: a) project grants, project preparation grants and respective fees for the GEF funded projects; and b) total project costs and operation costs for SIP funded projects.

more approximate. Almost 90% of the GEF-6 funded projects considered in this review, entirely focused on MC-related activities¹⁴ and their costs could be calculated as 100% MC-related. The summing up of the full cost of those projects together with a rough and conservative estimation of the Minamata directly related costs in the remaining 10% of projects¹⁵, brings the total amount provided by the GEF-6 cycle, for activities directly related to the objectives of the Minamata Convention, in the projects under review, to an estimation of approximately 125 million USD.

46. On the basis of the above estimations, the total level of funding provided by the MC financial mechanism, to the 135 active projects in the period covered by this review, for activities specifically related to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, was approximately of 331 million USD, of which about 325 million USD disbursed through the GEF (98.2%) and about 6 million USD disbursed through the SIP (1.8%).

The GEF funding

47. The analysis of the different type of projects funded by the GEF, in the period covered by this review, provides a better understanding of the levels of funding which have been supporting different categories of activities.

48. The highest number of MC-related GEF-funded projects, in the period covered by this review, refers to Enabling Activities¹⁶ (EA): 70 projects, involving 88 countries (73% of the eligible countries for this type of activity), with an average cost between 500 and 600 thousands USD per project (including agency fees) and funding, mostly, two main types of activities: the *Minamata Convention Initial Assessments* (MIAs, about 59% of the EAs, average cost for the projects under review: about 460 thousands USD per project) or the *National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining* (ASGM NAP, about 37% of the EAs, average cost for the projects under review: about 800 thousands USD per project). The total funding of the EAs under review amounts to about 41 million USD (8% of the correspondent total GEF funding).

49. Eight Medium-Sized Projects¹⁷ (MSPs) directly involved 10 countries (10% of the eligible countries for this type of activities) and addressed, mainly, activities focusing on the phasing-out of specific mercury-added products or the strengthening of the environmentally sound management of mercury and other hazardous chemicals. The total funding of the MSPs covered by this review amounts to about 15 million USD (3% of the correspondent total GEF funding)¹⁸.

50. The highest amount of MC-related GEF funding, in the period covered by this review, has been used for the funding of 31 Full-Sized Projects¹⁹ (FSP), involving 45 countries (45% of the eligible countries for this type of activities). The activities covered by this category of projects varied among: the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals (58% of the number of projects in the FSP category); the Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining initiatives (ASGM, 23%); and the phasing-out of mercury-added products (19%). The total funding of FSPs covered by this review amounts to about 300 million USD (58% of the correspondent total GEF funding).

51. The two following GEF-funded Programs²⁰ were also active in the period covered by this review, and their total cost amounted to about 163 million USD (31% of the correspondent total GEF funding):

¹⁴ Such as: development of a Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA), National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM NAP), GEF GOLD and Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) initiatives, or capacity strengthening for the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

¹⁵ The rough estimation is based on the application, to the total costs of those GEF-6 funded projects that are not uniquely related to the Convention, of the percentage of funds directly related to the Convention, calculated in the same category of GEF-7 funded projects for which this level of details is provided.

¹⁶ GEF Enabling Activities (EA) are projects for the preparation of a plan, strategy, or report to fulfill commitments under a convention (Source: GEF Secretariat).

¹⁷ GEF Medium-sized Projects (MSPs) are project with financing of less than, or equivalent to, two million US dollars. The GEF CEO can approve (Source: GEF Secretariat).

¹⁸ MSPs are funded at up to 2M in GEF resources. According to the GEF Secretariat, in GEF 7 these have been rarely used by countries as they are working on implementation which requires larger amounts of resources resulting in the MSP not being used widely (Source: GEF Secretariat).

¹⁹ GEF Full-sized Projects (FSPs) are projects with financing of more than two million US dollars. Council approval is required (Source: GEF Secretariat).

²⁰ GEF Programs are longer-term and strategic arrangements of individual yet interlinked projects that aim at achieving large-scale impacts on the global environment (Source: GEF Secretariat).

- *Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of Artisanal And Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector plus - GEF GOLD + ²¹*. The program objective was “to reduce the use of mercury in the ASGM sector in the participating countries through a holistic, multi-sectoral integrated formalization approach, and increasing access to finance leading to adoption of sustainable mercury free technologies and access to traceable gold supply chains”. In the period under review, this project involved eight countries for a total cost of about 81 million USD (including agency fees); and
- *Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS)*. The program objective was “to prevent the build-up of POPs and mercury materials and to manage and dispose of existing harmful chemicals and materials in SIDS”. It covered 28 countries for a total cost of about 82 million USD (including agency fees);

52. Tables 2 and 3 report the breakdown of the GEF projects under review, by cycle, project category, number of projects and funding.

The SIP funding

53. The Specific International Programme (SIP), as established by Art. 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, is hosted by the MC Secretariat and funded through voluntary contributions by Parties and other relevant stakeholders.

54. During the first three rounds of applications to the SIP (2018-2021), a total contribution of about 6.2 million USD was provided by 10 Party-donors²² and used for the funding of 24 projects in 24 recipient countries²³. The total projects disbursement in the three rounds was about 5.1 million USD (83% of the total funding) and the funding range of these projects was between 100 and 250 thousand USD, with an average of about 214 thousand USD per project. Table 4 reports the list of donors and voluntary contributions to the Specific Trust Fund in the first three rounds of SIP applications.

55. All SIP funded projects, as for SIP mandate, supported capacity-building and technical assistance; in particular, some of the main objectives of these projects were: a) the inventory/monitoring of mercury-added products in the recipient countries; b) the phasing-out of mercury-added products and industrial processes (with specific references to lamps, wastes, emissions, releases and management in chlor-alkali plants); c) environmentally sound management of mercury, technical assistance and technology transfer; d) development/strengthening of the institutional and regulatory framework; e) strengthening health sector and health risk control of mercury exposure (with specific references to strategy for assessing mercury contaminated sites and reducing the mercury presence in vulnerable populations).

The ability of the MC financial mechanism to mobilize resources

56. According to the documentation provided by the GEF and the MC Secretariats, the 135 active projects, funded through the MC financial mechanism in the period covered by this review, raised a total level of co-financing of about 2.7 billion USD which added up to the original 524 million USD of the project funding to reach the sum of 3.2 billion USD mobilized for the activities initiated under the MC financial mechanism (a 5.2/1 ratio between co-financing and the funding of the projects under review; for details see Table 1).

²¹ At <https://www.planetgold.org/>

²² No voluntary contributions by other stakeholders are reported in the three rounds under review.

²³ In the three SIP rounds of projects under review, one country was the recipient of three projects and one project was proposed by three countries together.

Table 1

Total level of funding and co-financing mobilized by the two entities of the financial mechanism in projects related to the *Minamata Convention on Mercury*, during the period under review (August 2019 - July 2022), and inclusive of the first three rounds of applications to the Specific International

Entities comprising the Financial Mechanism	Cycles / Rounds	Number of Funded Projects	Number of Recipient Countries ²⁴	Projects Funding (USD) (a)	Agency Fees / Project Operations (USD) (b)	Total Projects Funding (USD) (a+b)	Total Projects Co-financing (USD) (c)	Total Funds Mobilized (USD) (a+b+c)
GEF	GEF-6 (2014-2018)	65	82	161.062.011	14.798.145	175.860.156	698.828.015	874.688.171
	GEF-7 (2018-2022)	46	81	313.911.479	28.556.590	342.468.069	2.049.950.488	2.392.418.557
<i>Sub-totals</i>		<i>111</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>474.973.490</i>	<i>43.354.735</i>	<i>518.328.225</i>	<i>2.748.778.503</i>	<i>3.267.106.728</i>
SIP	1st Round (2018)	5	5	961.663	321.876	1.283.539	427.410	1.710.949
	2nd Round (2019)	10	10	1.977.564	440.808	2.418.372	622.124	3.040.496
	3rd Round (2020–2021)	9	11	2.193.842	280.069	2.473.911	1.633.662	4.107.573
<i>Sub-totals</i>		<i>24</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>5.133.069</i>	<i>1.042.753</i>	<i>6.175.822</i>	<i>2.683.196</i>	<i>8.859.018</i>
Totals		135	126	480.106.559	44.397.488	524.504.047	2.751.461.699	3.275.965.746
<i>(%)</i>				<i>(92%)</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>100%) - (16%)</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>100%)</i>

²⁴ Total and sub-totals in this column indicate the final numbers of recipient countries in each category and therefore do not match the sum of the rows above because some countries were recipient of funding in multiple projects.

Table 2

Number of the GEF-funded projects that were active in the period under review, by cycle and project category.

GEF Projects Cycle	No. of EA projects (a)	No. of MSP projects (b)	No. of FSP projects (c)	No. of PDF projects (d)	Total number of projects funded (a+b+c+d)
GEF-6 (2014-2018)	45	3	17	0	65
GEF-7 (2018-2022)	25	5	14	2	46
Totals (%)	70 (63%)	8 (7%)	31 (28%)	2 (2%)	111 (100%)

Table 3

Total funding of the GEF-funded projects that were active in the period under review, by cycle and project category⁹.

GEF Projects Cycle	Total EA funding (USD) (a)	Total MSP funding (USD) (b)	Total FSP funding (USD) (c)	Total PDF funding (USD) (d)	Total projects funding (USD) (a+b+c+d)
GEF-6 (2014-2018)	28.933.125	5.136.031	141.791.000	0	175.860.156
GEF-7 (2018-2022)	11.919.075	9.654.220	158.137.579	162.757.195	342.468.069
Totals (%)	40.852.200 (8%)	14.790.251 (3%)	299.928.579 (58%)	162.757.195 (31%)	518.328.225 (100%)

Table 4

Donors and voluntary contributions to the Specific Trust Fund in the first three rounds of SIP applications (2018-2021).

Donors	1st Round (2018) (USD)	2nd round (2019) (USD)	3rd Round (2020–2021) (USD)	Total Amount received (USD)	(%)
Norway	500.000	1.034.792	1.103.348	2.638.140	(43%)
Switzerland	0	1.013.377	101.492	1.114.869	(18%)
Sweden	333.624	0	317.365	650.989	(11%)
Germany	99.711	112.230	263.268	475.209	(8%)
USA	100.000	100.000	173.008	373.008	(6%)
Austria	46.528	34.091	239.854	320.472	(5%)
UK	144.040	65.960	0	210.000	(3%)
Netherlands	27.871	27.473	103.024	158.367	(3%)
Denmark	31.765	30.449	62.543	124.757	(2%)
France	0	0	110.011	110.011	(2%)
Total	1.283.539	2.418.372	2.473.913	6.175.822	(100%)

57. This significant level of additional resources mobilized has been secured by both the entities comprising the MC financial mechanism, in measure comparable to their different dimensions, through their guidance to projects implementation¹. The GEF, with its co-financing policy, secured (with the exclusion of Enabling Activities) a 6.8/1 ratio between co-financing and its funding of the projects under review. On the other hand, even the much lighter SIP mechanism, though not necessarily requiring co-financing from the applicant Governments, obtained a satisfactory 0.5/1 ratio between co-financing and its funding of the three rounds of projects under review.

The co-financing in GEF projects

58. With the exclusion of 42 Enabling Activities, the GEF Secretariat reported co-financing, for the remaining 69 GEF projects active in the period covered by this review, for a total amount of about 2.7 billion USD². A categorization of the main co-financing sources was also provided, for the GEF-7 cycle, and helps in better identifying the nature of these contributions.

59. The highest category of contribution in terms of project co-financing (about 689 million USD, 34% of the total co-financing of the projects under review in the GEF-7 cycle) is reported by the *Recipient Country Governments* in 24 projects and its value is 2.3 times the value of the GEF financing of the related projects³. It usually refers to an estimation of in-kind contributions in terms of staff and use of Government resources (such as buildings, vehicles, office supplies, etc.). In several projects the Government co-financing also refers to public investment mobilized for the expansion of the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste, infrastructure and equipment related to the hazardous chemicals presence in the country.

60. A similar value contribution (about 637 million USD, 31% of the total co-financing of the projects under review in the GEF-7 cycle), though with a significant portion in grants, loans or equity investments⁴, is reported from the *Private Sector*. Co-financing from this category is reported in 16 projects, and its value is 2.5 times the value of the GEF financing of the related projects²¹. The activities referred to these contributions and the value of the investments significantly differs among the projects: for eight projects, contributions by the *Private Sector* category are reported between 3 and 25 million USD, in three projects between 30 and 100 million USD, and in three more projects between 110 and 140 million USD.

61. Among the activities co-financed by the *Private Sector*, it is possible to extract, from the original project documents, the following major contributions: "export of mining waste (mercury)", "investments in a recycling facility for e-waste", "establishment of infrastructure for manufacturing mercury-free alternatives in demonstration plants", "phase-out of 3 tons of mercury waste from medical products", "technical support", "conversion of mercury cell technology plant", "expansion of the mercury-contained products waste recycling facility", and "purchasing of dental amalgam separators for the project".

62. A third significant category of contributions in the co-financing is reported from the *GEF Partner Agencies* (about 284 million USD, 14% of the total co-financing of the projects under review in the GEF-7 cycle) and the *Donor aid agencies* (about 211 million USD, 10% of the total co-financing). These contributions are reported in 28 different projects, and their value is 1.8 times the value of the GEF financing of the related projects²¹. Also in these cases, the activities referred to these contributions and the value of the investments significantly differs among the projects: in eleven projects, contributions are reported between 150.000 and 600.000 USD; in three projects between 10 and 20 million USD, in two projects between 1 and 2 million USD, and in one regional project for Africa are reported 237 million USD (of which about 171 million USD of co-financing, specifically

¹ For GEF: *Policy on Co-financing and Guidelines on Co-financing* at <https://www.thegef.org/documents/co-financing>; for SIP: *Application Guidelines (Third Round of Applications)* at <https://www.mercuryconvention.org/en/implementation/specific-international-programme/third-round>.

² Minamata Convention Article 13.7 directs the GEF to provide "resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities" which is the source of requiring co-financing for MSPs, FSPs and PFD. Consistently with this convention text, enabling activities are not required to provide co-financing (Source: GEF Secretariat).

³ Ratio calculated on project grants only, excluding project preparation grants and agency fees.

⁴ According to the "GEF Guidelines on Co-Financing", grants are defined as resources provided without expectation of repayment; loans are resources provided with an expectation of repayment and equity investments are investment into a company or asset with the possibility of financial returns.

targeting the “scaling up of actions to reduce and wherever possible, eliminate manufacture, trade, use, emission and release of POPs and mercury and its compounds”⁵).

63. From the original project documents most of the GEF partners and donor agencies co-financing contributions appear to be in-kind; however the following major contributions are also reported: “strengthening sustainable forest management”; “support companies with the implementation of GC [*Green Chemistry*] alternatives for POPs and mercury”; and “support initiative on the management of chemicals and waste”.

64. Other sub-categories of co-financing sources, as reported by the GEF Secretariat for the projects under review, are the *Civil Society Organizations* (non-profit, non-governmental entities), which are reported having contributed for about 28.6 million USD in four projects (5% of the co-financing when present); the *Beneficiaries* (individuals or communities that directly benefits from the project/program), contributing for about 2.3 million USD in two projects (0.5% of the co-financing when present); and a large group of other co-financers, not matching the above defined categories and generically tagged as *Others*, which are reported having contributed for about 200 million USD (10% of the total co-financing of the projects under review in the GEF-7 cycle) in seventeen different projects; the contribution from these *Other* sources amounts to 14% of the co-financing when present and its value is comparable to the value of the GEF financing of the related projects²¹.

65. In none of the GEF funded projects under review, resources are indicated as mobilized indirectly, by actions of the private sector and other stakeholders, other than those specified in the co-financing.

The co-financing in SIP projects

66. In-kind co-financing (usually in the form of staff salary and/or use of Government resources for the project implementation) is reported in 20 of the SIP projects funded in the period covered by this review. Its total amount is estimated at about 2.7 million USD (about 52% of the total SIP disbursement) in a range, when present, between about 5.000 and 200.000 USD per project, with the exception of one project where the in-kind co-financing was estimated at about 1.4 million USD⁶.

67. In none of the SIP funded projects, resources are indicated as mobilized indirectly, by actions of the private sector and other stakeholders, other than those specified in the co-financing.

The geographical distribution of the funding

68. In addressing the necessary financial resources to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, Article 13 underlines, in its Para. 4, *the specific needs and special circumstances of Parties that are small island developing States or least developed countries* for which the Parties, in their actions with regard to funding, are requested to *take full account*.

69. Of the 135 projects funded through the MC financial mechanism and active in the period under review: 43 projects involved *Least Developed Countries (LDCs)* for a total funding from the MC financial mechanism of about 260 million USD⁷ (50% of the total projects funding); countries from the *Small Island Developing States (SIDS)* group, were involved in 21 projects for a total funding of about 183 million USD (35% of the total projects funding); and members of the group of *Countries with Economies in Transition (CETs)* were involved in 10 projects for a total funding of about 53 million USD (10% of the total projects funding).

70. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the projects involving LDC, SIDS and CET countries, in the period under review, and the related funding by the two entities comprising the MC financial mechanism and their cycles or rounds.

71. In terms of regional distribution, of the 135 projects funded through the MC financial mechanism and active in the period under review, 58 projects involved countries from *Africa* for a total funding of about 306 million USD (58% of the total projects funding); countries from *Asia* were

⁵ In project: “AFLDC-2 Scaling-up Investment and Technology Transfer to Facilitate Capacity Strengthening and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Stockholm and Minamata Conventions in African LDCs” (GEF- ID:10218, implemented by AfDB).

⁶ In project: “Improving the national management framework to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Cuba focusing on mercury stocks measurements, as well as contaminated sites assessment” (SIP Project ID: 2021/03/LAC/CUB).

⁷ All funding reported in this section, unless otherwise specified, are inclusive of: a) project grants, project preparation grants and respective fees for the GEF funded projects; and b) total project costs and operation costs for SIP funded projects.

involved in 46 projects for a total amount of about 249 million USD (47% of the total projects funding); countries from *Latin America and Caribbean (LAC)* were involved in 37 projects for a total amount of about 283 million USD (54% of the total projects funding); and countries from *Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)* were involved in 3 projects for a total amount of about 51 million USD (10% of the total projects funding).

Table 5

Number and total funding²⁵ of active projects, in the period under review, involving Least Developed Countries (LDC), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Countries with Economies in Transition (CET), by the entities comprising the MC financial mechanism and their related cycles or rounds⁸.

FM Entities	Cycles / Rounds	Projects involving LDC countries		Projects involving SIDS countries		Projects involving CET countries	
		No.	Funding (USD)	No.	Funding (USD)	No.	Funding (USD)
GEF	GEF-6 (2014-2018)	21	35.869.000	12	16.126.375	5	29.150.500
	GEF-7 (2018-2022)	16	223.113.746	7	166.080.520	2	23.004.601
<i>Sub-totals</i>		37	258.982.746	19	182.206.895	7	52.155.101
SIP	1st Round (2018)	2	449.663	0	0	1	162.000
	2nd Round (2019)	1	200.000	1	210.000	1	219.765
	3rd Round (2020-2021)	3	718.632	1	249.210	1	248.500
<i>Sub-totals</i>		6	1.368.295	2	459.210	3	630.265
Totals		43	260.351.041	21	182.666.105	10	52.785.366

Table 6

Number and total funding²⁵ of active projects, in the period under review, involving countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), by the entities comprising the MC financial mechanism and their related cycles or rounds.

FM Entities	Cycles/ Rounds	Projects involving African countries		Projects involving Asian countries		Projects involving LAC countries		Projects involving CEE countries	
		No.	Funding (USD)	No.	Funding (USD)	No.	Funding (USD)	No.	Funding (USD)
GEF	GEF-6 (2014-2018)	31	76.066.100	22	84.826.706	15	43.050.350	4	28.384.000
	GEF-7 (2018-2022)	18	227.384.246	17	163.198.331	19	239.503.819	2	23.004.601
<i>Sub-totals</i>		49	303.450.346	39	248.025.037	34	282.554.169	6	51.388.601
SIP	1st Round (2018)	2	449.663	1	100.000	1	250.000	1	162.000
	2nd Round (2019)	3	700.000	3	471.799	3	586.000	1	219.765
	3rd Round (2020-2021)	4	968.132	3	728.000	1	249.210	1	248.500
<i>Sub-totals</i>		9	2.117.795	7	1.229.799	3	1.085.210	3	119.800
Totals		58	305.568.141	46	249.254.836	37	283.639.379	9	51.508.401

72. Table 6 provides a breakdown of the regional distribution of projects, in the period under review, and the related funding by the two entities comprising the MC financial mechanism and their cycles or rounds.

⁸ For the purpose of this survey, the classification of developing countries, least developing countries, small island developing countries and countries with economies in transition has been taken from the *World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2022*, a report produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the five United Nations regional commissions.

2. The Guidance

73. Article 13 of the Minamata Convention establishes that, for the purpose of the Convention, both entities comprising the MC financial mechanism *shall be operated under the guidance of and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties* (Para. 7 and 9). With reference to the GEF it also indicates that the COP shall provide guidance on *overall strategies, policies, programme priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources*, as well as on *an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support from the GEF Trust Fund* (Para. 7). Similarly, with reference to the SIP, it indicates that the COP, once decided on the hosting institutions⁹, shall *provide guidance to it, including on its duration* (Para. 9).

74. The ToR for this review requests, among other things, an analysis of the guidance provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism. The *Responsiveness of the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme to the guidance adopted by or provided by the Conference of the Parties* is also indicated in the list of performance criteria to be taken into account for the assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism.

75. The overall appreciation rate¹⁰ of the guidance provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP, as expressed by all the National Focal Points participating in the Survey, was of 68%.

76. The following section analyzes the guidances provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP and relates them to the review findings. The GEF Secretariat specifically provided for this review its own submission¹¹, including, among other information, a detailed *Response to the Guidance from the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention* which, in some measure, is quoted along the text.

The guidance to the GEF

77. Decision MC-1/5 adopts the Guidance to the GEF *on the overall strategies, policies, programme priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources and on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund*.

