



GLOBAL
MERCURY
PARTNERSHIP



United Nations
Environment Programme

Customs codes for mercury-added products

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Lunchtime event:

Solutions, Innovation and Technology for Reducing Mercury Pollution

Organized by:

*The Global Mercury Partnership
UN Environment Chemicals and Health Branch*

Minamata Convention on Mercury, COP 2

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Overview

- Objectives & rationale for targeted customs (HS) codes
- Current situation
- Example from Uruguay
- Relevant efforts of the UN Global Mercury Products Partnership
- COP 2 plenary decision to forward the CRP to a contact group

Objectives

Help countries to:

- Better implement the Minamata Convention:
 - Article 4 obligations to phase out the manufacture, import, and export of mercury-added products listed in Annex A
 - facilitate Article 21 reporting requirements
- better understand domestic production and use of mercury-added products
- better understand their imports and exports of mercury-added products
- better prioritize their mercury reduction activities

Current customs codes

- 190 countries have agreed on a harmonized numbering system to identify internationally traded goods
- The World Customs Organization (WCO) oversees the "Harmonized System" (HS) of 6-digit codes
- Sub-codes of more than 6 digits may be created at the discretion of national authorities
- Most present codes (even to 8 digits) do not segregate Hg-added products

Examples of current customs codes that may include mercury-added products

HS code and commodity description		All items contain mercury?
8506.40	silver oxide batteries	no
8539.31	fluorescent lamps	yes
9025.11	liquid-filled thermometers	no
9025.11.10	liquid-filled thermometers, clinical	no

Typical process for creating sub-codes with more than 6 digits – Uruguay example (slide 1)

- Minamata focal point is the Environment Directorate (DINAMA)
- DINAMA wanted better information on mercury-added products
- DINAMA established a Working Group called "Proyecto Mercurio" :
 - Ministry of Public Health
 - Technological Laboratory of Uruguay
 - National Directorate of Customs

Uruguay example (slide 2)

- The Working Group "Proyecto Mercurio" was asked to create tariff codes in the Mercosur Common Nomenclature for:
 - Medical devices containing mercury, as well as
 - Hexachlorobutadiene and other controlled chemicals
- The new codes for mercury-added medical devices were notified to the Ministry of Economy and Finance
- As all new codes were defined by more than 6 digits, there was no need for WCO approval

Customs codes to target mercury-added products

National authorities can create new sub-codes (more than 6 digits) for purposes of tariffs, statistics, trade policy, etc.

Uruguay's new definition of a mercury-specific sub-code (10 digits) for thermometers		All items contain mercury?
9025.11	Termómetros de líquido	No
9025.11.10	Termómetros de líquido, clínicos	No
9025.11.10.10	Termómetros de líquido, clínicos, que contengan mercurio	Yes
9025.11.10.90	Termómetros de líquido, clínicos, los demás	No

Initiative of the Mercury Products Partnership

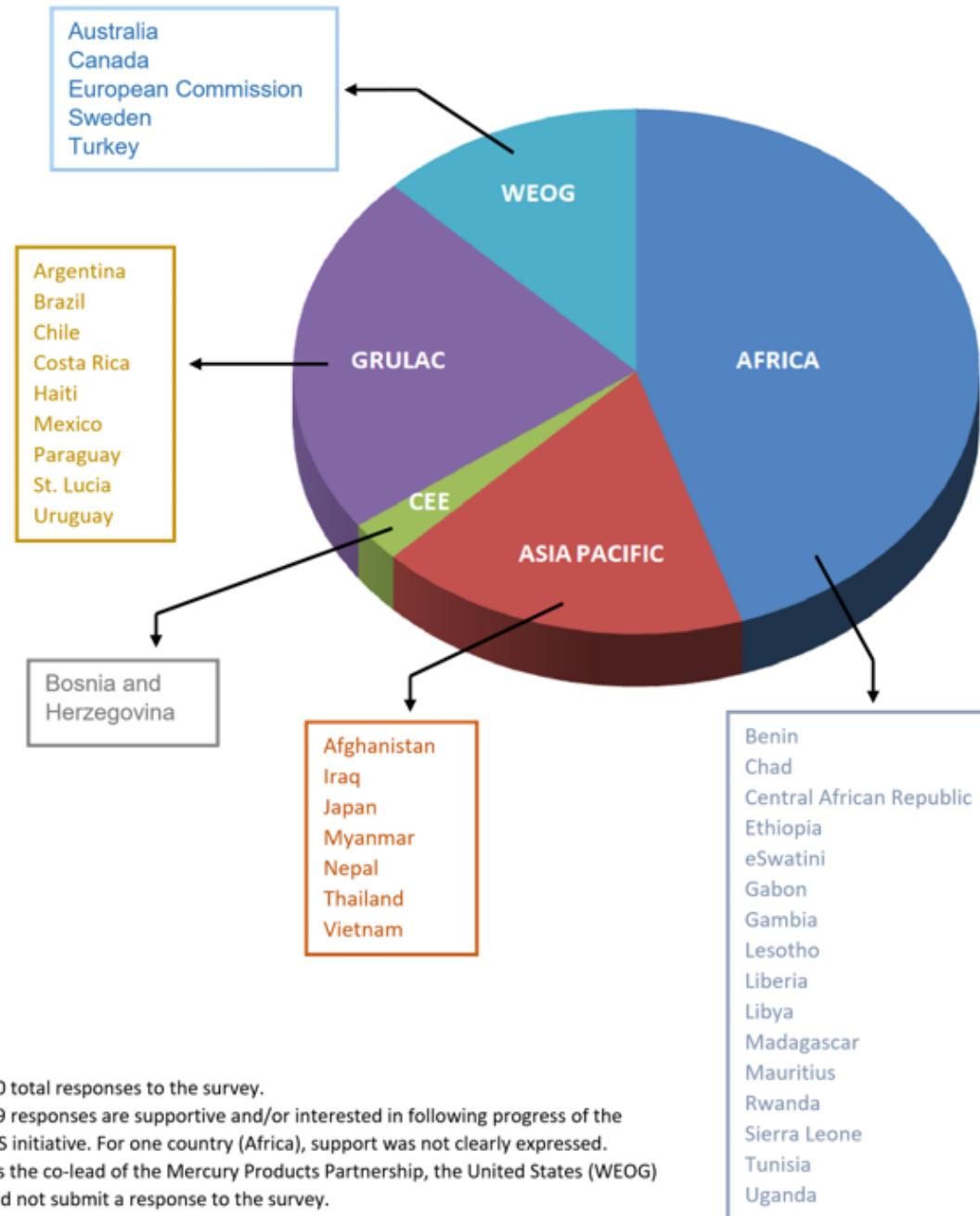
- In July 2018 the UN Mercury Products Partnership was asked to assess general support for targeted and harmonized customs codes
- The Mercury Products Partnership developed a series of survey questions
- The Minamata Convention Secretariat sent the survey to all delegates to COP 1
- 40 responses to the survey, of which 39 expressed support for efforts to identify and harmonize targeted customs codes
- Further discussions were held during regional meetings in preparation for COP 1

Survey questions

1. Is your country discussing or presently considering modifying or adding HS codes for the purposes of obtaining better information on mercury-added products?
2. If you answered "no" to Question 1, would your country likely be interested in participating in such an initiative?
3. If you answered "yes" to Question 1, what changes to HS codes have been planned or carried out, and what further changes are expected?
4. Which agency or agencies in your country (often the customs authorities in collaboration with the environment ministry) would be responsible for adapting or creating HS commodity codes at the 8- and 10-digit levels?