78. Article 1 of the guidance specifies that it is *intended to assist the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in fulfilling its role as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention*.

79. The first of the five sections composing the GEF guidance deal with the *Eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources*. It sets two criteria for the eligibility to the GEF funding; recipient countries must be: a) Parties to the Convention and b) developing countries or countries with an economy in transition (CET). Countries which are signatories to the Convention are also indicated as *eligible for funding from GEF for enabling activities, provided that any such signatory is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party*.

80. According to the information provided by the GEF Secretariat for this review, the 111 projects, funded by the GEF in relation to the Minamata Convention and active in the period under review, assisted 121 countries of which 86 are now Parties to the Convention; 14 are still signatories and received assistance for enabling activities or, together with the remaining 21 countries, not Parties nor signatories, were mostly involved in projects either approved before the adoption of the guidance or aiming at a wider spectrum of harmful chemicals and with a large number of countries participating in regional or global activities¹².

⁹ In decision MC-1/6 on the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance, as finalized by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting (November 2018)*, the COP decided that the hosting institution referred to in paragraph 9 of article 13 was to be provided by the United Nations Environment Programme.

¹⁰ Appreciation rates in this review are based on the rates provided by the participants to the survey (on a scale from zero to five) and expressed as percentages.

¹¹ "Information provided by the Global Environment Facility as an input into the second review of the *financial mechanism* of the Minamata Convention on mercury – MC-4/7: second review of the *financial mechanism*" (GEF, November 2022).

¹² The most representative of these larger projects are: "Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS)" (GEF id:10185, Global, 28 recipient countries); "Reducing Pollution from Harmful Chemicals and Wastes in Mediterranean Hot Spots and Measuring Progress to Impacts" (GEF id: 9684,

81. The second section of the guidance to the GEF deals with *Overall strategies and policies* and specifies the main criteria for selecting activities that should be funded by GEF through the MC financial mechanism. In commenting on this section the GEF Secretariat notes that this guidance was used to inform the GEF-6 and GEF-7 programming and that all projects approved in the GEF-7 period follow this guidance. On this topic, the GEF response also notes that *throughout GEF-7, there has been a focus on synergies within the chemicals and waste focal area and with other focal areas*, which has allowed Minamata Convention projects to achieve synergies across the chemicals and waste focal area.

82. The third section of the GEF guidance, *Programme priorities*, indicates specific types of activities to be prioritized, such as MIAs and ASGM NAP in case of enabling activities, as well as activities to implement the provisions of the Convention with priority to those that: (a) *relate to legally binding obligations*; (b) *facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party*; and/or (c) *allow for a reduction in mercury emissions and releases and address the health and environmental impacts of mercury*. The guidance in this section also requests the GEF, when providing resources for an activity, to take into account the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs.

83. As mentioned in the section on *GEF funding* above, the GEF projects under review focusing on MIAs or ASGM NAP comprise almost the totality of the EAs financed in this period (96% of the total number of EA projects under review) while the majority of the GEF funds was invested in the MSPs, FSPs and Program activities mainly focusing on phasing-out of specific mercury-added products, strengthening of environmentally sound management of mercury and other hazardous chemicals, or on the Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) initiative.

84. On this section, the GEF Secretariat notes that *all projects and programs in GEF-7 that seek to implement the Minamata Convention have been designed consistently with this guidance*, and that *other programmed resources for projects that are aimed at early implementation address several areas of priorities of the Minamata Convention that meet the agreed incremental costs of mercury reduction, such as chlor-alkali, mercury products including medical devices and ASGM. These projects estimate to address 1,629 metric tons of mercury*.

85. The fourth section of the guidance to the GEF provides an *Indicative list of categories of activities* that could receive support, differentiating by *enabling activities* (MIAs, ASGM NAP and other EAs as agreed by the COP) and *activities to implement the provisions of the Convention*, that: a) *relate to legally binding obligations* (including a list of possible areas related to these activities); b) *facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party* (including a list of possible categories for which financial support may be considered); or c) *allow for the reduction of mercury emissions and releases and address both the health and environmental impacts of mercury*. In the GEF Secretariat response to this section, it is noted that *all MSPs and FSPs include capacity building* and that *GEF-funded projects in the GEF-7 period primarily focus on implementing obligations of the Convention that reduce mercury*.

86. All review findings confirm the adherence of the GEF funded activities under review to the guidance. National Focal Points, from GEF recipient countries and participating in the survey, expressed an appreciation rate of 67% toward GEF contribution in meeting the costs in support of the implementation of the Convention.

87. The fifth and final section of the GEF guidance deals with the *Review by the Conference of the Parties* of the guidance itself, to be conducted on a regular basis in order for the COP to *take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, including by updating and prioritizing as necessary its guidance to GEF*.

The guidance to the SIP

88. Decision MC-1/6 approves the guidance on the operations and duration of the Specific International Programme (SIP) as set out in annex I to the decision, named *Hosting arrangements, guidance on the operations of and duration of the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance*. The first two paragraphs of the annex deal with

Regional, 10 recipient countries); "Mediterranean Sea Basin Environment and Climate Regional Support Project" (GEF id: 9686, Regional, 9 recipient countries); and "The Global Greenchem Innovation and Network Programme" (GEF id: 10353, Global, 6 recipient countries).

Governance arrangements for the Specific International Programme; the Guidance on the Specific International Programme is contained in the rest of the annex.

89. The *Guidance* on the SIP is composed of five sections. The first section defines the SIP *Scope as to support capacity-building and technical assistance* and includes a recommendation *to avoid duplication and overlap*. The findings of this review confirm a good working relationship among the MC, the GEF and the Special Programme¹³ Secretariats under the UNEP Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP)¹⁴ which insured, in the period under review, to achieve complementarity of activities and avoid duplications among the different funding mechanisms and the stakeholder's community.

90. The second section on *Eligibility* identifies developing-country Parties and Parties with economies in transition as those eligible for resources under the financial mechanism and recommends taking *full account of the specific needs and special circumstances of Parties that are Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries*. The MC Secretariat and the SIP Governing Board ensured that all 24 projects funded through the SIP, in its first three rounds of operations, were assigned to eligible Parties and, in particular, 6 of these projects were assigned to LDC and 2 to SIDS Parties (the distribution of SIP projects and funds among these groups is shown in Table 5).

91. The third section, on *Operations*, identifies the main criteria that should guide SIP operations: *country-drivenness*, taking into consideration national priorities; *complementarity* with other existing arrangements to provide capacity-building and technical support; built upon *lessons learned* and engage at the national and regional levels, including by encouraging South-South cooperation; and be *consistent with the integrated approach* to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste, as relevant to the implementation of the Convention. As for these review findings, all reports from ongoing SIP projects, as well as the few terminal reviews and evaluations available, confirm the country-driven approach of the projects and the engagement at national and regional level (three SIP projects have regional components and involve eleven countries). The constant inter-exchange of information with the other funding mechanisms also insured, in the first three rounds under review, a strongly integrated approach to financing.

92. The fourth section of the SIP Guidance identifies the *Resources* for the SIP as *financial and in-kind contributions and expertise* and encourages contributions of resources *from a broad range of sources including all Parties to the Minamata Convention with the capacity to contribute, as well as other relevant stakeholders*. All reports from ongoing SIP projects, as well as the few terminal reports available, confirm a significant involvement of national and regional agencies in the implementation of most of SIP projects; the above section on the *Co-financing in SIP projects* and Table 1 also report an overall 52% of in-kind co-financing in the funding of the SIP projects under review.

93. The COP guidance section on *Resource* also requests the MC Secretariat to develop, in consultation with the SIP Governing Board, a resource mobilization strategy with a view to attracting a broad range of donors, building on lessons learned in other areas and include approaches whose purpose is to leverage resources, including in-kind resources, from non-State actors. On this request the MC Secretariat reported in its Overall report on the SIP to COP3¹⁵ that: *Following extensive deliberations on the elements of a resource mobilization strategy for the SIP, the Governing Board concluded that rather than requesting the Secretariat to draft a fully-fledged resource mobilization strategy at this stage, the priority would be to identify two to three tangible areas of effort to support the mobilization of resources through strategic communication. Furthermore, while hoping for contributions from non-traditional donors and other non-traditional funding sources, the Governing Board identified traditional donors as the most important source of funds at present*. The MC Secretariat also confirmed that, in following up that advice, its activity in this area is mainly focused

¹³ The Special Programme, also known as the Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, provides support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to enhance their sustainable institutional capacity to develop, adopt, monitor and enforce policy, legislation and regulation for effective frameworks for the implementation of the Minamata Convention, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). At <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/special-programme>.

¹⁴ The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP) consists of stakeholders from governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, private sector, academia and scientific community who are dedicated to reducing mercury pollution and protecting human health and the environment from the impacts of mercury. At <https://www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/>.

¹⁵ In document UNEP/MC/COP.3/10, Section C, Para. 13.

on improving communications about the SIP and, particularly, on direct communications to donor party Governments.

94. The fifth and last section of the SIP Guidance sets the *Duration* of the SIP to ten years from the establishment of the trust fund¹⁶, extendable by the COP to a maximum of additional seven years.

3. The Effectiveness and the Efficiency

The provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources

95. Article 13 of the Minamata Convention clearly defines, in its paragraph 5, the scope of the MC financial mechanism as: *the provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources [...] to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under this Convention.*

96. A general and extensive appreciation of the MC financial mechanism has come out, “strong and clear”, from all the inputs received in this review by the National Focal Points to the Convention and the other main stakeholders. The funding mentioned in Section 2 above were clearly indicated, by all sources, of paramount importance in successfully supporting the recipient Parties in their progress toward the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.

97. In the survey, the focal points of countries recipient of SIP and/or GEF funding expressed specific appreciation toward the *adequacy* (82% of appreciation for SIP and 72% for GEF), the *predictability* (82% of appreciation for SIP and 72% for GEF) and the *timeliness* (83% of appreciation for SIP and 71% for GEF) of the financial resources received.

98. An additional element of analysis, specific about the *adequacy* of the resources, might be obtained in considering that, according to the GEF Secretariat (accountable, in the period under review, for more than 98% of the funding disbursed by the MC financial mechanism), the funds allocated under the GEF-7 cycle for the Minamata Convention were enough to support all project requests and no project application respecting GEF parameters, among those submitted through the MC financial mechanism in the period under review, was rejected.

99. Again from the survey results, respondents from recipient countries indicated an 82% rate of appreciation toward SIP funding contribution in improving their country capacity *in implementing its obligations under the Convention*; and a 67% rate of appreciation toward GEF funding contribution in *meeting costs in support of implementation of the Convention*.

Accessing the funds

100. Generally speaking, the *guidance* provided by GEF and MC Secretariats for accessing the funds of the MC financial mechanism was highly appreciated in the responses and comments of representatives of the recipient countries (76% rate of appreciation for both SIP and GEF guidance).

101. More specifically, according to the review findings, the MC Secretariat developed clear and specific guidelines for accessing each round of SIP funding (the different components of these guidelines received, through the survey, between 60% and 73% of appreciation rate for their *user-friendliness* and the *simplicity* for accessing project funds was rated with 62% of appreciation). In more general terms, the MC Secretariat received a 77% rate of appreciation for the *support* received by recipient countries when requesting SIP funding.

102. The GEF’s different approach, where all projects phases are mediated by the implementing agencies, received similar ratings (65% rate of appreciation for the *simplicity* in accessing project funds and 78% for the *support* received by recipient countries when requesting funding). From survey comments and the interviews, however, the general feedback was that often many developing countries did not have enough expertise, within their national agencies, to initiate themselves a GEF project application and that they often relied on initial proposals by implementing agencies in order to start the application process.

103. In terms of *average time*, the preparation of SIP projects was indicated by recipient countries as much faster than the GEF projects (5-6 months average for SIP projects vs. 11 months for GEF projects). The longer time needed for GEF projects approval is also confirmed by the data provided by the GEF Secretariat, indicating an average of 3-4 months required from the PIF submission to the GEF

¹⁶ In following the first meeting of the Conference of Parties, the Specific Trust Fund was established by the UNEP Executive Director with an initial expiry date of 31 December 2028 (UNEP/MC/COP.2/9).

Council approval, or an average of 6-7 months from the project document submission to the CEO endorsement or approval.

104. Notwithstanding the above differences, obviously related, among other factors, to the different sizes of the projects in terms of activities and related funding, the appreciation rates for the *expeditiousness* of accessing project funds was of 63% for both SIP and GEF funded projects.

105. A similar feedback was provided by the focal points on *flexibility*: GEF projects were generally indicated as slightly less flexible in terms of the procedures for accessing funds. High praises, however, were given to the support received, by both the MC Secretariat and the implementing agencies, in those cases where the existing rules were not exactly meeting the country needs. *Flexibility* of accessing project(s) funds received, through the survey, an appreciation rate of 68% for SIP projects and 64% for GEF projects.

106. In terms of *transparency and timeliness of the project approval processes* the feedback received through the review was also quite positive and the appreciation rate, expressed by the focal points through the survey, was of 67% for the *transparency* of the funding provided by the financial mechanism and of 61% for *timeliness* of the project approval processes. It is noted, however, that the GEF reports to COP are not currently required to include, and do not include, information about the full list of applicant countries and that the MC Secretariat reports to COP on SIP activities do not include the *relevant information on the rejection of project proposals* as requested by the *Terms of reference of the Specific International Programme*¹⁷. In both cases, this information could have helped the general assessment of possible existing problems in the application process by this review.

107. The main problems related to accessing the funds, raised by some of the focal points (collected through interviews and survey comments) referred to the *language-barriers* and the *lack of dedicated resources* at national level able to follow up the project application process. Some NFPs, or project managers, also mentioned as challenges: the difficulty in some countries to *open a Government bank account* which could be used for the project implementation (it was suggested that national executing agencies could be allowed to directly receive these funds); the *limited time* in preparing the project proposal (especially in terms of consulting with national stakeholders); *difficulties in understanding* the theory of change or the budget allocation framework details; *gathering the required information* at national level; and more generally speaking, the *lack of existing information* and *previous experience* in these types of activities at national level. A common request was for small grants aimed at strengthening national capacity in project preparation; also webinars (similar to those organized by the MC Secretariat for accessing the SIP funding) were suggested for accessing GEF funded projects¹⁸.

Implementing the projects

108. Consistently with the comments reported above, the project implementation phase was regarded, by the vast majority of the focal points contacted, as a demanding but not too difficult process. Both GEF and SIP projects received a positive appreciation for the *simplicity* (66-70% of appreciation rate), *flexibility* (64-72%) and *expeditiousness* (64-69%) of implementing and reporting on projects. However the lowest rates in the above ranges were always referred to the GEF funded projects and also in their comments the focal points underlined and praised the greater flexibility of the SIP projects.

109. The feedback on the *transparency* of the funding provided by the MC financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention was also quite positive (67% of appreciation rate in the survey). Parties' comments were also generally positive about the comprehensive extent of the GEF project approval and understanding, as well as appreciative of, the efforts managed by the SIP, notwithstanding its funds limitations.

110. All projects under review were reported as being carefully negotiated, in both GEF and SIP cases, in order to ensure an adequate level of *country ownership* of the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism (for which the survey reported a 67% of appreciation rate) as well as of *stakeholder involvement* (confirmed by both the significant level of co-financing of most projects and a 71% of appreciation rate in the survey).

111. It is worth noting that both entities comprising the MC financial mechanism give high importance, in their guidance to the project design, to the widest possible level of involvement of

¹⁷ Annex II to Decision MC-1/6, Para. 8.

¹⁸ The GEF Secretariat noted, in its comments to the draft of this review, that these problems have already been addressed, independently of this review, in document "Country Engagement Strategy Implementation Arrangements for GEF-8" (GEF/C.63/05, October 31, 2022).

stakeholders at various levels of the project implementation. On the other hand, some focal points commented that, in some cases, the limited time available for preparing the project application did not allow enough time for consulting with major stakeholders.

Projects results

112. In terms of results, it is important to note that most of the projects under review are still on-going and only a small fraction of them produced a final report¹⁹. With reference to the projects under review, and as of January 2023, the GEF Secretariat reported 31 projects implemented (28% of the GEF projects under review) of which 25 (22%) having submitted their final PIR; 46 under implementation (41%); and 34 having just received their endorsement/approval (31%). The MC Secretariat, in the same period and with reference to the three first rounds of SIP, also reported 4 projects having produced their final reports (17% of the SIP projects under review), 17 projects under implementation (71%) and 3 projects about to start their activities (12%).

113. All GEF projects under review and having submitted a final report were approved under GEF-6. With the exception of one national MSP (focusing on environmentally sound management of mercury), all the other concluded projects were enabling activities dealing either with the *Minamata Convention Initial Assessments* or with the *National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining* initiatives (15 MIA projects and 9 ASGM NAP projects).

114. The MIA projects were all aimed to facilitating the ratification and/or early implementation of the Minamata Convention by providing an overview of each country's use, emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds as well as an assessment of existing national capacities in the related sectors. In terms of results, the final reports of the MIA projects under review consistently refer to completed or updated inventories of mercury releases and emissions (performed in accordance with the UNEP's *Toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases*²⁰), as well as to the assessments of national policy, legislative and institutional frameworks in relation to the implementation of the Minamata Convention²¹. Other common MIA projects results included the identification of populations at risk and the development of national strategies for education and awareness-raising, identification of national priorities, and/or dissemination of information among relevant stakeholder groups.

115. Half of the non-MIA GEF projects under review were or are being carried out under the broader programmatic approaches of the *Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM)* initiative, to support the transition away from mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. The most recent of these ASGM projects is the GEF PlanetGOLD programme which, in the period under review, had active projects in eight countries and has been reporting a powerful knowledge management component to foster the sustainability and scaling up of project results²².

116. With reference to the *Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining* initiative, a recent report of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office²³ provides detailed evaluative evidence on the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of GEF interventions in the ASGM portfolio. Among its conclusions, it reports that: a) GEF ASGM interventions are highly relevant to the Minamata Convention and national government priorities related to mercury reductions; b) completed GEF projects had success in reducing mercury use from ASGM in project areas; c) formalization continued to build momentum after project completion (e.g. creation of national artisanal miners' associations); d) the GOLD program is being implemented in many of the countries with the highest mercury use in the world; and e) the GOLD program's global "hub" has promoted collaboration and learning between child projects.

¹⁹ The usual implementation period of GEF projects is 5 years and the length of implementation in the period under review was skewed by the Covid-19 pandemic which stopped or significantly slowed project activities (Source: GEF Secretariat).

²⁰ A description of the UNEP's *Toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases* is available at <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/mercury-inventory-toolkit>.

²¹ Results from the inventories are being compiled by the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and can be found at https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/mark.burton.bri/viz/MIAMercuryInventoryDashboard/Main_Dashboard?publish=yes

²² An expansion of the PlanetGOLD program, was approved, after the period covered by this review, to reach 23 countries in GEF-7 and the program is being further expanded in GEF-8 (the updated list of projects under the PlanetGOLD program is available at <https://www.planetgold.org>).

²³ *GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector*, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, Evaluation Report No. 146, January 2022

117. Another example of the GEF broader programmatic approach is the GEF ISLANDS program (Implementing Sustainable and Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS), working in 28 Small Island Developing States to manage the growing impacts of chemicals and wastes on their environments, including the management of at least 38 metric tons of mercury from products, health care and other use sectors.

118. The projects comprised in these broader and more structured approaches have all benefitted of an increased level of south-south cooperation among the so-called *child projects* and have been able to apply better standards to their activities, because refined through wide collaboration and broadly circulated by the agencies in charge of the *hub-projects*.

119. Starting with the GEF-7 cycle, a new *result framework* was implemented by the GEF Secretariat by introducing 11 core indicators and associated sub-indicators spanning all 5 focal areas of GEF activity²⁴. The only core indicator including mercury is indicator no. 9 (*chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced*) and the only sub-indicator directly referring to mercury is no. 9.2 (*quantity of mercury reduced*). A different sub-indicator, no. 9.6 (*POPs/Mercury containing materials and products directly avoided*), also refers to mercury but in conjunction with other POPs and only provides an estimation of the aggregated amounts of materials and/or products containing POPs/mercury that has been avoided as a direct result of the GEF projects²⁵.

120. With the exception of the enabling activities, all the GEF projects approved in the GEF-7 cycle (and onward) should report on the total *quantity of mercury reduced* expressed in metric tons. According to the data provided by the GEF Secretariat, a total value of about 1613 tons of mercury is expected to be reduced by 18 of the projects under review (of which 4 MSPs, 12 FSPs and 2 PFDs) for a total value of about 166 million USD estimated for activities directly related to the objectives of the Minamata Convention. As of January 2023, two of the above projects were under implementation and the remaining 16 had recently received their endorsement/approval and were about to start.

121. With reference to SIP projects, the focal points participating in the survey indicated the article(s) of the Convention for which those funding improved their capacity in implementing its obligations. The main articles to which they referred were: art. 18 on *public information, awareness and education* (indicated by 58% of the respondents), art. 4 on *mercury-added products* (50%), art. 17 on *information exchange* (42%), art. 11 on *mercury wastes* (33%), art. 19 on *research, development and monitoring* (33%), art. 3 on *mercury supply sources and trade* (33%), art. 8 on *emissions* (33%), and art. 9 on *releases* (33%).

122. Similar results could be extracted from the final reports of the few SIP funded projects which have terminated their activities: most of the main projects outcomes are reported under art. 4 on *mercury-added products* (e.g. inventories, feasibility analysis or strategy development for sound collection, storage, transportation, and processing of mercury-added products); and art. 18 on *public information, awareness and education* (e.g. awareness campaigns, engaging/sharing knowledge between key stakeholders). Figure 1 provides an overview of the Minamata Convention articles targeted by the first three rounds of SIP projects.

123. Specific SIP funded projects also reported results under art. 12 on *contaminated sites* (e.g. producing a waste and contaminated materials inventory in mercury cell chlor-alkali plant and developing a guideline for decontamination of mercury wastes); art. 16 on *health aspects* (e.g. producing a health risk assessment report); or art. 19 on *research, development and monitoring* (e.g. enhance capacities for research and mercury surveillance; strengthening the technical capacity of the local government agencies, laboratories, academics and research centres; or developing mercury sampling and analyzing methods in different media). All SIP final reports also include in their results an important institutional component such as the development of a draft legal framework or national strategies on mercury (e.g. for phasing out/down mercury-added products; for handling mercury lamps; on movement of hazardous wastes; etc.).

The effectiveness and efficiency of the MC financial mechanism

124. Overall, the focal points from countries recipient of the funding, rated positively in the survey the *efficiency* and the *effectiveness* of both the entities entrusted with the operation of the MC financial mechanism (74% of appreciation for both SIP efficiency and effectiveness, 72% of appreciation for

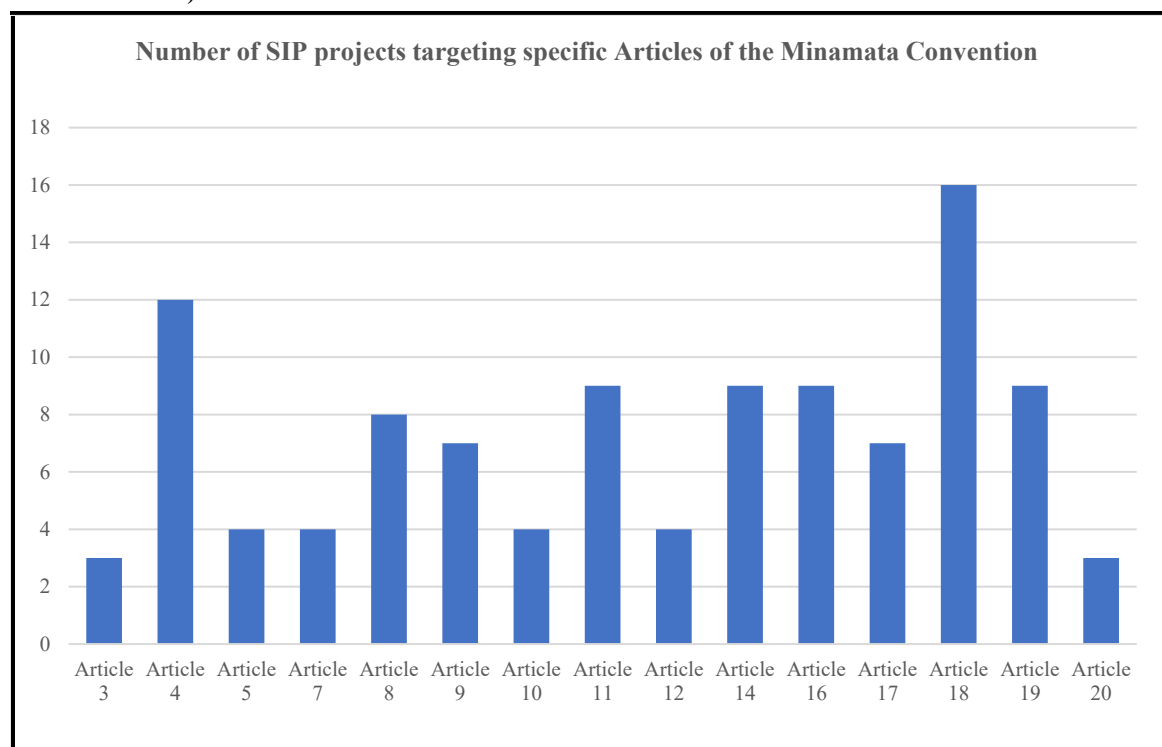
²⁴ GEF organize its work around five focal areas - biodiversity loss, chemicals and waste, climate change, international waters, and land degradation – and take an integrated approach to support more sustainable food systems, forest management, and cities (at: <https://www.thegef.org/what-we-do>).

²⁵ Extracted from: *Guidelines on the Implementation of the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework*, GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01, June 30, 2022

GEF efficiency and 71% of appreciation for GEF effectiveness). Similar questions, focusing on both entities together, asked to all focal points participating to the survey (independently from them being or not representatives of countries recipient of the funding), scored similar rating values (68-69% of appreciation for the efficiency and the effectiveness of the entities entrusted with the operation of the MC financial mechanism).

Figure 1

Minamata Convention articles targeted by the first three rounds of SIP projects. (courtesy of the MC Secretariat).



As for the focal points and project managers contacted and involved in projects funded through the MC financial mechanism, all clearly stated that they experienced no significant problems in dealing with the funding entities in all phases and funding of their project activities and that both mechanisms resulted truly efficient and effective in supporting the projects from design to implementation.

Table 7 provide a summary of the appreciation rates extracted from the survey, relatives to the performance criteria, requested by the ToR for this review, to be taken into account for the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the financial mechanism.

4. The Sustainability of the Resources and the Changing Needs of Developing Countries

125. According to Art. 13 of the Convention, and as reflected in the ToR of this review, an important focus of this analysis is *the ability*, of the entities entrusted to operationalize the MC financial mechanism, *to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition*. This section specifically focuses on this aspect by considering the sustainability of the financial resources and its impact on these changing needs.

Table 7

Summary of the appreciation rates extracted from the survey, relatives to the performance criteria, requested by the ToR for this review to be taken into account for the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the financial mechanism.

<i>Performance criteria</i>		<i>Appreciation rates</i>	
The responsiveness of the GEF and the SIP to the guidance provided by the COP		65%	
The extent to which the projects funded by the financial mechanism have reduced, or are expected to reduce, the supply, use, emissions and releases of mercury, and deliver other benefits in terms of Convention implementation		61%	
The transparency of the funding provided by the financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention		67%	
The timeliness of the project approval processes		61%	
The simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects		60%	
Responses from focal points of recipient countries only	Appreciation rates		
	SIP	GEF	
<i>Simplicity of accessing project(s) funds</i>	62%	65%	
<i>Simplicity of implementing the project(s)</i>	70%	66%	
<i>Simplicity of reporting on project(s)</i>	67%	66%	
<i>Flexibility of accessing project(s) funds</i>	68%	64%	
<i>Flexibility in implementing the project(s)</i>	72%	70%	
<i>Flexibility in reporting on project(s)</i>	72%	64%	
<i>Expeditionness of accessing project(s) funds</i>	63%	63%	
<i>Expeditionness in implementing the project(s)</i>	69%	68%	
<i>Expeditionness in reporting on project(s)</i>	69%	64%	
The adequacy of the available resources		58%	
The sustainability, of the funding provided by the financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention		66%	
The Country ownership of activities funded by the financial mechanism		67%	
The level of stakeholder involvement in the activities funded by the financial mechanism		71%	

Funds allocated by the GEF Trust Fund to the implementation of the Minamata Convention in the past and current cycles show an incremental progression (+46% of increment between GEF-6 and GEF-7 and an additional +31% between GEF-7 and GEF-8). Figure 2 shows the GEF total resources, by cycles, allocated to the implementation of the Minamata Convention and those programmed/used for the financing of mercury projects²⁶.

It is worth noticing, however, that the Convention is entering now in a more mature phase of its implementation and that the initial requests for enabling activities, submitted by most of the recipient countries in the past cycles, are being currently replaced by undeniable needs for medium and full size projects that will have an important impact on the level of funds needed by the recipient countries for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.

In looking again at Table 2, and in considering the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition, it is easy to predict that should the recipient Parties of the 25 GEF-7 funded EA projects under review decide to request funding for the follow-up of their initial MIA or for the implementation of their ASGM NAP, these activities alone would require between 50 and 300 million USD of GEF funding (calculated as the average cost, in the period under review, of the same number of MSPs or FSPs)²⁷.

In addition, while the ASGM initiative has been one of the main focus of the past projects, new deadlines are fast approaching under the Convention (as per the Convention text and applicable annexes) and new categories of projects

²⁶ Project financing only; exclude agency fees and PPGs; source GEF Secretariat.

²⁷ The GEF Secretariat noted, in its comments to the draft of this review, that “while this is the maximum costs based on the current portfolio that costs are likely to be lower due to application of lessons learned and knowledge gained from the ongoing portfolio.”

activities and related funding will be consequently needed by the eligible Parties to face the new challenges of implementing the Convention objectives²⁸.

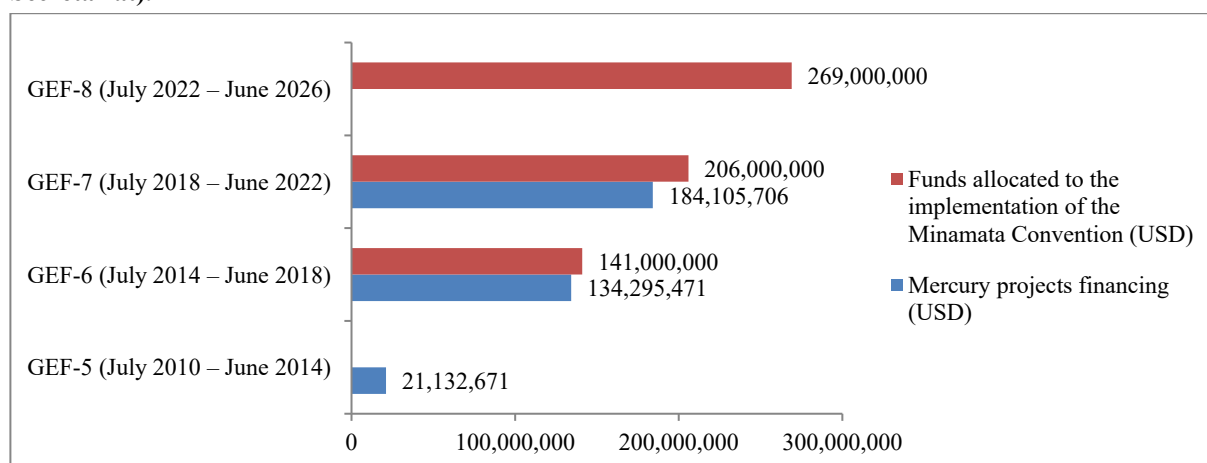
Funds received by the SIP trust fund, independently from the much limited amount compared to the GEF funds, have not shown the same type of incremental progression (after a +88% of increment, between the first and the second round, there has been a small increment of +2% between the second and the third round) and the on-going voluntary contributions for the fourth round, as of March 2023, had reached just the 36%, in total, of the previous round. Figure 3 shows the SIP total funds received and those effectively used for the financing of projects.

126. SIP donors, so far, have been also a very small group of countries (the list of the 10 donors for the first three rounds is shown in Table 4), among which one donor, Norway, contributed alone for the 42% of the total amount of the first three rounds.

127. The three completed SIP rounds received, in total, 56 valid project applications²⁹ of which 24 were approved for funding. The application number increased in each round and, only in the third round, 15 applications could not be approved for funding and for those applications, the Board formulated recommendations to be transmitted by the MC Secretariat to each of the applicants for their consideration and to enable them to strengthen their applications for possible submission to the fourth or subsequent rounds. It is expected therefore that the number of SIP applications will continue to increase in the coming rounds with a consequent increase of the request for funding.

Figure 2

GEF total resources, by cycles, allocated to the implementation of the Minamata Convention and programmed for the financing of mercury projects (as of January 2023, source: GEF Secretariat).

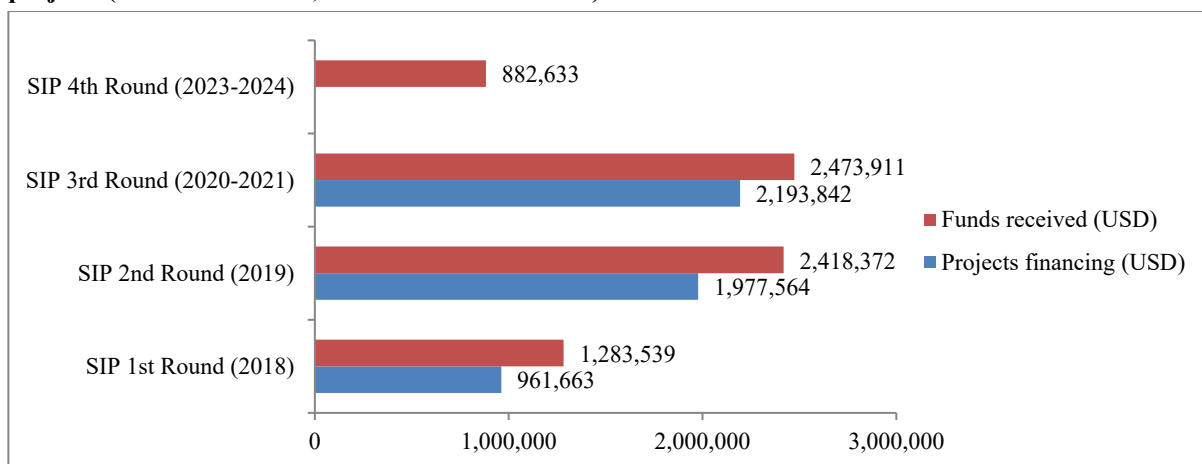


²⁸ A *Compilation of deadlines under the Minamata Convention on Mercury as per the Convention text and applicable annexes to the text* is contained in Appendix 1 of the Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on *Strengthening the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: enhancing the effective functioning of the Programme* (UNEP/MC/COP.4/13).

²⁹ 12 valid applications were reported to be received in the first SIP round, 20 in the second round and 24 in the third round.

Figure 3

SIP total resources, by round, received by the Specific Trust Fund and used for the financing of projects (as of March 2023, source: MC Secretariat).



128. In 2023, SIP has reached the mid-term of its initial 10-years mandate³⁰; a simple calculation shows that, hypothetically, in order to assist, at least once each eligible Party with an average funded SIP project, before the end of its mandate the fund should receive about 4 million USD for each of the next five years, with a significant and steady increment of +62% with respect to the funds received in the third round³¹.

129. The scope of the above calculations is only to suggest that the current level of resources, when considering the approaching objectives of the Convention, is in all probability insufficient to address the expected increase of demand from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition for the implementation of MC-specific projects in the next coming years.

5. Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

Conclusions

130. A first important conclusion of this review is that, *in the period under consideration, the financial mechanism established under Article 13 of the Minamata Convention has proven effective in the provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources for supporting developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention.*

131. This first conclusion is supported by the feedback received, as well as by the findings (mainly those in the sections on *The Funding* and *The Effectiveness and the Efficiency*) reporting an important number of projects funded by the MC financial mechanism, all addressing mercury-related activities, having a significant impact on a large number of eligible countries, mobilizing considerable additional funds through the co-financing, and taking in account the specific needs and special circumstances of Parties that are Small Island Developing States or Least Developed Countries.

132. A second, equally important, conclusion is that, *at this stage of the operations of the Convention, the MC financial mechanism is in need of both a substantial increase of financial resources and a more specific guidance to the entities entrusted to its operationalization, in order to face the present and impending challenges of implementing the Convention.*

133. In other words, it stands to reason that the MC financial mechanism, in order to sustain a significant impact on the implementation of the Convention, will require, in the near future, increased generosity and flexibility from the donor's side as well as clearly defined interventions and capacity of prioritization by the COP in its guidance, the entities comprising the mechanism, the implementing agencies and the recipient countries.

³⁰ Decision MC-1/6, annex I, Para 12.

³¹ The calculation is based on the hypothetical scenario of proportionally extending, within the next five years, the same amount of funds provided for the 24 projects assigned (approx. 6 million USD), to the 76 eligible Parties having not yet received any funding from SIP.

134. In terms of financial resources, the review findings show that the GEF (responsible in the period under review for more than 98% of the funds disbursed through the MC financial mechanism) managed to address quite satisfactorily the financial demand from eligible countries. The SIP funding, on the other hand, with its very limited resources (less than 2% of the funds disbursed through the MC financial mechanism), has been able to accommodate about half of the applications received in its first three rounds and has produced a significant queue of projects recommended for possible submission to the fourth or subsequent rounds.

135. In looking at the Convention objectives and the deadlines that the COP decided to meet in the coming years, it could be realistically expected that the financial demand from eligible countries will significantly increase, both as a consequence of the results of the enabling activities MIAs or ASGM NAP, as well as in response to the new impending challenges of the implementation (see section on *The Sustainability of the Resources and the Changing Needs of Developing Countries*). The recently started GEF-8 cycle and SIP fourth round will be both, in their different areas and measures of impact, two important tests for the sustainability of the MC financial mechanism and for the ability of the entities entrusted to operationalize the mechanism, to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition.

136. In terms of guidance to the entities comprising the MC financial mechanism, it is reasonable, on the basis of the findings of this review, to consider that it is possible to increase the efficiency of the mechanism by providing a more detailed guidance, in line with the objectives and the deadlines already set by the Minamata Convention and its COP decisions³².

137. The GEF projects implemented in the period under review have impacted on many different areas, but it has been largely recognized that more structured programs (e.g. the GEF interventions in the ASGM Sector or the ISLANDS program) have provided more important synergies, capacity building and technology transfer to the participating countries than other projects independently implemented by single countries. The obvious reason of this difference is that the so called *global hub projects* (and the related larger impact of different groups of stakeholders on these projects through these hubs) have promoted collaboration and learning between *child projects* at a level that it is very difficult to be reached by more traditional types of projects managed on a smaller scale of activities.

138. The additional step of favouring a comprehensive and synergistic approach to the Convention objectives could be extremely important, in terms of economy of scale, in refining the global approach of all MC Parties to the implementation of the Convention and, accordingly, in guiding the GEF to offer more timely and structured *hub projects* targeting the most urgent areas of action for the implementation of the Convention, such as: waste, storage, products, trade, emissions, releases, health, etc.

139. Still in terms of economy of scale, it is important to consider the results of the current GEF effort to achieve Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) by associating mercury-related projects to other focal areas (e.g. PlanetGOLD+ program and the Mexico primary mercury project both have GEBs associated with the land degradation focal area, while earlier projects, not funded through the chemicals and waste areas, in some occasion addressed the ASGM initiative with complete or partial funding from the international waters focal area³³). Similarly it would be possible considering the association of activities aimed at reducing mercury-related emissions and releases with the climate change, international waters, and/or land degradation areas.

140. While the GEF has already moved in a direction of multifocal area with an integrated approach, a specific guidance by the COP in the same direction, and in line with the objectives and the deadlines of the Convention, could help the GEF and the implementing agencies to better deal with the specific needs of the Convention by offering, to the eligible countries, even better opportunities for regional and south-south cooperation, as well as increased capacity building and technology transfer, while working toward the implementation of the Convention.

141. A different approach is suggested for the SIP in order to maintain its efficient approach in supporting capacity-building and technical assistance. What has been more appreciated by the recipient countries of this alternative and innovative programme is its flexibility and ease of access and implementation, compared to the heavier and more complex procedures of accessing GEF funding. It has been noted that the limitations in the SIP project funds make these projects mostly unfit to deal

³² On this issue the GEF Secretariat noted that *the GEF-8 replenishment policy recommendations mandated cross-cutting efforts to streamline and implement further efficient measures throughout GEF operations*.

³³ E.g. "Removal of Barriers to the Introduction of Cleaner Artisanal Gold Mining and Extraction Technologies" (GEF-2, ID 1223, UNDP), later known as the "Global Mercury Project" (GMP); and "Sin Mercurio (Without Mercury) project in Peru and Ecuador" (GEF-5, ID 4799, UNIDO).

with any type of structural intervention on the field; on the other hand, they are considered efficient in dealing with capacity building on national needs and have helped to produce, within governmental agencies, important advancement in the preparation of new national legislation, guidelines, training activities and other *ad hoc* national initiatives which could have been more difficult to address, possibly with the same momentum, through GEF funding and the intermediation of implementing agencies.

142. As also indicated by most of the suggestions received, the findings of this review suggest that the SIP should continue to play an important role in funding all those *ad hoc* activities needed by some Parties for aligning their priorities to those of the other Parties of the Convention in facing the main challenges of its implementation. Should the COP decide to update the GEF guidance to focus, more specifically, on structural and targeted intervention, the SIP could continue to play an important role in providing a small but necessary buffer of funds to deal with specific national needs in terms of capacity-building and technical assistance.

143. A third and last conclusion of this review is that *a higher level of definition in the monitoring and reporting of the activities funded through the MC financial mechanism could greatly increase its efficiency*. In particular, some relatively small improvements in this area could greatly facilitate the understanding of the global progress in the implementation of the Convention and, accordingly, the identification of the corrective measures to adopt, when necessary, to ensure better and more efficient results.

144. A first measure suggested, in following up this last conclusion, is the development of a *larger standard set of mercury indicators*, consistent with the Convention objectives, which might be used in the future reporting of all new projects funded under the MC financial mechanism, and possibly extended to all Parties through the format of the national report required by Art. 21. The introduction of new indicators could also be extended to a *subset of GEF specific mercury indicators*, to be discussed with the GEF Secretariat, under its sub-indicator 9.2 on *quantity of mercury reduced* (e.g. on quantity of mercury-added products reduced, quantity of waste, emissions, releases, etc.), together with the split of sub-indicator 9.6 (on *POPs/Mercury containing materials and products directly avoided*) into two different sub-categories of *POPs* and *mercury-added products*.

145. A new set of indicators, specific for all mercury-related projects, might greatly help in monitoring all Parties progresses toward the Convention objectives and, in the larger context of the GEF moving in direction of multifocal areas and integrated approaches, to compare results even when the activities are not fully funded under the chemical and waste area.

146. A more detailed level of reporting could also be used by GEF and SIP about the process of approval of new projects as per guidance, as well as for reporting to the COP about the system of weights and criteria used in the assignment and/or prioritization of projects, including relevant information on the rejection of project proposals. This information is, generally, already shared with applicant countries, but could also benefit the COP and its reviewing mechanism to better understand problems and needs of the applicant countries. An overall periodic reporting on applications received, projects funded, problems addressed and project results could also be used, as a communication tool, by the MC Secretariat, in launching, possibly in partnership with other stakeholder groups, a SIP resource mobilization strategy with a view to attracting a broader range of donors.

147. An additional measure, directly suggested by the undertakings of this review, is a *better synchronization between the periodic reviews of the MC financial mechanism and the GEF cycles*. The present review was requested to cover the activities of the MC financial mechanism starting from a cut-off date (August 2019) that was not related to the project cycles and this resulted in the analysis of only a part of the GEF-6 funded projects and of mostly unfinished GEF-7 funded projects. A different focus, in this case on all MC-related final project reports of the GEF-6 cycle and all the approved MC-related project documents of the GEF-7 cycle, would probably have allowed the review to deal with more homogeneous data-sets, gain better input in terms of documentation and analysis, and more consistently comparing, in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, the project results with the rationale of their design.

148. In brief, the findings of this review confirm that the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention has been quite effective in the period under review and suggest that the COP could increase its efficiency by providing a more defined guidance, to the entities entrusted to its operationalization. Among other things, the new guidance should address: a further differentiation of the operational targets of the two entities comprising the mechanism; an even better alignment of the funded activities with the Convention objectives and deadlines; and a further improvement of the overall system of monitoring and reporting on the activities of the two entities, aligned with the priorities and the objectives of the Convention.

Lessons learned

149. Most of the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism, in the period under review, are currently under implementation and it is still quite early to draw lessons from their results. On the other hand, there are some important lessons learned during the preparation and implementation phases which are worth to be mentioned.

Lesson Learned #1:	<i>A dedicated team makes the difference between an activity and a successful one.</i>
Context/comment:	This is to say that the support and availability of committed teams, such as the MC Secretariat, the GEF Secretariat and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (GMP), have been catalyzing important resources in terms of knowledge and coordination which resulted in significant assets for the implementation of many projects.
Lesson Learned #2:	<i>South-South cooperation is an important source of investments into promoting green economies.</i>
Context/comment:	GEF funded regional and global programs, such as PlanetGOLD and ISLANDS, demonstrated that structured activities programs greatly favour collaboration and learning among <i>child</i> projects and encourage important synergies, often unreachable by traditional types of projects managed on a smaller scale of activities.
Lesson Learned #3:	<i>Co-financing is an essential and effective component of the interventions funded by the MC financial mechanism.</i>
Context/comment:	The impressive rate of co-financing in the projects under review (6.8/1 ratio between the co-financing of GEF projects and the GEF funding) has proved very effective in both the larger assets made available to the project activities and the number and quality of the stakeholders participation (and the consequent higher level of country ownership) to the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism.
Lesson Learned #4:	<i>National Focal Points of the Convention are often subject to a high turnover and, when appointed, should be assisted with fast-learning tools to better approach the Convention and its financial mechanism.</i>
Context/comment:	This lesson has come from multiple sources during this review and also extends to the needs of training activities on how to submit an application to the MC financial mechanism or directed to the persons in charge of designing a project compatible with the standards requested by the two entities entrusted to its operationalization.

Recommendations

150. As pointed out in the conclusions above, it is suggested that the COP could improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the MC financial mechanism in meeting the objective of the Convention, by considering the following recommendations.

Recommendation #1:	Providing a more defined guidance, to the entities entrusted to operationalize the MC financial mechanism (<i>recommendations 4-11 below include suggestions to this purpose</i>).
Recommendation #2:	Developing a <i>larger standard set of mercury-related indicators</i> , consistent with the Convention objectives, which might be used in the reporting of all new projects funded under the MC financial mechanism and possibly extended to all Parties through the format of the national report required by Article 21.
Recommendation #3:	Planning future reviews of the financial mechanism with a view to achieve better synchronization with the GEF replenishment cycles and with a focus to analyze all final reports of a closing cycle and all the approved project documents of the following one.
Recommendation #4:	Request the GEF to prioritize the funding of coordinated regional and global activities targeting specific objectives of the Minamata Convention, such as the reduction of mercury in waste, storage, products, trade, emissions,

	releases, etc., and in line with the priorities and the deadlines set by COP decisions.
Recommendation #5:	Request the GEF to provide, through its implementing agencies and in collaboration with stakeholder groups, global components for the coordination of the regional and global activities of the funded projects, acting as <i>knowledge hubs</i> developing and disseminating knowledge products, including tools, guidance, methodologies, and training materials; and favouring experts interchange and consultation at the regional level.
Recommendation #6:	Request the GEF, GEF agencies, and Parties in their applications to the GEF to introduce, to a feasible extent, mercury-related project components in multifocal area projects, with objectives related to those of the Convention and the intent to produce synergisms and economies of scale.
Recommendation #7:	Request the GEF to introduce, in its <i>result framework</i> , new mercury-related sub-indicators; in particular, new sub-indicators about quantity of mercury reduced by GEF funded activities for mercury-added products, mercury wastes, emissions, releases, etc. (under sub-indicator 9.2) and mercury-containing materials and products directly avoided (under sub-indicator 9.6).
Recommendation #8:	Request the SIP Governing Board to prioritize the funding for the capacity building of governmental agencies in developing or enhancing mercury-related national legislation and guidelines in order to align recipient Parties priorities to those of the other Parties of the Convention in facing the main challenges of its implementation.
Recommendation #9:	Request the GEF and MC Secretariat, in their reports to the COP, to provide more detailed information on all project applications received and relevant information on the rejection of project proposals.
Recommendation #10:	Request the GEF and MC Secretariat, to make further efforts in providing guidelines to their funding application in different languages and to integrate these guidelines with <i>ad hoc</i> , online, multi-language tools (e.g. Q&As, chat-box, webinars) aimed to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in their applications to the MC financial mechanism, also taking into account the high turnover of National Focal Points.
Recommendation #11:	Request the MC Secretariat, to develop, and launch in partnership with stakeholder groups, a SIP resource mobilization strategy based on the widest sharing of information extracted from project reports, applications received, projects funded, problems addressed and project results of SIP funded activities, with a view to attracting a broader range of donors, including donors from the private sector, donor aid agencies and civil society organizations.

Annex 1 - Terms of reference for the Second review of the financial mechanism (Annex to decision MC-4/7)

A. Objective

1. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Conference of the Parties will review the *financial mechanism* established under article 13 to support Parties in the implementation of the Convention, with a view to taking appropriate action, if necessary, to improve the effectiveness of the *financial mechanism*. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of article 13, the review will include an analysis of:

- (a) The level of funding;
- (b) The ability of the financial mechanism to mobilize resources from all sources, the level and type of funding, including differentiation between earmarked and non-earmarked voluntary contributions;
- (c) The guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility and to the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism;
- (d) The efficiency and effectiveness of the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism;
- (e) The ability of the two entities of the *financial mechanism* to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition.

B. Methodology

2. The review will cover the activities of the *financial mechanism* for the period from August 2019 to July 2022, which represents the period from the conclusion of the first review of the *financial mechanism* to the end of the period of the seventh replenishment of the trust fund of the Global Environment Facility and inclusive of the first three rounds of applications to the Specific International Programme, with particular emphasis on the activities concluded during that period.

3. The review will draw on the following sources of information, among others:

- (a) Information submitted by Parties on their experiences gained through their interactions with the *financial mechanism*, organized according to the performance criteria set forth in section D of the present terms of reference;
- (b) Reports submitted to the Conference of the Parties by the entities entrusted with the operation of the *financial mechanism*;
- (c) Other reports provided by the entities entrusted with the operation of the *financial mechanism*, including, among other things, reports of the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility, terminal evaluations of completed projects of the Specific International Programme and reporting from ongoing projects of the Specific International Programme;
- (d) Relevant reports and information submitted by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; stakeholders; other entities providing multilateral, regional and bilateral financial and technical assistance pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 3 of article 13 of the Convention; the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (with respect to complementarity and avoiding duplication); and the Global Mercury Partnership (relative to its interaction with the *financial mechanism* in advancing the implementation of the Convention);
- (e) Reports submitted by Parties pursuant to article 21 of the Convention.
- (f) Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme entitled "Strengthening the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: enhancing the effective functioning of the Programme (UNEP/MC/COP.4/13);

4. In keeping with these terms of reference, the Secretariat will, subject to the availability of resources:
 - (a) Make adequate arrangements to ensure that the second review of the *financial mechanism* is undertaken in an independent and transparent, effective and efficient manner;
 - (b) Hire a consultant to prepare a draft report on the information provided;
 - (c) Submit the draft report on the review to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its fifth meeting.
5. The entities entrusted with the operation of the *financial mechanism* are requested to provide information relevant to the review in a timely manner.
6. Parties are requested to provide information pursuant to paragraph 3 (a) above as soon as possible and not later than 30 September 2022.

Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, stakeholders, the Special Programme, the Global Mercury Partnership and relevant entities providing multilateral, regional and bilateral financial and technical assistance are requested to provide relevant information pursuant to the objectives of the present review as soon as possible and not later than 30 September 2022.

C. Report

The report on the second review will include the following elements:

- (a) An overview of elements (a)–(e) of paragraph 1 above;
- (b) Analysis of lessons learned from the activities funded by the *financial mechanism* during the period covered by the review;
- (c) Assessment of the Global Environment Facility's principles of incremental cost and global environmental benefits as they pertain to activities to implement obligations under the Convention, along with lessons learned from the evaluation reports on activities of the Global Environment Facility and the final reports and evaluation reports of completed projects under the Specific International Programme;
- (d) Assessment of the sustainability, transparency and accessibility of the funding provided by the *financial mechanism* for the achievement of the objective of the Convention;
- (e) Identification of the resources mobilized directly by the *financial mechanism*, including in-kind contributions and co-financing, and, to the extent possible, quantitative and/or qualitative assessment of the resources mobilized indirectly by actions of the private sector and other stakeholders;
- (f) Recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the *financial mechanism* in meeting the objective of the Convention;
- (g) Assessment against the performance criteria set out in paragraph 10 below.

The Secretariat will submit the above-mentioned report to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its fifth meeting.

D. Performance criteria

The effectiveness and efficiency of the *financial mechanism* will be assessed, taking into account, among other things:

- (h) Responsiveness of the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme to the guidance adopted by or provided by the Conference of the Parties;
- (i) Extent to which the projects funded by the *financial mechanism* have reduced, or are expected to reduce, the supply, use, emissions and releases of mercury, and deliver other benefits in terms of Convention implementation;
- (j) Transparency and timeliness of the project approval processes;
- (k) Simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects;
- (l) Adequacy and sustainability of the available resources;
- (m) Country ownership of activities funded by the *financial mechanism*;

- (n) Level of stakeholder involvement;
- (o) Any other significant issues raised by the Parties.

Annex 2 - Response to stakeholder comments

Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the reviewer, where appropriate.

<i>Text Reference</i>	<i>Stakeholders' comments and suggestions</i>	<i>Reviewer's response</i>
Para 12	<p>GEF Sec: All multi-country projects and programs, either global or regional have a clearly defined budget per country and during project implementation there is an annual project steering committee which consists of Government focal points that decide and agree on an annual budget against which funds are programmed in that year. Further countries and agencies report annually through a Project Implementation Report that reports on progress. In these report the issues mentioned in this statement have not been raised. There may be a disconnect between the focal points implementing projects and the convention focal points.</p> <p>Suggestion: Suggest discussing a way forward on this text as the statements are not representative of the reality of access of resources during project implementation.</p>	Para. 12 is a summary of the findings listed in Para. 107; in its second part it reports about "The main problems in accessing the funds, as reported by focal points and stakeholders" and, according to the reviewer's point of view, it is representative of the opinions gathered by this review.
Para 13	<p>GEF Sec: This statement is unclear. The Enabling activities for Minamata was 7% of the Minamata allocation in GEF-7 and is 7% in GEF 8 while the monetary allocation increased by 30.58% from GEF-7 to 8 therefore there has been an increase in the resources for implementation activities. It is also important to note that to date close to 50% of countries that have ASGM, the biggest source of emissions, have already received funding, which among other things unlocks resources from the private and commercial sectors to amplify the work done by the GEF project. It is also important to note that many countries are not yet Party and as such would not currently be eligible to receive GEF funded as guided by the COP so like in the early phase of Stockholm resources are available for current Parties.</p> <p>Suggestion: While aware that the review covers primarily the GEF-7 period, information on GEF 8 and the existing portfolio has been provided. The statement should be clarified as it can lead to guidance that may impact the GEF 8 period. It can be reframed such that the GEF receives guidance to increase resources (based on a cost estimate or on the data from MIAs and NAPs) for consideration during the 9th replenishment.</p>	This review is looking at the data from 111 GEF projects funded under GEF-6 and GEF-7; Paras 13 and 129-130 note that the number of EAs under review, as well as the additional deadlines of the Convention fixed by the COP for the present and coming years, might suggest the need for additional funding with respect to the increase already approved and mentioned in Para 128.
Para 16	<p>GEF Sec: It would be useful to specify that this would be for GEF-9 as there is no mechanism whereby resources can be increased in GEF-8 as replenishments are pledged amounts that are fixed by the negotiations.</p>	Para. 16 is part of the summary of the conclusions in the Executive summary and cannot introduce different concepts. The whole issues of the GEF replenishment(s) is out of the scope of the review: Para 16 states that "the MC

<i>Text Reference</i>	<i>Stakeholders' comments and suggestions</i>	<i>Reviewer's response</i>
	<i>Suggestion:</i> Add text to indicate that this would apply to GEF-9.	financial mechanism is in need of both a substantial increase of financial resources and a more specific guidance [<i>to GEF and SIP</i>]” without entering into details about how and when this could be done.
Recommendation #1	GEF Sec: It is unclear how the analysis presented in the report reaches this recommendation for more defined guidance.	All recommendations listed in this review are based on the “Conclusions” sub-section (Para. 137-155); see response to comments to Para. 147 and 150.
Recommendations #1, #2, #7	GEF Sec: These recommendations can only be actioned in the context of the negotiations of the 9 th Replenishment as these changes cannot be made in GEF-8 as resources, indicators etc have been fixed by the negotiations. Any additional sub-indicators can only be introduced at the beginning of a new GEF Phase. So, this can be considered for GEF-9 (July 2026-). <i>Suggestion:</i> Separate recommendations that can be actioned in GEF-8 from those that can be actioned in GEF-9.	As also mentioned in other responses, it is the opinion of the reviewer that the way to implement these recommendations is up to the COP in its deliberations.
Recommendation #5	GEF Sec: This recommendation seems to point to the utility of using programmatic approaches as a preferred modality for programming particularly in relation to knowledge hubs <i>Suggestion:</i> Overall, suggest these types of recommendations to be more strategic (“what”), rather than operational in nature (“how” certain support may be provided).	The suggestion expresses an opinion on the substance of the recommendations that differs from the intention of the reviewer.
Recommendation #10	GEF Sec: Given that the GEF supports multiple conventions, project templates, guidelines, etc. will continue to follow a harmonized approach across the conventions. Countries have access to 18 GEF agencies which all have the six UN languages available to them to support countries in all languages. The GEF works via its agencies which writes and uploads projects therefore the recommendation would be unactionable from the GEF side. Additionally, the GEF conducts regional workshops in the relevant languages that provides information to GEF OFPs and convention focal points on the project application. Additionally, since the time of the review at the 63 rd GEF council in November 2022, the GEF Council approved a new COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR GEF-8, which will address these issues as it relates to the GEF. http://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11/EN_GEF.C.63.05_Country%20Engagement%20Strategy%20Implementation%20Arrangements-CG_0.pdf <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest limiting this recommendation to the SiP as applicable	The review suggests that “providing guidelines to [<i>GEF and SIP</i>] funding application in different languages and to integrate these guidelines with <i>ad hoc</i> , online, multi-language tools” could improve the efficiency of the FM. As also mentioned in other responses, it is the opinion of the reviewer that the way to implement these recommendations is up to the COP in its deliberations.

<i>Text Reference</i>	<i>Stakeholders' comments and suggestions</i>	<i>Reviewer's response</i>
	as it cannot be actioned more than already exists for the GEF.	
Table 1	GEF Sec: the caption refers to support level during the period under review (August 2019-July 2022), but the GEF-6 is outside the review period...	As for ToR: "The review will cover the activities of the financial mechanism for the period from August 2019 to July 2022 [...] with particular emphasis on the activities concluded during that period.", Para 42 specifies that this review covers "135 active projects" that received "funding in the period under review (August 2019 - July 2022)". Table 1 "reports the breakdown of these funding by the disbursing entities and their related cycles or rounds".
Para 75	GEF Sec: the appreciation rate of guidance provided by the COP to the GEF and the SIP: Not quite sure what this means (given that Parties themselves provided guidance) – please clarify. Also any way to separate out the response to the GEF and the SIP?	The ToR for the review require to include an analysis of <i>The guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility and to the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism</i> ". This element, among many others, was also presented in the survey for the assessment of the National Focal Points who indicated an overall appreciation rate of 68% (see question 40 of the survey). The survey also required specific appreciations of the separate activities of GEF and SIP to respondents from recipient countries; these rates are reported in Table 7.
Para 111	GEF Sec: Can you let us know if this applies to the GEF or the SIP. Given the difference in the project cycle and likely stakeholder consultation requirements between the GEF and the SIP, it is unclear how such statement could be made without further clarity. This point also contradicts the point made by respondents in paragraph 103 on the preparation time for projects. This time built into preparation of GEF projects is to facilitate the widest possible stakeholder engagement. <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest nuancing the text to indicate the contradictions.	Para 111 reports comments from "some focal points" which, as implied in the text, referred to both GEF and SIP projects.
Figure 1	GEF Sec: From the data provided by the GEF a similar graphic can be developed, with the proviso that the SiP and the GEF fundamentally fund different activities and have different guidance from the COP in this regard <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest adding a similar figure on the GEF funded projects that includes not only number of projects but amount of resources.	As mentioned in the title, Fig.1 was provided as courtesy of the Secretariat. Time limitations did not allow the preparation of additional figures.
Para 125	GEF Sec: This paragraph is contradicting earlier statements particularly captured in comment 6 [Para 12] as the para 125 seems to suggest that no significant problems were experienced with the funding entities, i.e. the GEF and the SiP.	Para 125 refer to an overall assessment by NFPs (no "significant" problems), other paragraphs, throughout the documents, report specific comments shared during survey and interviews (i.e. "some focal points commented that..." in Para 111).

<i>Text Reference</i>	<i>Stakeholders' comments and suggestions</i>	<i>Reviewer's response</i>
	<i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest removing the contradictions throughout the document.	
Para 129	GEF Sec: Same comment as 7 [Para 13] above. <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest clarify the ask using data on actual needs and recognizing that all countries are not yet parties and that the majority of funds in GEF 7 and GEF (93%) are allocated to non-EA projects for Minamata with the proviso that GEF-8 allocation for Minamata is 30.58% higher than GEF-7.	See response to Para 13.
Para 131	GEF Sec: Please see comment 8 [Para 13]	See response to Para 13.
Para 136	GEF Sec: The conclusion made is not based on a needs assessment and does not accurately account (at face value) on the work already ongoing covering the majority of activities to be funded by the FM. As presented this statement can be misleading as earlier information indicates that parties are satisfied with the funding and that to date (at least for the GEF) all needs have been funded. <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest re-wording to reflect that as more countries join the convention, additional resources will be required in GEF-9.	Text in Para 136 does not refer to new countries joining the Convention but to the entering of the Convention in “a more mature phase of its implementation” and that in the immediate future there will be “undeniable needs for medium and full size projects that will have an important impact on the level of funds needed by the recipient countries for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention” (Para 129).
Paras 139, 140	GEF Sec: These are valid conclusions, but for clarity particularly in the context of new guidance in the case of the GEF that is it is explicitly stated that this would be for the consideration of the negotiations of the 9 th replenishment. Additionally, on Para 139: Please clarify what is meant by in need of a more specific guidance and Para 140: There is little information presented in the report regarding the need for domestic resource mobilization, or how to leverage additional resources. <i>Suggestion:</i> Suggest rewording to be explicit to the two parts of the FM and clearly indicate that for the GEF this would be guidance to be considered in the negotiations of the 9 th replenishment as new funding cannot be allocated in GEF-8 as previously explained.	This review suggests there is a need for more specific guidance to both entities; in particular Paras. 140-150 (and recommendations #4 to #11) indicates in which direction this guidance might go. Other than that, and as also mentioned in other responses, it is the opinion of the reviewer that the way to implement these recommendations is up to the COP in its deliberations..
Paras 147 and 150	GEF Sec: Please clarify how these specific conclusions are supported by the analysis in earlier sections. It is unclear how the analysis supports the need for specific guidance to the GEF on specific opportunities. Also, it is unclear how the higher-level definition in monitoring and the reporting of projects supported would increase efficiency, based on the analysis presented.	The first two conclusions of the review are that 1) the FM has been effective and 2) that it could be made more efficient. The whole Conclusions sections suggests possible ways forward to increase this efficiency based on the results of the analysis presented in the main body of the review. The third conclusion is that “a higher level of definition in the monitoring and reporting of the activities funded through the MC financial mechanism could greatly increase its efficiency.” and Paras 151-154 address possible measures, suggested by the review, in following up the third conclusion.

<i>Text Reference</i>	<i>Stakeholders' comments and suggestions</i>	<i>Reviewer's response</i>
Lessons Learned	<p>GEF Sec: Overall, please clarify how these lessons learned were generated – are they based on data provided by focal points, or are they from the consultant with interviews?</p> <p>Lesson learned #3: We do not disagree, but what evidence has led to make this statement that co-financing is an <u>EFFECTIVE</u> component of the interventions?</p>	<p>As for ToR: “The report on the second review will include [...] (an) analysis of lessons learned from the activities funded by the <i>financial mechanism</i> during the period covered by the review;” and “lessons learned from the evaluation reports on activities of the Global Environment Facility and the final reports and evaluation reports of completed projects under the Specific International Programme;”.</p> <p>As for all the text contained in the conclusions section (and as specified in Para 40), the lessons learned reflect the point of view of the reviewer on the basis of “the analysis of the results of the activities funded by the MC financial mechanism, during the period covered by the review”.</p>

Annex 3 - List of projects under review

GEF projects under review (111 projects, source: GEF Secretariat)

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
10983	GEF7	Thailand	Advanced Minamata Assessment in Thailand	UNIDO	EA	Approved	0,50	0,04
10940	GEF7	Pakistan	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10936	GEF7	Senegal, Thailand, Uruguay	Accelerate implementation of dental amalgam provisions and strengthen country capacities in the environmental sound management of associated wastes under the Minamata Convention	UNEP	MSP	Approved	2,00	11,33
10922	GEF7	Cambodia	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Cambodia	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10891	GEF7	Qatar	Development of Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) For the State of Qatar	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,20	0,00
10868	GEF7	Sri Lanka	Integrated Management and Environmentally Sound Disposal of POPs Pesticides and Mercury in Healthcare and Agricultural Sectors in Sri Lanka	UNDP	FSP	Approved	5,04	40,86
10864	GEF7	China	Sustainable Mercury Management in Non-ferrous Metal Industry	WB	FSP	Approved	20,30	140,00
10860	GEF7	Brazil	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Brazil	UNEP	EA	Approved	1,00	0,00
10811	GEF7	Oman	Development of Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) for Sultanate of Oman	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,20	0,00
10810	GEF7	Gabon, Jamaica, Sri Lanka	Eliminating mercury skin lightening products	UNEP	MSP	Approved	2,00	14,95
10748	GEF7	Global	Assessment of existing and future emissions reduction from the coal sector toward the implementation of the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions	UNEP	MSP	Under Implem.	0,59	0,65

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
10721	GEF7	Panama	Environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes containing POPs and Mercury	UNDP	FSP	Approved	2,73	26,05
10716	GEF7	Albania, Burkina Faso, India, Montenegro, Uganda	Phasing out mercury measuring devices in healthcare	UNEP	FSP	Approved	7,98	126,34
10658	GEF7	Global	Transforming the Fashion Sector to Drive Positive Outcomes for Biodiversity, Climate, and Oceans	CI	MSP	Under Implem.	2,00	4,79
10652	GEF7	Cuba	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Cuba	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,21	0,00
10631	GEF7	Afghanistan	Minamata initial assessment and national action plan for the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Afghanistan	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,70	0,03
10585	GEF7	Bahamas	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in The Bahamas	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,15	0,00
10582	GEF7	Tuvalu	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Tuvalu	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,13	0,00
10569	GEF7	Bolivia, Congo, Ghana, Honduras, Madagascar, Nigeria, Suriname, Uganda	Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of artisanal and small-scale gold mining ASGM) Sector Plus - GEF GOLD +	CI	PFD	Approved	74,32	342,32
10531	GEF7	Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru	Integrated watershed management of the Putumayo-Içá river basin	WB	FSP	Approved	12,84	89,72
10527	GEF7	Togo	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Togo	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10526	GEF7	Mexico	Eliminate mercury use and adequately manage mercury and mercury wastes in the chlor alkali sector in Mexico	UNEP	FSP	Approved	12,00	128,16
10519	GEF7	Viet Nam	Reduce the impact and release of mercury and POPs in Vietnam through lifecycle approach and Ecolabel	UNDP	FSP	Approved	4,60	28,55
10448	GEF7	Chad	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Chad	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,01

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
10440	GEF7	Cameroon	National action plan on mercury in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Cameroon	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,05
10423	GEF7	Costa Rica	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Costa Rica	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10422	GEF7	Mexico	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Mexico	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10419	GEF7	Peru	Environmentally sound management of PCBs, Mercury and other toxic chemicals in Peru	UNDP	FSP	Approved	4,73	34,02
10383	GEF7	Cote d'Ivoire	Development of National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Cote d'Ivoire	UNEP	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10373	GEF7	Rwanda	Supporting a Green Economy - Decoupling Hazardous Waste Generation from Economic Growth in Rwanda	UNDP	FSP	Approved	6,30	34,13
10353	GEF7	Indonesia, Jordan, Peru, Serbia, Uganda, Ukraine	The Global Greenchem Innovation and Network Programme	UNIDO	FSP	Approved	12,60	127,56
10349	GEF7	China	Demonstration of production phase-out of mercury-containing medical thermometers and sphygmomanometers and promoting the application of mercury-free alternatives in medical facilities in China	UNDP	FSP	Approved	16,00	112,00
10310	GEF7	Bolivia	National action plan in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in the Plurinational State of Bolivia	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,03
10218	GEF7	Angola, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, Zambia	AFLDC-2 Scaling-up Investment and Technology Transfer to Facilitate Capacity Strengthening and Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Stockholm and Minamata Conventions in African LDCs	AfDB	FSP	Approved	21,30	237,14

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
10185	GEF7	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Comoros, Cook Islands, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Micronesia, Guyana, Kiribati, <i>(continue in the next column)</i>	Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS) --- Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	UNEP	PFD	Approved	75,00	440,21
10153	GEF7	Guyana	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,00
10148	GEF7	Nicaragua	Minamata initial assessment and national action plan on the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Nicaragua	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,70	0,03
10141	GEF7	Nigeria	Circular Economy approaches for the electronics sector in Nigeria	UNEP	MSP	Under Implem.	2,00	13,09
10136	GEF7	Rwanda	National action plan on mercury in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Rwanda	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,06
10135	GEF7	Angola	National action plan on mercury in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Angola	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,06
10134	GEF7	Liberia	National action plan on mercury in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Liberia	UNIDO	EA	Approved	0,50	0,00
10133	GEF7	Liberia	Minamata Initial Assessment in Liberia	UNIDO	EA	Approved	0,20	0,02
10132	GEF7	Rwanda	Minamata Convention: Initial assessment for Rwanda	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,02
10126	GEF7	Lebanon	Minamata Initial Assessment in Lebanon	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,02
10094	GEF7	Argentina	Environmentally Sound Management of POPs, Mercury and other Hazardous Chemicals in Argentina	UNDP	FSP	Approved	8,93	46,63

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
10086	GEF7	Mexico	Reducing global environmental risks through the monitoring and development of alternative livelihood for the primary mercury mining sector in Mexico	UNEP	FSP	Approved	7,04	51,07
9992	GEF6	Marshall Islands	Development of A Minamata Initial Assessment in Marshall Islands	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,13	0,00
9991	GEF6	Belize	Development of Minamata Initial Assessments (MIA) in the Caribbean (Belize)	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,15	0,00
9932	GEF6	Micronesia	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment in the Federated States of Micronesia	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,13	0,00
9930	GEF6	Niue	Development of A Minamata Initial Assessment in Niue	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,13	0,00
9885	GEF6	Argentina	Minamata Initial Assessment for Argentina	UNDP	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,00
9865	GEF6	Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Development of Minamata Initial Assessments (MIA) in the Caribbean	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,60	0,00
9855	GEF6	Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Senegal	Knowledge exchange and institutional partnerships to reduce environmental health risks from exposure to harmful chemicals and waste - Regional	WB	FSP	Under Implem.	4,31	10,85
9851	GEF6	Ghana	Africa Environmental Health and Pollution Management Project - Ghana	WB	FSP	Under Implem.	8,72	50,60
9850	GEF6	Tanzania	Africa Environmental Health and Pollution Management Project – Tanzania	WB	FSP	Under Implem.	7,34	150,30
9755	GEF6	Indonesia	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Indonesia	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,70	0,00
9751	GEF6	El Salvador	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment in El Salvador	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,00

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
9737	GEF6	Ecuador	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Ecuador	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,50	0,08
9731	GEF6	Belarus	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,20	0,06
9718	GEF6	Burkina Faso	GEF GOLD: Contribution Towards the Elimination of Mercury and Improvement of the Gold Value Chain in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector	UNIDO	MSP	Under Implem.	2,00	7,31
9713	GEF6	Guyana	A GEF GOLD/ Supply Chain Approach to Eliminating Mercury in Guyana's ASGM Sector: El Dorado Gold Jewelry Made in Guyana	CI	FSP	Under Implem.	2,65	3,14
9711	GEF6	Burkina Faso	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector in Burkina Faso	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,50	0,22
9710	GEF6	Peru	GEF GOLD Peru - Integrated Sound Management of Mercury in Peru's Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM)	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	3,99	35,23
9709	GEF6	Colombia	GEF GOLD Colombia: Integrated Sound Management of Mercury in Colombia's ASGM sector	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	6,00	23,44
9708	GEF6	Kenya	Integrated Sound Management of Mercury in Kenya's Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM)	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	4,20	17,82
9707	GEF6	Indonesia	Integrated Sound Management of Mercury in Indonesia's Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ISMIA)	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	6,72	28,60
9697	GEF6	Burkina Faso, Colombia, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines	Global Knowledge Management and Exchange of Child Project Results Through Networking and Outreach Activities for the GEF GOLD Program	UNEP	FSP	Under Implem.	8,00	17,77
9695	GEF6	Mongolia, Philippines	GEF GOLD Mongolia-Philippines: Contribution Towards the Elimination of Mercury in the ASGM sector From Miners to Refiners	UNEP	FSP	Under Implem.	11,70	48,21

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
9690	GEF6	Iraq	Develop the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Minamata Initial Assessment for the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Iraq	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,80	0,00
9686	GEF6	Algeria, Albania, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt, Lebanon	Mediterranean Sea Basin Environment and Climate Regional Support Project - Regional	UNEP	FSP	Under Implem.	2,50	6,62
9684	GEF6	Turkey, Albania, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria	Reducing Pollution from Harmful Chemicals and Wastes in Mediterranean Hot Spots and Measuring Progress to Impacts - Regional	UNEP	FSP	Under Implem.	14,25	53,15
9680	GEF6	Mongolia	Advanced Minamata Initial Assessment in Mongolia	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,02
9644	GEF6	Kyrgyz Republic	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and Updating of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,70	0,00
9641	GEF6	Eritrea	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,70	0,00
9622	GEF6	Lao PDR	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and Updating of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,70	0,00
9547	GEF6	Guinea, Niger	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Guinea and Niger	UNEP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00
9533	GEF6	Mali, Senegal	Development of National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining Mali and Senegal	UNEP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
9494	GEF6	South Africa	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in South Africa	UNEP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00
9489	GEF6	Suriname	Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) National Action Plan (NAP) for Suriname	UNDP	EA	Completed	0,50	0,00
9478	GEF6	Ghana	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining Sector in Ghana	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,50	0,06
9456	GEF6	Tanzania	Development of National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in the United Republic of Tanzania	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,50	0,00
9454	GEF6	Sierra Leone	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Sierra Leone	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,70	0,00
9453	GEF6	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	UNEP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00
9381	GEF6	Ghana	Development of Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) for Ghana	UNDP	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,00
9379	GEF6	Viet Nam	Application of Green Chemistry in Vietnam to Support Green Growth and Reduction in the Use and Release of POPs/Harmful Chemicals	UNDP	MSP	Under Implem.	2,00	8,40
9358	GEF6	Nigeria	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Nigerian Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,50	0,37
9351	GEF6	Honduras	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Honduras	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,70	0,00
9350	GEF6	Paraguay	Development of National Action Plans for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Paraguay	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,50	0,00
9346	GEF6	Sri Lanka	Minamata Convention: Initial Assessment in Sri Lanka	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,20	0,04
9345	GEF6	Sudan	Minamata Convention: Initial assessment in the Republic of Sudan	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,20	0,12

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
9343	GEF6	Morocco	Strengthen the National Decision Making Mechanism to Ratify the Minamata Convention and Strengthen National Capacities for the Implementation of its Futures Provisions	UNDP	EA	Completed	0,20	0,00
9308	GEF6	Cabo Verde, Sao Tome and Principe	Minamata Convention: Initial Assessment in Cabo Verde and Sao Tome and Principe	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,40	0,19
9276	GEF6	Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Regional Project on the Development of National Action Plans for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Africa - Regional	UNEP	EA	Completed	4,00	0,05
9240	GEF6	China	Capacity Strengthening For Implementation Of Minamata Convention On Mercury	WB	FSP	Under Implem.	8,00	8,00
9203	GEF6	Ecuador	National Program for the Environmental Sound Management and Live Cycle Management of Chemical Substances	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	8,49	40,57
9188	GEF6	Papua New Guinea	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Papua New Guinea	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,30	0,00
9187	GEF6	Cook Islands, Kiribati, Palau, Tonga, Vanuatu	Development of Minamata Convention Mercury Initial Assessment in Pacific - Regional	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,02
9185	GEF6	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland	Development of Minamata Initial Assessment - Regional	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,80	0,06
9174	GEF6	Djibouti	Development of a Minamata Initial Assessment in Djibouti	UNEP	EA	Completed	0,20	0,00
9173	GEF6	Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon	Development of Minamata Convention Mercury Initial Assessment in Africa - Regional	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	1,00	0,06
9170	GEF6	India	Improve Mercury Management in India	UNDP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00

GEF ID	GEF cycle	Countries	Project title	Agency	Project type	Project status	Funding (mil. \$)	
							Project grant	Co-financing
9164	GEF6	Gabon	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector in Gabon	UNIDO	EA	Completed	0,50	0,16
9144	GEF6	Malaysia	Minamata Convention Initial Assessment in Malaysia	UNDP	EA	Completed	0,25	0,25
8026	GEF6	Panama	Minamata Initial Assessment for Panama	UNDP	EA	Completed	0,20	0,00
8017	GEF6	Belarus	GEF-6 POPs Legacy and Sustainable Chemicals Management	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	8,40	50,81
8000	GEF6	Tunisia	Improve Mercury Management in Tunisia	UNIDO	MSP	Completed	0,60	2,35
6985	GEF6	Mozambique	National Action Plan on Mercury in the Mozambican Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining sector	UNIDO	EA	Under Implem.	0,50	0,08
6959	GEF6	Bangladesh, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Mozambique, Samoa	Strengthen national decision making towards ratification of the Minamata Convention and build capacity towards implementation of future provisions - Regional	UNDP	EA	Completed	1,00	0,00
6944	GEF6	Angola, Malawi, Zimbabwe	Development of Minamata Convention on Mercury Initial Assessment in Africa - Regional	UNEP	EA	Under Implem.	0,55	0,51
6928	GEF6	Colombia	Reducing UPOPs and Mercury Releases from Healthcare Waste Management, e-Waste Treatment, Scrap Processing and Biomass Burning	UNDP	FSP	Under Implem.	5,80	32,92
6921	GEF6	China	Demonstration of Mercury Reduction and Minimization in the Production of Vinyl Chloride Monomer in China	UNIDO	FSP	Under Implem.	16,20	100,40

SIP Projects under review (24 projects, source: MC Secretariat)

<i>SIP Round</i>	<i>Countries</i>	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project status</i>	<i>Funding (mil. \$)</i>	
				<i>Project grant</i>	<i>Co-financing</i>
1	Argentina	Capacity Building Programme for the implementation of the Minamata Convention	Completed	0,25	0,20
1	Armenia	Strengthening capacity to promote phasing-out of mercury-added products (lamps) in Armenia	Completed	0,16	0,07
1	Benin	Improvement of management framework for mercury-containing products and wastes	Under Implem.	0,25	0,06
1	Iran	Implementing of Minamata Convention on Mercury Management in Chlor-Alkali Plants in the Petrochemical Industry	Completed	0,10	0,05
1	Lesotho	Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho	Completed	0,20	0,05
2	Antigua and Barbuda	Facilitating capacity-building with technical assistance and technology transfer for managing mercury in the Caribbean	Under Implem.	0,21	0,12
2	Ecuador	Project to strengthen capacities in the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Ecuador	Under Implem.	0,25	0,10
2	Ghana	Strengthening Ghana's Health Sector for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury	Under Implem.	0,25	0,14
2	Indonesia	Improving Health Risk Control of Mercury Exposure in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) and Surrounding Areas by Developing the "Participatory Approach" Model	Under Implem.	0,14	0,00
2	Iran	Capacity Building for Effective Implementation of Minamata Convention Focusing on Mercury Inventory	Under Implem.	0,15	0,10
2	Moldova	Support to post-ratification of the Minamata Convention to the Republic of Moldova by building phase down capacities and reducing risks associated with mercury	Under Implem.	0,22	0,03
2	Nigeria	Capacity strengthening for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Nigeria	Under Implem.	0,25	0,05
2	Peru	Strengthening capacities to control emissions and releases of mercury in Peru	Under Implem.	0,13	0,06
2	Sri Lanka	Strengthening National Capacity for Phasing Out Mercury Added Products and Environmentally Sound Mercury Containing Waste Management in Sri Lanka	Under Implem.	0,18	0,01
2	Zambia	To strengthen the Institutional Capacity for Zambia to implement the obligations of the Minamata Convention by reducing the presence of mercury in vulnerable populations as provided for under Articles 16 and 18	Under Implem.	0,20	0,03
3	Burundi	Capacity building support for the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Burundi	Under Implem.	0,25	0,00
3	Cuba	Improvement of information on inventories of mercury use and the environmental cycle in Cuba to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention	Under Implem.	0,25	1,37
3	Gabon	Facilitating capacity-building with technology assistance and technology transfer for monitoring and managing mercury in Central Africa	Under Implem.	0,25	0,05
3	India	Development of Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Implementation of Minamata Convention in India	Approved	0,24	N/A
3	Iran	Improving capacity building program for the replacement of mercury containing lamps in order to implement Minamata Convention in Islamic Republic of Iran	Approved	0,24	0,03
3	Jordan	Environmentally Sound Management of Mercury-Containing Wastes and Reduce the Use of Mercury-Containing Products in Jordan	Under Implem.	0,25	0,06

<i>SIP Round</i>	<i>Countries</i>	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Project status</i>	<i>Funding (mil. \$)</i>	
				<i>Project grant</i>	<i>Co-financing</i>
3	North Macedonia	Strengthening national capacities for Minamata Convention implementation with focus on development of strategy for assessing the sites contaminated with mercury	Under Implem.	0,25	0,02
3	Rwanda	Strengthening the Institutional Capacities for Rwanda to implement Minamata Convention	Under Implem.	0,22	0,10
3	Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso	Strengthening the legal framework and institutional capacities of ECOWAS countries (Senegal, Togo and Burkina Faso) for the implementation of Articles 3 and 4 of the Minamata Convention	Under Implem.	0,25	0,00

Annex 4 - Results of the survey

Note: Questions marked with an asterisk were mandatory

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Section 1 – Your role in the Minamata Convention on Mercury <i>This survey is part of the Second Review of the Financial Mechanism (FM) of the Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury (requested by the Parties in their decision MC-4/7), and it is addressed to all the National Focal Points of the Convention and to the GEF Operational Focal Points of all countries eligible for some or all types of funding under the Convention Financial Mechanism.</i> <i>According to countries eligibility for funding through the MC Financial Mechanism, respondents will be asked different sets of questions. Sections 1, 4 and 5 are for all participants; Section 2 is for Parties to the Convention which are eligible for funding through the Specific International Programme (SIP); and Section 3 is for Parties and Signatory Countries which are eligible for funding through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund.</i>			
Q1. In which capacity are you participating in this survey?*	Number of Responses:	42	100%
	National Focal Point of the Minamata Convention	36	86%
	GEF Operational Focal Point	5	12%
	Delegated by one of the above authorities (please specify)	1	2%
Q2. Which Country do you represent?*	Number of Responses:	42	
	Number of Countries	40	100%
	Number of MC Parties	35	88%
	Number of MC Signatory Countries	5	12%
Q3. Are you familiar with the Financial Mechanism , as established by the Art. 13 of the Minamata Convention and further elaborated by COP decisions MC-1/5 and MC-1/6?*	Number of Responses:	42	100%
	Yes	33	79%
	No	9	21%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	5 comments	
Note on survey logic: from this point onward, depending from the COUNTRY indicated in Q2, respondents were sorted into three different sections according to the entities (GEF and/or SIP) of the Financial Mechanism (FM) for which they are (or not) eligible for receiving funding: Group 1 (Developing countries Parties and CET Parties, eligible for GEF and SIP funding under the FM) were asked questions about both GEF and SIP (sections 2 and 3); Group 2 (Developing or CET signatories countries but not Parties yet, eligible, under the FM, for GEF enabling activity support only) were asked questions just about GEF (section 3); and Group 3 (Non-developing country Parties, not eligible for FM support) were asked, together with groups 1 and 2, general questions about the Financial Mechanism (section 4).			
Section 2(a) –Parties eligible for funding from the Specific International Programme (SIP) <i>The Minamata Convention (MC) sets up, in its Art. 13, a Financial Mechanism to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. Accordingly, the Mechanism includes: (a) the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund; and (b) a Specific International Programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance.</i> This section refers to the possibility for your country to apply for funding to the Specific International Programme (SIP) through the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention			
	Number of Responses:	32	100%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Q4. Has your country ever requested financial support from the Specific International Programme (SIP), through the Financial Mechanism, for the implementation of the Minamata Convention? (please check all sentences that are true) *	Yes, we requested funds in SIP first round (2018)	8	25%
	Yes, we requested funds in SIP second round (2019)	1	3%
	Yes, we requested funds in SIP third round (2020-21)	11	34%
	No, we never requested funds to SIP.	12	38%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	9 comments	
Q5. Is your country currently planning on requesting (additional) funds to the Specific International Programme (SIP)?*	Number of Responses:	32	100%
	Yes	16	52%
	No	15	48%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	8 comments	
Note on survey logic: from this point onward, depending from the answer to Q4, respondents in the current section were moved to Section 2(b) (those checking any “Yes” answer), or Section 3a (the “No” answer).			
Section 2(b) – Parties having requested funding from the Specific International Programme (SIP) <i>This section refers to the possibility for your country of having received funding under the Specific International Programme (SIP) of the MC Financial Mechanism.</i>			
Q6. Has your country ever received financial support from the Specific International Programme (SIP), through the Financial Mechanism, for the implementation of the Minamata Convention? (please check all sentences that are true) *	Number of Responses:	20	100%
	Yes, we received funds in SIP first round (2018)	5	25%
	Yes, we received funds in SIP second round (2019)	0	0%
	Yes, we received funds in SIP third round (2020-21)	6	30%
	No, we never received funds from SIP.	9	45%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	1 comment	
Note on survey logic: from this point onward, depending from the answer to Q6, respondents in the current section were moved to Section 2(c) (those checking any “Yes” answer), or Section 2(d) (the “No” answer).			
Section 2(c) – Parties recipient of funding from the Specific International Programme (SIP) <i>This section refers to the funding your country received from the Specific International Programme (SIP) through the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention.</i> <i>Art. 13 of the Minamata Convention defines a Mechanism for the provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under this Convention.</i>			

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Q7. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max) and based on your country's direct experience, during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022), as a recipient of SIP funding, how much you would say the financial resources your country received from the Specific International Programme (SIP) were adequate, predictable, and timely in supporting the implementation of your country obligations under the Convention?	Number of Responses:	11	
	Adequate (<i>weighted average</i>)	4.08/5	82%
	Predictable (<i>weighted average</i>)	4.08/5	82%
	Timely (<i>weighted average</i>)	4.17/5	83%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	2 comments	
<i>According to the SIP terms of reference, as defined in decision MC-1/6, "the support for capacity-building and technical assistance provided by the Specific International Programme is expected to improve the capacity of developing-country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention".</i>			
Q8. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), and based on your country's direct experience as a recipient of SIP funding during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022), how much you would say the financial resources your country received from the Specific International Programme (SIP) contributed in improving the capacity of your country in implementing its obligations under the Convention?	Number of Responses:	10	
	<i>Weighted average</i>	4.10/5	82%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	5 comments	
Q9. Based on your country experience as a recipient of SIP funding , for which article(s) of the Convention these funding improved your capacity in implementing its obligations? (<i>please, check all articles for which the capacity was improved</i>)*	Number of Responses:	12	100%
	Article 3 (Mercury supply sources and trade)	4	33%
	Article 4 (Mercury-added products)	6	50%
	Article 5 (Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used)	1	8%
	Article 7 (Artisanal and small-scale gold mining)	3	25%
	Article 8 (Emissions)	4	33%
	Article 9 (Releases)	4	33%
	Article 10 (Environmentally sound interim storage of mercury, other than waste mercury)	3	25%
	Article 11 (Mercury wastes)	4	33%
	Article 12 (Contaminated sites)	3	25%
	Article 16 (Health aspects)	2	17%
	Article 17 (Information exchange)	5	42%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
	Article 18 (Public information, awareness and education)	7	58%
	Article 19 (Research, development and monitoring)	4	33%
	Article 20 (Implementation plans)	2	17%
	Article 21 (Reporting)	3	25%
	None of the above	1	8%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	2 comments	
Q10. Did the SIP funded project(s) contribute to mobilize additional financial resources toward implementing the Convention? In case of a positive answer, what was their amount?*	Number of Responses:	11	100%
	Yes (please specify)	2	18%
	No	9	82%
<i>Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 2d.</i>			
Section 2(d) – All Parties having requested the support of the Specific International Programme (SIP) Please help us to better understand your experience in requesting funding through the Specific International Programme (SIP) of the Financial Mechanism <i>According to the Terms of reference for the second review of the financial mechanism (as detailed in the Annex to decision MC-4/7), the review will include, inter alia, an analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Specific International Programme (SIP) in its capacity as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism.</i>			
Q11. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>efficiency</i> and the <i>effectiveness</i> of the SIP during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022) in its capacity as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism?*	Number of Responses:	17	
	Efficiency (weighted average)	3.71/5	74%
	Effectiveness (weighted average)	3.71/5	74%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	5 comments	
<i>According to the same Terms of reference, the review will include, inter alia, an analysis of the “simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects”.</i>			
Q12. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the simplicity for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Specific International Programme (SIP) ?*	Number of Responses:	17	
	Simplicity of accessing project(s) funds (weighted average)	3.12/5	62%
	Simplicity of implementing the project(s) (weighted average)	3.50/5	70%
	Simplicity of reporting on project(s) (weighted average)	3.36/5	67%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	7 comments	
	Number of Responses:	18	

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Q13. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>flexibility</i> for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Specific International Programme (SIP) ?*	<i>Flexibility</i> of accessing project(s) funds (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.39/5	68%
	<i>Flexibility</i> in implementing the project(s) (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.62/5	72%
	<i>Flexibility</i> in reporting on project(s) (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.62/5	72%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	6 comments	
Q14. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>expeditiousness</i> for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Specific International Programme (SIP) ?*	Number of Responses:	18	
	<i>Expeditiousness</i> of accessing project(s) funds (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.17/5	63%
	<i>Expeditiousness</i> in implementing the project(s) (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.46/5	69%
	<i>Expeditiousness</i> in reporting on project(s) (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.46/5	69%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	7 comments	
Q15. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how <i>user-friendly</i> would you say were the different components of the Specific International Programme (SIP) application forms? <i>The answer(s) to this question are optional, please feel free to provide answers <u>only if you have a defined opinion and/or a direct experience.</u></i>	Number of Responses:	17	
	Form A: Project Application (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.24/5	65%
	Form B: Project Budget (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.00/5	60%
	Form C: Letter Of Transmittal (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.65/5	73%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	3 comments	
Q16. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how much you would say the <i>guidance and support</i> , provided by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention for requesting funding through the Specific International Programme (SIP) were <i>adequate</i> to develop the project proposal?*	Number of Responses:	19	
	Guidance (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.79/5	76%
	Support (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.84/5	77%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	2 comments	
Q17. In broad terms, how long did it take for your country to prepare a workable project proposal to be submitted to the Specific International Programme (SIP) ?*	Number of Responses:	19	
	Months - <i>Weighted average</i>	5-6 months	
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	4 comments	

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Q18. Would you like to briefly comment on the main challenges you met in preparing a project proposal for the Specific International Programme (SIP) and how were they overcome?*	Number of Responses:	20	100%
	Yes (please specify)	10	50%
	No	10	50%
Q19. Would you like to suggest any action to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Specific International Programme (SIP) in meeting the objective of the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	20	100%
	Yes (please specify)	8	40%
	No	12	60%
Q20. Would you like to summarize your country main considerations for choosing to request funding to the Specific International Programme (SIP) rather to (or together with) the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund through the Financial Mechanism of the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	19	100%
	Yes (please specify)	8	40%
	No	12	60%
Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 3a.			
<p>Section 3(a) – Parties and Signatory Countries eligible for GEF funding under the Financial Mechanism</p> <p>The Minamata Convention (MC) sets up, in its Art. 13, a Financial Mechanism to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. Accordingly, the Mechanism includes: (a) the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund; and (b) a Specific International Programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance.</p> <p>According to COP Guidance to the GEF (decision MC-1/5), also Signatories to the Convention are eligible for funding from GEF for enabling activities, provided that any such signatory is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party.</p> <p>This section refers to the possibility for your country to apply for funding under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund through the Financial Mechanism of the Convention</p>			
Q21. Has your country ever requested and/or received financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund , through the Financial Mechanism, for the implementation of the Minamata Convention?*	Number of Responses:	37	100%
	Yes, we requested and received funding to the GEF through the MC Financial Mechanism;	18	49%
	Yes, we requested funding to the GEF through the MC Financial Mechanism and are currently waiting for the response;	3	8%
	Yes, we requested funding to the GEF through the MC Financial Mechanism, but our request was not approved;	2	5%
	No, we never requested and/or received funding to the GEF through the MC Financial Mechanism.	14	38%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional).	12 comments	
Q22. Is your country currently planning on requesting (additional)	Number of Responses:	37	100%
	Yes	23	62%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
funds to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund?*	No	14	38%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	7 comments	
<i>Note on survey logic: from this point onward, depending from the answer to Q17, respondents were moved to Section 3b (those answering “a”), Section 3d (answers “b”), Section 3c (answers “c”), or Section 4 (answer “d”).</i>			
Section 3b – Recipients of GEF funding under the MC Financial Mechanism			
<i>This section refers to the funding your country received from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund through the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention.</i>			
Q23. In which year did you start receiving funding from the GEF through the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention? (optional)	Number of Responses:	7	100%
	2018	4	57%
	2019	0	0%
	2020	0	0%
	2021	0	0%
	2022	3	43%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	8 comments	
<i>Art. 13 of the Minamata Convention defines a Mechanism for the provision of adequate, predictable, and timely financial resources to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under this Convention.</i>			
Q24. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), and based on your country’s direct experience, during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022), as a recipient of GEF funding, how much you would say the financial resources your country received from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund were <i>adequate, predictable, and timely</i> in supporting the implementation of your country obligations under the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	15	
	Adequate (weighted average)	3.60/5	72%
	Predictable (weighted average)	3.60/5	72%
	Timely (weighted average)	3.53/5	71%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	5 comments	
<i>According to the COP Guidance to the GEF, as defined in decision MC-1/5, the GEF Trust Fund shall provide financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of the Convention.</i>			
Q25. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), and based on your country direct experience as a recipient of GEF	Number of Responses:	15	
	Weighted average	3.33/5	67%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
funding during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022), how much you would say the financial resources your country received from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund contributed in meeting costs in support of implementation of the Convention? *	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	7 comments	
<i>Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 3d</i>			
Section 3(c) – Countries having requested but not received funding from the GEF through the FM Please help us to better understand why your request for funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund through the Financial Mechanism of the Convention has not been approved.			
Q26. In which ways did your country express interest in accessing funding for a GEF project that has not been approved? <i>(please check all sentences that are true)*</i>	Number of Responses:	2	100%
	We requested the assistance of the GEF Secretariat	0	0%
	We requested the assistance of the Minamata Convention Secretariat	0	0%
	We requested the assistance of a GEF implementing agency (UNEP, UNDP, etc)	1	50%
	The project was submitted to the GEF Council and not approved	1	50%
	The project was submitted for CEO endorsement (for GEF enabling activities or medium-sized projects) but was not approved	0	0%
	The project was NOT submitted to the GEF Council or for CEO endorsement	0	0%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	0 comments	
<i>Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 3d</i>			
Section 3(d) – All countries having requested the support of the GEF Trust Fund through the FM Please help us to better understand your experience in requesting funding to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund through the Financial Mechanism of the Convention.			
Q27. In which year did you apply for funding from the GEF through the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention?	Number of Responses:	12	100%
	2018	6	45%
	2019	1	9%
	2020	2	18%
	2021	2	18%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
	2022	1	9%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	6 comments	
According to the Terms of reference for the second review of the financial mechanism (as detailed in the Annex to decision MC-4/7), the review will include, inter alia, an analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund , in its capacity as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism.			
Q28. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>efficiency</i> and the <i>effectiveness</i> of the GEF during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022) in its capacity as one of the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism?*	Number of Responses:	20	
	Efficiency (weighted average)	3.50/5	70%
	Effectiveness (weighted average)	3.58/5	72%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	6 comments	
According to the same Terms of reference, the review will include, inter alia, an analysis of the “simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects” .			
Q29. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>simplicity</i> , for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund ?*(answers in rows 2 and 3, on implementing and reporting, are optional)	Number of Responses:	22	
	Simplicity of accessing project(s) funds (weighted average)	3.23/5	65%
	Simplicity of implementing the project(s) (weighted average)	3.28/5	66%
	Simplicity of reporting on project(s) (weighted average)	3.28/5	66%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	5 comments	
Q30. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>flexibility</i> , for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund ?*(answers in rows 2 and 3, on implementing and reporting, are optional)	Number of Responses:	21	
	Flexibility of accessing project(s) funds (weighted average)	3.19/5	64%
	Flexibility in implementing the project(s) (weighted average)	3.50/5	70%
	Flexibility in reporting on project(s) (weighted average)	3.19/5	64%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	4 comments	
Q31. Overall, in your experience and on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the <i>expeditiousness</i> , for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund ?*(answers in rows 2 and 3, on implementing and reporting, are optional)	Number of Responses:	21	
	Expeditiousness of accessing project(s) funds (weighted average)	3.14/5	63%
	Expeditiousness in implementing the project(s)(weighted average)	3.40/5	68%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
3, on implementing and reporting, are optional)	<i>Expeditionousness</i> in reporting on project(s)(<i>weighted average</i>)	3.20/5	64%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	4 comments	
Q32. On a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how much you would say the guidance and support provided by the Secretariats of the GEF and the Minamata Convention for requesting funding through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund were adequate to develop the project proposal?*	Number of Responses:	21	
	Guidance (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.81/5	76%
	Support (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.90/5	78%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	4 comments	
Q33. In broad terms, how long it took for your country to prepare a workable project proposal to be submitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund ?*	Number of Responses:	22	
	<i>Weighted average</i>	11 months	
	<i>More than 24 months</i>	1 respondent	
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	5 comments	
Q34. Would you like to briefly comment on the main challenges you met in preparing a Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund project proposal and how were they overcome?*	Number of Responses:	24	100%
	Yes (<i>please specify</i>)	4	17%
	No	20	83%
Q35. Would you like to suggest any action to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund in meeting the objective of the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	24	100%
	Yes (<i>please specify</i>)	5	21%
	No	19	79%
Q36. In case your country is eligible for both GEF and SIP funding, would you like to summarize your country main considerations for choosing to request funding to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund rather to (or together with) the Specific International Programme (SIP) through the Financial Mechanism of the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	24	100%
	Yes (<i>please specify</i>)	12	50%
	No	12	50%
Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 4.			
Section 4 – All respondents			
<i>In this section you are asked general questions on the overall Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention, independently from your country being (or not) an eligible country or having requested (or not) funding through it.</i>			
Q37. Overall, on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the efficiency and the effectiveness of the	Number of Responses:	40	
	Efficiency (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.40/5	68%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022)?*	Effectiveness (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.35/5	67%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	6 comments	
Q38. Has your country, so far, experienced any problem in relation to the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022)?*	Number of Responses:	42	100%
	Yes (<i>please specify</i>)	6	14%
	No	36	86%
Q39. Would you like to suggest any action to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Financial Mechanism in meeting the objective of the Convention?*	Number of Responses:	42	100%
	Yes (<i>please specify</i>)	9	21%
	No	33	79%
<i>According to the Terms of reference for the second review of the financial mechanism (as detailed in the Annex to decision MC-4/7), the review will include an analysis of many different elements which have been included in the next question.</i>			
Q40. Overall, on a scale from 0 (min) to 5 (max), how would you rate the following elements during the time period covered by the 2nd Review of the Financial Mechanism (August 2019 to July 2022)? <i>(The answer(s) to this question are optional, please feel to skip questions that you do not have experience with)</i>	Number of Responses:	36	
	The efficiency of the GEF and the SIP in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism; (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.48/5	70%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	2 comments	
	The effectiveness of the GEF and the SIP in their capacity as the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism; (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.38/5	68%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	2 comments	
	The accessibility of the funding provided by the financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention; (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.00/5	60%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	2 comments	
	The simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects; (<i>weighted average</i>)	3.00/5	60%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	4 comments	
	The adequacy of the available resources; (weighted average)	2.91/5	58%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	1 comment	
	The ability of the financial mechanism to mobilize resources from all sources; (weighted average)	2.94/5	59%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	2 comments	
	The guidance provided by the COP to the GEF and to the SIP to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance; (weighted average)	3.39/5	68%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	1 comment	
	The responsiveness of the GEF and the SIP to the guidance provided by the COP; (weighted average)	3.26/5	65%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	1 comment	
	The ability of the two entities of the financial mechanism (GEF and SIP) to address the changing needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition; (weighted average)	3.23/5	65%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	2 comments	
	The extent to which the projects funded by the financial mechanism have reduced , or are expected to reduce, the supply, use, emissions and releases of mercury , and deliver other benefits in terms of Convention implementation; (weighted average)	3.03/5	61%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (optional)	2 comments	

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
	The transparency of the funding provided by the financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention; <i>(weighted average)</i>	3.34/5	67%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	1 comment	
	The timeliness of the project approval processes; <i>(weighted average)</i>	3.07/5	61%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	2 comments	
	The sustainability , of the funding provided by the financial mechanism for the achievement of the objective of the Convention; <i>(weighted average)</i>	3.30/5	66%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	2 comments	
	The Country ownership of activities funded by the financial mechanism; <i>(weighted average)</i>	3.37/5	67%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	1 comment	
	The level of stakeholder involvement in the activities funded by the financial mechanism. <i>(weighted average)</i>	3.53/5	71%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question <i>(optional)</i>	3 comments	
Q41. Any final comment on the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention? <i>(optional)</i>	Number of Responses:	8	
Q42. Any comment on this Survey? <i>(optional)</i>	Number of Responses:	4	
Note on survey logic: all respondents in this section continued to section 5.			
Section 5 – Your contact details We would like to have the option to contact you to possibly hear more about your experience with the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention . All contact details are, however, optional and you may decide in this final section if providing them or not.			
Q43. Would you be available for a short interview on this subject? <i>(in case, please make sure to provide your</i>	Number of Responses:	42	100%
	Yes	22	54%

Survey Questions	Responses / Options	Results	%
<i>e-mail address and contact details in the questions below)*</i>	No	20	46%
	Please, feel free to add your comment to the above question (<i>optional</i>)	6 comments	
Q44. Your name (<i>optional</i>):	<i>Number of Responses:</i>	23	
Q45. Your e-mail address (<i>optional</i>)	<i>Number of Responses:</i>	25	
Q46. Your phone number (<i>optional</i>)	<i>Number of Responses:</i>	9	
Q47. Your postal address (<i>optional</i>)	<i>Number of Responses:</i>	6	
<i>End of the survey</i>			

Annex 5 - People consulted during the review

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Argentina, National Institute of Industrial technology	Ms. Leila Devia	Director
Argentina, Secretariat of Control and Environmental Monitoring	Ms. Alejandra Acosta	Former Director, Directorate of Chemicals Substances and Products
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)	Ms. Elena Lymberidi-Settimo	Policy Manager for 'Zero Mercury' Campaign
GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)	Mr. Gabriel Sidman	Evaluation Officer
GEF Secretariat	Mr. Anil Sookdeo	Senior Environmental Specialist, Programs Unit; Chemicals and Waste Coordinator
GEF Secretariat	Mr. Yuki Shiga	Environmental Specialist, Programs Unit
Guyana, Ministry of Natural Resources	Ms. Michelle Astwood	MC National Focal Point; Environmental Specialist
Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ms. Momoko Satoh	MC National Focal Point; Official, Global Environment Division, International Cooperation Bureau
Lesotho, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture	Ms. Moleboheng Juliet Petlane,	MC National Focal Point; Environment Officer
Moldova, Ministry of Environment	Ms. Cristina Lesnic	Project Manager; Environmental Projects Implementation Unit
Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC)	Ms. Susan Keane	Senior Director; Global Advocacy, International Program
Norway, Ministry of Climate and Environment	Mr. Atle Fretheim	Consultant
Senegal, Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement	Mr. Pathé Dieye	MC National Focal Point; Conseiller technique du Directeur de l'Environnement et des Etablissements classés
UNEP - MC-Secretariat	Ms. Anna García Sans	Communications and Knowledge Management Officer
UNEP - MC-Secretariat	Ms. Claudia ten Have	Senior Policy and Coordination Officer
UNEP - MC-Secretariat	Ms. Irene Rizzo	Associate Expert
UNEP - MC-Secretariat	Ms. Marianne Bailey	Programme Management Officer for Capacity-building and Technical Assistance
UNEP - MC-Secretariat	Ms. Monika Stankewitz	Executive Secretary
UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch	Mr. Kenneth Davis	Program Officer, Technology and Metals Team
UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch	Mr. Ludovic Bernaudat	Chemical and waste GEF portfolio manager
UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch	Ms. Stephanie Laruelle	Programme Management Officer, Knowledge and Risk Unit; Global Mercury Partnership point of contact
Zero Mercury Working Group (ZMWG)	Mr. Michael Bender	Director, Mercury Policy Project

Annex 6 - Key documents consulted

Sources of information listed in Annex to decision MC-4/7 - Terms of reference for the second review of the MC financial mechanism	
<i>(a) Information submitted by Parties on their experiences gained through their interactions with the financial mechanism, organized according to the performance criteria set forth in section D of the present terms of reference;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Party's submission (USA)
<i>(b) Reports submitted to the Conference of the Parties by the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 SIP Governing Board final reports (GB1-06, GB2-07, GB3-07, GB4-05, GB5-04, GB6-04); 4 GEF-Sec reports to COPs (COP1-INF03, COP2-INF03, COP3-INF02, COP4-INF07); 1 GEF-Sec Executive Summary to COP4 (COP4-09-Add1); <p><i>All available on the MC web site.</i></p>
<i>(c) Other reports provided by the entities entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism, including, among other things, reports of the Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility, terminal evaluations of Completed projects of the Specific International Programme and reporting from ongoing projects of the Specific International Programme;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 legal agreements of SIP projects (<i>marked as "confidential" and made available for this review</i>); 15 project summaries (<i>all available on the MC web site</i>), 4 final report and 1 terminal evaluation (<i>marked as "confidential" and made available for this review</i>) of the SIP projects approved in the first two rounds Background documents (prepared by the MC Secretariat) of the 7th meeting of the SIP Governing Board (<i>marked as "confidential" and made available for this review</i>); No background documents has been made available for the SIP GB first six meetings (round 1-3) Contact details of SIP GB Members (<i>marked as "confidential" and made available for this review</i>); GEF Secretariat submission for the 2nd review Project documents (and in some cases project reports and terminal evaluations) of the GEF funded Minamata projects (<i>available on the GEF project database website</i>);
<i>(d) Relevant reports and information submitted by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; stakeholders; other entities providing multilateral, regional and bilateral financial and technical assistance pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 3 of article 13 of the Convention; the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (with respect to complementarity and avoiding duplication); and the Global Mercury Partnership (relative to its interaction with the financial mechanism in advancing the implementation of the Convention);</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 submissions (Special Programme, and Global Mercury Partnership Advisory Group).
<i>(e) Reports submitted by Parties pursuant to article 21 of the Convention.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 118 "2021 National reports" (plus attachments) (all available on the MC web site).
<i>(f) Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme entitled "Strengthening the Specific International Programme to Support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention on Mercury: enhancing the effective functioning of the Programme (UNEP/MC/COP.4/13);</i>	<p><i>(available on the MC web site)</i></p>

Sources of information listed in Annex to decision MC-4/7 - Terms of reference for the second review of the MC financial mechanism	
COPs relevant document (all available on the MC web site)	
COP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report: MC/COP.1/29; including Decision MC-1/5, and Decision MC-1/6; • Background documents on GEF: MC/COP.1/INF/3, MC/COP.1/15, and MC/COP.1/8; • Background documents on SIP: MC/COP.1/9.
COP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report: MC/COP.2/19; including GEF MoU at Para 83 and SIP document in Annex II; • Background documents on GEF: MC/COP.2/INF/3, and MC/COP.2/8; • Background documents on SIP: MC/COP.2/INF/16, and MC/COP.2/9.
COP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report: MC/COP.3/23; including decision MC-3/7 and recommendation in Para 109 and GB members election in Para 110; • Background documents on the financial mechanism: MC/COP.3/11; • Background documents on GEF: MC/COP.3/INF/2, MC/COP.3/9, and MC/COP.3/9/Add.1; • Background documents on SIP: MC/COP.3/INF/3, MC/COP.3/INF/5/Rev.1, MC/COP.3/10, and MC/COP.3/10/Add.1.
COP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reports: MC/COP.4/28, MC/COP.4/28/Add.1; including decision MC-4/7 and GB members election in Para 23; • Background documents on the financial mechanism: MC/COP.4/INF/22 including Activity 13; and MC/COP.4/12; • Background documents on GEF: MC/COP.4/INF/7, MC/COP.4/INF/8, MC/COP.4/9, MC/COP.4/9/Add.1, and MC/COP.4/10; • Background documents on SIP: MC/COP.4/INF/9, MC/COP.4/11, MC/COP.4/11/Add.1, and MC/COP.4/13.
Other relevant documents (*available on the MC web site)	
<p>About the Convention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text of the Minamata Convention*; • Progress Report 2020 - Overview of the Minamata Convention on Mercury activities; Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, February 2020*; <p>About SIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of the Members of the SIP Governing Board*; • Status of contributions to the Specific Trust*; • Fund of the Minamata Convention (32MCP) - as of 31 October 2022*; • Communication and visibility guidelines for projects receiving funding from the Specific International Programme*; • SIP Projects Guidelines and templates: Applications (Rounds 1-3); terminal review; and terminal evaluation.* • Summary Preliminary Findings of the Mid Term Evaluation of the Specific International Programme (Courtesy of the MC Secretariat, revised February 2023) <p>About GEF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of MC Initial Assessments (MIAs) reports; • GEF Interventions in the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Sector; Evaluation Report No. 146, GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF-IEO), January 2022; • Minamata Initial Assessment Report - Suggested Structure and Contents; Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), October 2020; • Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study; Evaluation Report No. 115, GEF Independent Evaluation Office (GEF-IEO), November 2018. • Policy On Co-Financing (FI/PL/01), Approved by GEF Council on June 26, 2018 • Guidelines On Co-Financing (FI/GN/01), Approved by GEF CEO on June 26, 2018 • Country Engagement Strategy Implementation Arrangements for GEF-8; GEF/C.63/05, October 31, 2022. • Developing a National Action Plan to reduce and, where feasible, eliminate mercury use in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining; UNEP Global Mercury Partnership ASGM Partnership Area, September 2017; • Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Minamata Convention on Mercury; GEF/C.45/Inf.05/Rev.01, January 2014. 	

Annex II*

Submissions received from parties

United States comments on the second review of the financial mechanism

The United States is a strong supporter of a well-functioning financial mechanism for the Minamata Convention, capable of providing adequate, predictable and timely financial resources to developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition in support of their implementation of obligations under the Convention. We are pleased to submit comments on the second review of the financial mechanism. We submit views pursuant to the time period August 2019 to July 2022 on the following performance criteria, with a focus on the Global Environment Facility:

- (a) Responsiveness of the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme to the guidance adopted by or provided by the Conference of the Parties;
- (b) Extent to which the projects funded by the financial mechanism have reduced, or are expected to reduce, the supply, use, emissions and releases of mercury, and deliver other benefits in terms of Convention implementation;

A wider range of potential metrics can be used for describing and measuring the funding impact.

- The current single metric for GEF-funded projects is “total mercury reduced.”
- While this current metric should be maintained, grant recipients should be encouraged to include other metrics that are reflective or more precisely align with the objectives for which they are seeking funding. Data collection associated with such metrics should be supported by the project financing.
- Additional indicators could also be considered during the next round of GEF Results Framework deliberations, likely during the course of GEF-9.
- In addition, the COP will be considering possible indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the Convention. These indicators could include useful additional metrics for consideration, as appropriate and relevant, in order to draw additional linkages between the actions of the GEF and the effectiveness of the Convention.
- (c) Transparency and timeliness of the project approval processes.

We recognize the GEF as a highly transparent institution, with a relatively timely project approval process. We would recommend that the GEF double down on the communication of its available expedited modalities to relevant Minamata parties, including the recently expanded cap on medium sized projects that do not require Council approval, and the option to pursue project, rather than programmatic modalities.

- (d) Simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects.
- (e) Adequacy and sustainability of the available resources.

We recognize the GEF as a provider of adequate and sustainable resources. We note that the volume of GEF resources available for Minamata implementation has significantly increased under GEF-8.

- (f) Country ownership of activities funded by the financial mechanism.

We recognize the GEF as an institution that respects and operates under a paradigm of country ownership. We hope and expect that shifts in the support offered to country focal points under GEF-8 will further support this country-ownership principle.

- (g) Level of stakeholder involvement.
- (h) Any other significant issues raised by the parties.

* The present annex has not been formally edited.

While funding should continue to prioritize supporting parties meeting obligations and implementation activities, when possible, requests for support for technical and scientific assessment tools should be encouraged as part of GEF projects.

- The U.S. strongly believes that funding under the Convention must be prioritized to supporting parties meeting their Convention obligations and for implementation activities and recognizes that requests for GEF support emerge from a country-driven process.
- We also believe that there may be opportunities to integrate information collection methodologies and elements into projects intended to primarily implement actions towards the reduction of mercury releases and emissions. Support for complementary information collection can lead to a better understanding of the impacts of actions taken to meet an obligation, while also providing information that can be used for broader monitoring purposes.
- Instruments like UNEP's Mercury Inventory Toolkit have enabled a very useful general analysis as part of activities such as the Minamata Initial Assessment.
- We recognize a need for further development and refinement of party-specific information relevant to reduction of mercury emissions and releases as a function of Convention activities.
- Approaches that meet these dual purposes would increase the effectiveness of the GEF as a financial mechanism.
- This funding might also include regional cooperative technical efforts with clear scientific aims consistent with Article 14 of the Convention.

Enhance coordination and engagement with UNEP's Global Mercury Partnership (GMP) in GEF-funded projects.

- We think that more direct and explicit linkages to the UNEP's Global Mercury Partnership (GMP) in project formulation and workplan development would add value and reduce duplication.
- The capabilities and coverage of organizations such as the GMP has increased substantially in the last decade.
- The GMP has played a significant role in support of the work of GEF- and SIP- funding recipients. These include the development of NAPs, MIAs and specific elements of SIP funded projects.
- Both the GMP and countries receiving GEF funding would benefit from efforts to offer the GMP as a resource to member partners through funded projects.

Annex III*

**INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE GLOBAL
ENVIRONMENT FACILITY AS AN INPUT INTO THE
SECOND REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM
OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY –
MC-4/7: SECOND REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL
MECHANISM**

November 2022

* The present annex has not been formally edited.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASGM	Artisanal and Small-scale Mining
COP	Conference of the Parties
EA	Enabling Activity
FSP	Full-sized Project
GEB	Global Environmental Benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GOLD+	Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of Artisanal and Small- scale Gold Mining Sector Plus
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
ISLANDS	Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in small island developing States
LDC	Least Developed Country
MIA	Minamata Initial Assessment
MSP	Medium-sized Project
NAP	National Action Plan
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PSES	Private Sector Engagement Strategy
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SLP	Skin Lightening Product
UPOP	Unintentional Persistent Organic Pollutant

Background:

1. Article 13 of the Minamata Convention includes the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in the Financial Mechanism to provide new, predictable, adequate and timely financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of this Convention as agreed by the Conference of the Parties (COP).
2. Support to the Convention is done through the Chemicals and Waste focal area of the GEF.
3. The GEF has supported work relevant to the negotiations of the Minamata Convention during the Intergovernmental Negotiation process and the implementation of the Minamata Convention since it entered into force in August 2017.
4. From GEF-5 to GEF-7 covering the period from July 2010 to June 2022, the GEF has programmed \$340 million in project financing to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention for activities in countries, excluding agency fees and project preparation grants (PPG).

Table 1

Resources Programmed for Mercury Projects

<i>Project Type and Mercury Reduction Volume</i>	<i>GEF-5 (July 2010 – June 2014)</i>	<i>GEF-6 (July 2014 – June 2018)</i>	<i>GEF-7 (July 2018 – June 2022)</i>
Enabling Activities (\$)¹	7,917,923	34,322,045	10,885,000
Full-sized projects and Programs (\$)¹	1,904,848	1,069,800	166,845,706
Medium-sized projects (\$)¹	11,309,900	98,903,626	6,375,000
Total Resources (\$)¹	21,132,671	134,295,471	184,105,706
Tons of mercury managed (MT)	N/A²	638	1,629

5. Negotiations of the eighth replenishment of the GEF trust fund was completed in April 2022 conducted. \$269 million has been allocated for the implementation of the Convention for the GEF-8 period, which is from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2026.³

Information provided for the second review of the financial mechanism:

6. Data compiled in Annex 1 covers the work of the GEF in fulfilling its mandate under the Minamata Convention during GEF-7 (July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2022).
7. In GEF-7, \$206 million was allocated to support the implementation of Minamata Convention. Of this project financing was \$184.1 Million for activities in countries, while \$1.5 million was allocated to PPG and \$16.9 million to agency fees. The total utilization in GEF 7 was therefore 98.3 percent.
8. In GEF-7, the resources were programmed in 16 full-sized projects (FSPs) covering 30 countries, five medium-sized projects (MSPs), two programs covering 37 countries, and 25 enabling activity (EA) projects.⁴

(a) Responsiveness of the Global Environment Facility to the guidance adopted by or provided by the Conference of the Parties

9. The first COP to the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in 2017. The COP provided guidance to the GEF on overall strategies, policies, program priorities and eligibility for, access to, and utilization of financial resources. The COP also provided guidance on an indicative list of categories

¹ Project financing; exclude agency fees and PPGs.

² In GEF-5, projects addressing mercury were not required to have a reduction estimate.

³ GEF, 2022, Summary of Negotiations of the 8th Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, Council Document, GEF/C.62/03.

⁴ Project types are described in Section (d) 'Simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects'.

of activities that could receive support from the GEF Trust Fund.⁵ The following table includes the complete list of guidance and the GEF's response.

Table 2

Response to the Guidance from the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention

<i>COP Guidance</i>		<i>GEF's Response</i>
1. Eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources		
2	To be eligible for funding from GEF as one of the entities comprising the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, a country must be a Party to the Convention and must be a developing country or a country with an economy in transition.	The GEF's eligibility policy for mercury incorporates the criteria for funding enabling activities (EAs). The guidelines for EAs are found in the information document of the 45 th GEF Council meeting held in January 2014. ⁶ In GEF-5 and GEF-6, prior to the first COP, both signatory countries and Parties were eligible to receive funding from the GEF. In GEF-7, only Parties are eligible to access GEF resources, except for EAs. According to the COP guidance, signatories to the Convention are eligible for GEF funding from for EA, provided that any such signatory is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party.
3	Activities that are eligible for funding from the GEF trust fund are those that seek to meet the objectives of the Convention and are consistent with the present guidance.	According to the GEF Instrument, paragraph 6 (e), the GEF shall: Operate as one of the entities comprising the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, pursuant to its Article 13, paragraphs 5, 6, and 8. In such respects, the GEF shall operate under the guidance of, and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties, which shall provide guidance on overall strategies, policies, program priorities and eligibility for access to and utilization of financial resources. In addition, the GEF shall receive guidance from the Conference of the Parties on an indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support; and shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some EAs, pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 7, of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In GEF-7, eligible activities for funding under the Convention were defined in paragraphs 231 – 246 of the chemicals and waste strategy in the GEF-7 programming directions. ⁷
4	Signatories to the Convention are eligible for funding from GEF for enabling activities, provided that any such signatory is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party as evidenced by a letter from the relevant minister to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and to the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility.	Up to June 30, 2018, the GEF supported a total of 110 countries through GEF-5 and GEF-6 to implement Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs) and 32 countries to conduct their Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) National Action Plans (NAPs). Seventy-eight out of 89 signatories received funding for these EAs. Of the remaining eleven countries, six have become Parties as at June 30, 2018. Twenty-three countries that were non-signatory and non-Party have accessed EA resources; at the request of the sixth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee on mercury (INC 6) to allow non-signatory, non-Party States to access resources for EAs from the GEF, the GEF Council varied the eligibility criteria through a decision by mail on January 14, 2015. This variation of the eligibility for non-signatories, non-Parties is no longer applicable, as the COP 1 guidance only applies to signatories and Parties with respect to access of funding of EAs. Update as of June 30, 2022:

⁵ In the annex to Decision MC-1/5.

⁶ GEF, 2014, Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities for the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Council Document GEF/C.45/Inf.05/Rev.01.

⁷ GEF, 2018, Report on the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, Assembly Document GEF/A.6/05/Rev.01.

<i>COP Guidance</i>		<i>GEF's Response</i>
		Up to June 30, 2022, the GEF supported a total of 121 countries to implement MIAs and 48 countries to conduct their ASGM NAPs.
II. Overall strategies and policies		
5	<p>In accordance with Article 13, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the GEF trust fund shall provide new, predictable, adequate, and timely financial resources to meet costs in support of implementation of the Convention as agreed by the Conference of the Parties, including costs arising from activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are country-driven; Are in conformity with programme priorities as reflected in relevant guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties; Build capacity and promote the utilization of local and regional expertise, if applicable; Promote synergies with other focal areas; Continue to enhance synergies and co- benefits within the chemicals and wastes focal area; Promote multiple-source funding approaches, mechanisms and arrangements, including from the private sector, if applicable; and Promote sustainable national socioeconomic development, poverty reduction and activities consistent with existing national sound environmental management programmes geared towards the protection of human health and the environment. 	<p>This guidance was used to inform the GEF-6 and GEF-7 programming in and was addressed in the GEF-7 replenishment negotiations, which were concluded in April 2018. The new strategy is included in the summary of negotiations of GEF-7.⁸</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022:</p> <p>The projects approved in the GEF-7 period follow this guidance. Throughout GEF-7, there has been a focus on synergies within the chemicals and waste focal area and with other focal areas. Private sector engagement is also a priority. During the GEF-7 period, the 59th GEF Council meeting in December 2020 approved GEF's Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES).⁹ The PSES is supported by an Implementation Plan that sets out actions and deliverables up to the end of the GEF-7 period. The Implementing Sustainable Low and Non- Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS) Program achieves synergies across the chemicals and waste focal area while the project Integrated Watershed Management of the Putumayo-Içá River Basin combines mercury and international water resources as a multi-focal area project in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.</p> <p>Several standalone Minamata Convention projects have additional benefits to other focal areas including GEF-7 planetGOLD+ program and the Mexico primary mercury which both have GEBs associated with the Land Degradation Focal Area.</p>
III. Programme priorities		
6	<p>In accordance with Article 13, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the GEF trust fund shall provide resources to meet the agreed incremental costs of global environmental benefits and the agreed full costs of some enabling activities.</p>	<p>This is reflected in the GEF strategies.</p> <p>In GEF-7, \$206 million is allocated for the implementation of the Minamata Convention. The GEF has programmed resources to meet the full cost of the MIAs and the ASGM NAPs. The GEF has programmed resources for several projects that are aimed at early implementation, particularly in the ASGM sector.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022:</p> <p>In the GEF-7 period, the GEF has programmed resources to meet the full cost of the MIAs and the ASGM NAPs. Other programmed resources for projects that are aimed at early implementation address several areas of priorities of the Minamata Convention that meet the agreed incremental costs of mercury reduction, such as chlor alkali, mercury products including medical devices and ASGM. These projects estimate to address 1,629 metric tons of mercury.</p>
7	<p>In particular, it should give priority to the following activities when providing financial resources to developing-country Parties and Parties with economies in transition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling activities, particularly Minamata Convention initial assessment activities and national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining; Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, affording priority to those that: Relate to legally binding obligations; 	<p>This guidance was used in the GEF-6 and GEF-7 programming and was addressed in the priorities of the GEF-7 chemicals and waste focal area Programming Strategy. All projects and programs in GEF-7 that seek to implement the Minamata Convention have been designed consistently with this guidance.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022:</p>

⁸ Ibid.⁹ GEF, 2020, GEF's Private Sector Engagement Strategy, Council Document GEF/C.59/07/Rev.01.

COP Guidance		GEF's Response
	Facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party; Allow for reduction in mercury emissions and releases and address the health and environmental impacts of mercury.	In the GEF-7 period, 25 EAs, including 10 MIA and 16 ASGM NAPs ¹⁰ were approved in accordance with (a). All approved medium-sized projects (MSPs) and FSPs met the guidance under (b). For example, the project to address chlor alkali in Mexico, the GOLD+ Program addressing ASGM in 15 countries, and the projects addressing mercury products, all support legally binding obligations that facilitate early implementation and address health and environmental impacts.
8	In providing resources for an activity, GEF should take into account the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs in accordance with paragraph 8 of Article 13 of the Convention.	In GEF-7, projects with potential for significant mercury reductions have been approved. The GEF continues to work with countries and Agencies to look at the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs.
IV. Indicative list of categories of activities that could receive support		
A. Enabling activities		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minamata Convention initial assessments 2. Preparation of national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 7 and Annex C 3. Other types of enabling activities as agreed by the Conference of the Parties 	<p>This guidance was used to inform the GEF-6 and GEF-7 programming and was addressed in the priorities of the GEF-7 chemicals and waste focal area Programming Strategy. In GEF-6 and GEF-7, all eligible EAs that were submitted to the GEF received funding.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022: In the GEF-7 period, all eligible EAs that were submitted to the GEF received funding.</p>
B. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention		
1. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that relate to legally binding obligations		
9	<p>When providing financial resources to eligible Parties for activities to implement the provisions of the Convention, GEF should afford priority to those activities that relate to legally binding obligations of Parties under the Convention and should take into account the potential mercury reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs. Such activities could include those related to the following areas, listed in no particular order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercury supply sources and trade; • Mercury-added products; • Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used; • Artisanal and small-scale gold mining; • Emissions; • Releases; • Environmentally sound interim storage of mercury, other than waste mercury; • Mercury wastes; • Reporting; • Relevant capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer in relation to the above. 	<p>These have been included in the GEF-7 chemicals and waste focal area Programming Strategy. This guidance was used to inform the GEF-6 and GEF-7 programming.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022: Projects approved in the GEF-7 period follow this guidance. All MSPs and FSPs include capacity building. There are projects on mercury-added products, manufacturing processes, ASGM, emissions, releases, environmentally sound storage, mercury wastes, and mercury supply sources and trade. The chlor alkali project in Mexico is the first addressing the sector and has the potential to serve as a model for other projects in the region and globally.</p>
2. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that facilitate early implementation on entry into force of the Convention for a Party		
10	When considering activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that facilitate early implementation on entry into force, GEF should also consider providing support for activities that, although they are not the subject of a legal obligation under the Convention, may significantly contribute to a Party's preparedness to	<p>This was addressed during the GEF-7 programming, to be reported on at subsequent COPs.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022: GEF-funded projects in the GEF-7 period primarily focus on implementing obligations of the Convention that reduce mercury.</p>

¹⁰ One country opted to combine MIA and NAP under one EA.

<i>COP Guidance</i>		<i>GEF's Response</i>
	implement the Convention upon its entry into force for that country.	Others are considered on a case-by-case basis. Projects typically include technical assistance and capacity building that address a legally binding obligation. For example, the knowledge-sharing and communication component of the GOLD+ Program will support formalization, access to financing, and technology transfer within the sector leading to mercury reductions. In addition, the training of customs officers in the ISLANDS Program that will support the countries in meeting the phase-out date in Annex A for mercury-containing products and devices.
11	<p>Within the context of the GEF mandate, such activities could include, inter alia, support for:</p> <p>With regard to emissions, the development by Parties with relevant sources of emissions of national plans setting out the measures to be taken to control emissions and their expected targets, goals and outcomes;</p> <p>With regard to releases, the development by Parties with relevant sources of releases of national plans setting out the measures to be taken to control releases and their expected targets, goals and outcomes;</p> <p>With regard to contaminated sites, capacity- building for the development of strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury or mercury compounds and, as appropriate, the remediation of those sites;</p> <p>Information exchange;</p> <p>Public information, awareness and education;</p> <p>Cooperation in the development and improvement of research, development and monitoring;</p> <p>Development of implementation plans following initial assessments.</p>	<p>This was addressed during the GEF-7 programming, to be reported on at subsequent COPs.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022:</p> <p>GEF projects primarily focus on implementing legal obligations of the Convention and reducing mercury. Other activities are considered on a case-by-case basis. Activities that are not subject to legal obligation under the Convention were considered in projects funded in the GEF-7 period, such as information exchange, public awareness, and capacity building for the development of strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury and, as appropriate, their remediation. For example, the chlor alkali project in Mexico includes an assessment of the site contaminated with mercury and a plan for remediation.</p>
3. Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that allow for the reduction of mercury emissions and releases and address both the health and environmental impacts of mercury		
12	Activities to implement the provisions of the Convention that allow for the reduction of mercury emissions and releases and address both the health and environmental impacts of mercury may encompass activities relating to both binding and non-binding provisions, with priority to the legally binding provisions discussed above, that accord with the GEF mandate to deliver global environmental benefits and reflect the GEF chemicals and wastes focal area strategy.	<p>This was addressed during the GEF-7 programming, to be reported on at subsequent COPs.</p> <p>Update as of June 30, 2022:</p> <p>The projects approved in the GEF-7 period will contribute to the reduction of 1,629 metric tons of mercury.</p>
V. Review by the Conference of the Parties		
13	In accordance with paragraph 11 of Article 13, the Conference of the Parties will review, no later than at its third meeting, and thereafter on a regular basis, the level of funding, the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties to GEF as one of the entities entrusted with operationalizing the mechanism established under this Article and the mechanism's effectiveness and ability to address the changing needs of developing-country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. On the basis of such review, the Conference of the Parties will take appropriate action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, including by updating and prioritizing as necessary its guidance to GEF.	At the request of the COP, the GEF has provided information that relates to the review described in paragraph 11 of Article 13 of the Minamata Convention.

(b) Extent to which the projects funded by the financial mechanism have reduced, or are expected to reduce, the supply, use, emissions and releases of mercury, and deliver other benefits in terms of Convention implementation

10. The projects approved in the GEF-7 period respond to the guidance from the COP by prioritizing legal obligations and mercury reductions, while also supporting capacity building and activities that support the implementation of the Convention. For example, the portfolio deals with mercury in products, mercury waste, ASGM and mercury in industrial practices, in addition to updating regulations and policies to properly manage mercury. It also includes innovative approaches, such as green chemistry in the Global Greenchem Innovation and Network Program. The GOLD+ Program and its addendum comprise 15 countries, addressing the ASGM sector as the largest global source of anthropogenic mercury. This program utilizes a landscape/jurisdictional approach to support formalization and builds capacity in the commercial banking sector to provide financing to ASGM while building the capacity of miners to access finance and improve their mining practices.

11. The projects and programs approved in GEF-7 have also allowed for a reduction in mercury emissions and releases and addressed the health and environmental impacts of mercury. For example, skin lightening products, mercury containing medical devices and dental amalgam are being addressed by the projects.

12. The GEF-7 results framework included a core indicator to measure the results in the chemicals and waste focal area.¹¹ This core indicator had a target of addressing 100,000 metric tons of chemicals and waste, including mercury. There was no stand-alone target for mercury in GEF-7, however each project supporting the implementation of the Convention is required to provide a mercury reduction target. The projects approved in the GEF-7 period supporting the Minamata Convention implementation are estimated to reduce 1,629 metric tons of mercury.

13. Projects and programs approved in GEF-7 continued to enhance synergies and co-benefits within the chemicals and waste focal area, as well as promote synergies with other focal areas. In addition to mercury reductions, the approved projects are estimated to achieve other Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), including reducing 9,132 metric tons of POPs, disposing nearly 3 million metric tons of POPs and mercury-containing and contaminated material, reducing 1,226 gTEQ unintentional POP (UPOP) emissions, reducing more than 600,000 metric tons of CO₂ eq, and avoiding 260,000 metric tons of marine litter.

(c) Transparency and timeliness of the project approval processes

14. All the projects approved in GEF-7 followed the relevant [GEF Policies and Guidelines](#) that are publicly accessible. Project information and documents, including the review sheets, are also available in the [GEF website](#).

15. During the GEF-7 period, 16 FSPs were approved to contribute towards the implementation of Minamata Convention. As of June 30, 2022, 12 FSPs were endorsed for implementation. The average preparation time between PIF submission to PIF approval was 3 months for FSPs. The average preparation time between PIF approval to CEO endorsement for the GEF-7 projects that were CEO endorsed by June 30, 2022, was 21 months for FSPs.¹² Two FSPs requested force majeure to extend the CEO endorsement deadline due to prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

16. Similarly, during the GEF-7 period, five one-step MSP and 25 EAs were CEO approved to contribute towards the implementation of Minamata Convention. The average preparation time between CEO approval submission to CEO approval was 3 months for one-step MSP and 3 months for EAs.¹³ There were no two-steps MSP in the GEF-7 period.

17. During GEF-7, 2 FSPs, 3 MSPs and 12 EAs have reached the first disbursement to contribute towards the implementation of the Minamata Convention. Average time from CEO endorsement (FSP) or CEO approval (EA/MSP) to first disbursement was 7 months.

¹¹ GEF, 2018, *GEF-7 Programming Directions*, Council Document GEF/R.7/19.

¹² The COVID-19 pandemic slowed the preparation of projects as international travel was halted in several countries. The GEF IEO has provided an evaluation of the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on GEF Activities – [GEF/E/C.63/02](#).

¹³ Two Liberia EAs resubmitted after several years by the Agency are excluded to provide more realistic average.

(d) Simplicity, flexibility and expeditiousness of the procedures for accessing funds and for implementing and reporting on projects

18. The GEF provides funding through four modalities to best suit the requirements of the countries in a flexible, simple and agile manner per the size and nature of the projects. Four modalities are: full-sized projects, medium-sized projects, enabling activities, and programmatic approaches.

Full-sized Project (FSP):	GEF project financing of more than two million US dollars. Council approval required.
Medium-sized Project (MSP):	GEF project financing of less than or equivalent to two million US dollars. The GEF CEO can approve.
Enabling Activity (EA):	A project for the preparation of a plan, strategy, or report to fulfill commitments under a convention.
Program:	A longer-term and strategic arrangement of individual yet interlinked projects that aim at achieving large-scale impacts on the global environment.

19. In addition, in light of the difficult and extraordinary situation due to COVID-19 pandemic, the GEF CEO decided to provide an automatic extension of three months to the business standard deadlines applicable to the submission of CEO Endorsements or Approvals on March 21, 2020. On June 1, 2020, this deadline was extended by an additional three months, due to the extraordinary circumstances still posed by the pandemic and its impact on the required work. The extension was six months in total. In addition, a decision was made in the 59th GEF Council Meeting (December 2020) that the GEF CEO may grant extensions to cancellation deadlines for all project types for a total of up to 24 months, upon request from the OFP (for national projects) or the GEF Agency (for regional/global projects).

(e) Adequacy and sustainability of the available resources

20. During GEF-7, \$184.1 million of GEF project financing¹⁴ was utilized for programming to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention in 87 countries. This includes 27 least developed countries (LDCs) and 35 small island developing States (SIDS).

21. During GEF-7, 25 EA projects supported ten MIAs and 16 ASGM NAPs. Three countries were non-Parties at the time of approval of GEF EA, among one has since become Party. This brought the total number of countries receiving GEF support for MIAs as at June 30, 2022 to 121 and ASGM NAPs to 48.

22. The implementation of the Minamata Convention is funded under the GEF's chemicals and waste focal area, and there are several projects that combine resources for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and other focal areas with mercury resources. In this regard, the co-financing ratio in combined projects is not calculated for mercury alone. During GEF-7 period, the overall average co-financing ratio for projects that included resources for the implementation of the Minamata Convention was 1 to 7.¹⁵ This indicates that projects and programs approved in GEF-7 have promoted multiple- source funding approaches, including more than \$640 million of co-finance from private sector.

23. The projects and programs approved in GEF-7 have not only attracted substantial financial resources from the private sector, but have also promoted active involvement in the project implementation as exemplified by initiatives such as the GEF Gold partnership planetGOLD of the Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of artisanal and small- scale gold mining (ASGM) Sector Plus (GOLD+) program which aims at taking mercury out of the supply chain to build a bridge between suppliers and corporate consumers of gold.

(f) Country ownership of activities funded by the financial mechanism

24. All of projects and programs approved during GEF-7, except for two global MSPs, were country driven endorsed by country Operational Focal Points, and as such are expected to contribute to building capacity and promoting the utilization of local expertise. In addition, all the projects and programs were in conformity with programme priorities as reflected in relevant guidance provide by

¹⁴ Excludes Project Preparation Grants (PPGs) and Agency fees.

¹⁵ According to the 2018 Co-financing Policy, co-financing is calculated based on GEF project financing for programs, FSPs and MSPs. EAs, PPGs and Agency fees are excluded.

the COPs, and all of the projects and programs, except for MIAs were related to legally binding obligations.

25. In the GEF-7 period, 25 EAs, including 10 MIA and 16 ASGM NAPs¹⁶ were approved. The primary objective of these investments is to assist nations to fulfil essential communication requirements related to the Convention, make informed policy decisions, and assist in prioritizing activities, in order to empower the nations in taking the ownership of the activities funded by the financial mechanism further.

(g) Level of stakeholder involvement

26. The GEFs Policy on Stakeholder Engagement, which became effective in July 2018, establishes mandatory requirements for GEF Agencies to engage stakeholders at all stages of the GEF's project cycle (from development, preparation to implementation and monitoring). The main objective of the policy is to promote the inclusive and meaningful participation of stakeholders in support of GEF's mandate to protect the global environment, with a view to promoting transparency, accountability, integrity, effective participation and inclusion.

27. Inclusive and meaningful participation starts with early consultations in project design. In this regard, all GEF financed projects must include a stakeholder engagement plan or assessment to describe how key stakeholders will be consulted and engaged in project implementation. The analysis of the portfolio under the chemicals and waste focal area, which aims at addressing mercury pollution, shows that all projects conducted consultations with civil society organizations, as well as with private sector and other stakeholders during project development.

28. The GEF-7 portfolio analysis, excluding EAs, showed that nearly 50 percent incorporated plans to engage civil society as well as private sector in an active role including as a co-financier. One of these roles is acting as Executing Entity and 22 percent will have civil society organizations (including academic and research organizations and international NGOs) as an Executing Entity. Civil society and indigenous peoples were identified mostly as beneficiaries of the projects' outcomes.

29. A core component of the GEF's strategy to engage the private sector includes working with multi-stakeholder platforms. The strategy's aim is to work with entire sectors, value chains or landscape actors to transform economic systems at a meaningful scale and with robust project outcomes that endure beyond GEF funding cycles. In addition to the aforementioned GEF GOLD+ and ISLANDS programs, there are excellent examples of engagement with the private sector that exemplify this strategic approach.

30. In the global project *Eliminating mercury skin lightening products* (SLPs) (GEF project ID: 10810) the key partners Label Beauté Noire, Zero Mercury Working Group, BeautyWell, Biodiversity Research Institute and Pantheon of Women Who Inspire aim to stop the production, trade and distribution of SLPs. Importantly, the project will not only address the production side of SLPs but also the powerful marketing channels and influential media representations with online retailers, such as Amazon and eBay. Cosmetics Europe will also be engaged for their distribution networks to their member cosmetics companies and other industry associations in order to scale down the promotion of SLPs and their undesirable effects, even when reformulated products no longer contain mercury, to reduce overall global demand.

31. The FSP *Accelerate implementation of dental amalgam provisions and strengthen country capacities in the environmental sound management of associated wastes under the Minamata Convention* (GEF project ID: 10936) aims to phase down the use of dental amalgam and improve the management of its associated mercury and hazardous wastes based on the risks they posed to people. This project engages the World Dental Federation representing over 200 national dental associations from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America along with the major dental industries in the participating countries. This approach brings a global scale and a level playing field for industry actors to collaborate and invest that would otherwise not be motivated to act or invest alone or take market risks that are not evenly shared.

32. The Fashion Pact is the largest industry grouping for sustainability in the fashion sector, which was launched by French President Emanuel Macron and is driven at the company CEO level, engages the 72 of the worlds largest companies and over 200 of their brands, ranging from high-end to fast fashion companies, representing one third of global production. In the GEF project *Transforming the Fashion Sector to Drive Positive Outcomes for Biodiversity, Climate, and Oceans* (GEF Project ID: 10658) their collective goal is to facilitate the fashion sector's engagement in implementing the

¹⁶ One country opted to combine MIA and NAP under one EA.

Science-Based Targets for Nature framework and to eliminate the use of mercury in the production of fashion items that contain gold or leather. Participating companies use a supply chain methodology to identify the environmental and biodiversity impacts of their supply chains with tracking and reporting on their supply chain impacts to inform their waste management and circular economy strategies.

33. In each of these cases, the approach of using multi-stakeholder platforms is bringing larger scale impacts, higher levels of co-financing and investment into solutions for their respective challenges in the management of mercury.

Annex IV***Response of the co-chairs of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to the request for inputs on the Minamata Convention's effectiveness review of the financial mechanism**

The Special Programme Terms of Reference, adopted by UNEA resolution 1/5, specify that the Special Programme's objective is to support institutional strengthening at the national level in the context of an integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste, taking into account the national development strategies, plans and priorities of each country, to increase sustainable public institutional capacity for the sound management of chemicals and wastes throughout their life cycle. Institutional strengthening under the Special Programme will facilitate and enable the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

Paragraph 4 of the Terms of Reference specifies that the Special Programme 'should avoid duplication and proliferation of funding mechanisms and associated administration, and should fund activities that fall outside the mandate of the Global Environment Facility'.

The inputs from the Special Programme on the effectiveness of the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention focus on the need to achieve complementarity and avoid duplication between the two funding mechanisms. In this respect the following is relevant:

1. The Minamata Secretariat and the Special Programme Secretariat have established a good working relationship, interacting on a regular basis during the review of project applications, and as needed on issues that may arise from time to time.

The Minamata Secretariat participates as an observer at meetings of the Special Programme Executive Board, allowing it to maintain an overview of the Special Programme's operations and approved projects.

The Minamata and Special Programme Secretariats have developed complementary mechanisms whereby each secretariat participates in the substantive review and appraisal of the applications submitted under the other funding mechanism. This ensures that the mandate of each is respected, and that new applications can build upon existing approved projects, while avoiding duplication of efforts and funding.

* The present annex has not been formally edited.

Annex V*

Submission from the Chair of the Global Mercury Partnership Advisory Group

Introduction

1. In its decision MC-4/7 (“Second review of the financial mechanism”), the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury invited submissions from Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders on their experience gained through their interactions with the financial mechanism of the Convention, over the period of August 2019 to July 2022. Submission from the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership was called for relative to its interaction with the financial mechanism in advancing the implementation of the Convention.

2. In response to this request, the Chair of the Partnership Advisory Group is delighted to hereby share some observations with respect to the experience of the Partnership. It should be highlighted that interactions with the entities comprising the financial mechanism of the Convention occur at different levels, in light of the Partnership’s multistakeholder membership and its activities. Members of the Partnership, from governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry, private sector, academia or the scientific community may indeed endorse different “roles” with respect to the Convention’s financial mechanism, including as donors, direct beneficiaries, or project partners in the implementation or execution. Further information on the work of the Partnership and its partners is made available to the Conference of the Parties through its regular activity reports¹.

I. Global Environment Facility

3. Interactions with the Global Environment Facility take place at different levels, including through direct implementation and execution of projects. The GEF Secretariat also participates on a regular basis in the meetings of the Partnership Advisory Group and of its areas of work to exchange on substantive activities of common interest.

4. Through enabling activities funded by the GEF, the Partnership has provided technical support to 67 countries undertaking Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs) and 33 countries developing National Action Plans (NAPs) on artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM), through the global component of the UNEP-implemented projects. These projects have enabled beneficiary countries to develop amongst others an overview of mercury sources, emissions and releases at the national level, and also enhance the understanding of ASGM in the country, allowing tailored strategies to be defined for the reduction of mercury sources, emissions and releases. For example, it has been estimated that through the implementation of the submitted NAPs developed by countries, close to 260 tonnes of mercury would be eliminated by 2030².

5. Information collected through national mercury inventories developed under GEF funded MIAs with the UNEP toolkit for the identification and quantification of mercury releases³, trends in the main source categories of inputs, emissions and releases of mercury and its compounds by region were the basis of exchange of information among partners of the Partnership⁴, and provided substantial data to various initiatives, such as recently to the ongoing development of factsheets on priority waste streams by the Partnership Area on Mercury Waste Management.

6. The resources allocated to the NAP projects global component, which is coordinated through the Partnership⁵, resulted in enhanced quality of NAPs (e.g. through facilitated technical peer reviews)

* The present annex has not been formally edited.

¹ Report on activities undertaken within the Global Mercury Partnership of the United Nations Environment Programme to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention (document UNEP/MC/COP.4/INF/16/Rev.1) available at: www.minamataconvention.org/en/documents/report-activities-undertaken-within-global-mercury-partnership-united-nations-0

² www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/insights-asgm-national-action-plans

³ www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/mercury-inventory-toolkit

⁴ www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/events/webinar/webinar-minamata-initial-assessments-latest-trends-key-findings-and-data-analysis

⁵ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/22321/NAP_GC_En.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

as well as further regional knowledge and experience exchange among countries, including through dedicated events organized under the Partnership. The NAP global component of the UNEP-implemented project further contributes to the sustainability of NAP projects by acting as a knowledge hub, developing and disseminating knowledge products and engaging national focal points in consultations at the regional level, including once the projects have finished.

7. The NAP global component, through the Partnership, also contributed to addressing the request by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention at its third meeting (COP3) to update the NAP guidance document with respect to ASGM tailings management, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention. The updated NAP guidance document⁶ was adopted at COP4 and the guidance document on the management of artisanal and small-scale gold mining tailings⁷ was presented.

8. The Partnership, through its Areas of work and its partners, also contributes to sector specific projects implemented with the support of the GEF, including those related to artisanal and small-scale gold mining, releases from coal combustion, mercury supply and storage, mercury cell chlor-alkali, mercury-added products and mercury waste management. Several new projects foreseeing the contribution of the Partnership are also in the course of development or inception.

9. For example, the Partnership Area on mercury in artisanal and small-scale gold mining is providing technical support to the planetGOLD programme, which aims at helping gold miners replace mercury with cleaner techniques, at improving access to finance and at facilitating formalization of the sector. The programme was initially launched in 2019 in eight countries (Burkina Faso, Colombia, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, Peru and the Philippines), with a global knowledge management and communications component. In June 2020, the GEF Council approved an expansion of the planetGOLD programme to another nine countries (Bolivia, Ecuador, Ghana, Honduras, Madagascar, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Suriname, and Uganda) and in June 2021, to an additional seven countries (Sierra Leone, Zambia, Mali, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Nicaragua, Ecuador).

10. On coal combustion, the GEF funded project: “Assessment of existing and future emissions reduction from the coal sector toward the implementation of the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions” implemented by UNEP and executed by the Partnership area leads, Macquarie University and the International Centre for Sustainable Carbon (ICSC) will draw on expertise and input from the Partnership Area on Mercury Releases from Coal Combustion and partners. This project, which started in October 2021, consists of two components: a comprehensive sectoral analysis, which will review scientific data on mercury/POPs/GHGs from the coal sector and estimate future emissions in the light of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement commitments and targets; and the synthesis of strategies, including policy guidance, for the coal sector’s emissions reduction contribution to the Stockholm and Minamata conventions.

11. On mercury-added products, the GEF funded project “Eliminating Mercury Skin Lightening Products” implemented by UNEP and co-executed by WHO and the Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) in collaboration with the Governments of Gabon, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka, will receive technical support from the Partnership, as confirmed by its Steering Committee (December 2022 meeting). In particular, the Partnership will support knowledge generation, curation and dissemination through stakeholder engagement and its channels, as well as global communication and advocacy. The Partnership’s network will also be leveraged to gather data, especially on supply chain aspects⁸. The project held its inception workshop in February 2023. Other projects focusing on dental amalgam and mercury-containing medical devices in the course of development or inception foresee the contribution of the Partnership in terms of technical support.

12. On mercury cell chlor-alkali production, the GEF funded project “Eliminate mercury use and adequately manage mercury and mercury wastes in the chlor-alkali sector in Mexico” implemented by UNEP and executed by the Environmental Protection Institute of Nuevo Leon and the Mexican Center for Cleaner Production, is expected to draw on the Partnership to provide assistance for the remediation assessment and dissemination with partners, with experts from the Partnership to be invited to share experience and expertise. The Project Cooperation Agreements with both executing agencies are in the process of being signed. The project is expected to start in the coming months through the inception workshop and the first Project Steering Committee.

⁶ www.mercuryconvention.org/en/documents/article-7-artisanal-and-small-scale-gold-mining-update-%20guidance-document-preparation

⁷ www.mercuryconvention.org/en/documents/guidance-document-management-artisanal-and-small-scale-%20gold-mining-tailings%20

⁸ www.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/our-work/mercury-products/eliminating-mercury-skin-lightening-products

II. Specific International Programme

13. In the framework of the third Round of applications to the Specific International Programme of the Minamata Convention, the Partnership, through its Secretariat, also contributed to the review process of project proposals submitted by Parties with the provision of technical input and the participation in Cross-Secretariat Task Team meetings, together with the secretariats of the Minamata Convention, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Special Programme.

14. Members of the Partnership also contributes to the actual delivery of projects. For example, Members of the Partnership Area on Mercury Air Transport and Fate Research were involved in the Antigua and Barbuda and Gabon projects supported by the Specific International Programme, through the provision of assistance in initiation of regional networks such as the Caribbean Region Mercury Monitoring Network, and is envisaging similar networks in other regions such as central Africa and southern Asia.

III. Elements for possible consideration in the review of the financial mechanism

15. The Chair of the Global Mercury Partnership reiterates his appreciation of the funding mechanism that support countries in the effective implementation of the Minamata Convention, and would like to bring the following points to the attention of the Conference of the Parties:

- The objective and work priorities of the Partnership are strongly aligned with those of the Minamata Convention and its financial mechanism. With the overall goal to protect human health and the environment from mercury, the Partnership indeed works closely with a wide range of stakeholders across sectors, to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention, provide knowledge and science and raise awareness towards global action on mercury.
- The Partnership can further contribute to supporting GEF and SIP funded projects through different angles:
 - First, projects can benefit from leveraging the broad network of the Partnership to support the development of various types of knowledge products and their dissemination, including tools, guidance, methodologies, training materials and knowledge hubs coordination that can benefit all Parties and relevant stakeholders. With its specific set up, the Partnership has the ability to ensure the materials developed are widely disseminated and respond as closely as possible to countries needs in implementing their obligations under the Minamata Convention.
 - Second, provisions for technical assistance from the Partnership may be encouraged in future projects developed for funding through the financial mechanism, including through regional or global components, allowing the Partnership to contribute with its expertise to project implementation, responding to requests from projects stakeholders. The Partnership may also be included from the design phase of the projects, as relevant, allowing to draw on its knowledge, network and expertise, including in the development of baseline information.
 - Third, the involvement of the Partnership in the delivery of projects funded by the GEF and the SIP could be encouraged as a means of bringing diverse stakeholders, knowledge and expertise together to support implementation through communities of practice. The awareness raising and outreach activities of the Partnership through its broad and multistakeholder network allows for scaling up of results and broad reach out, ensuring lessons learnt are shared amounts a wide group but also the sustainability of the project results and their future uptake.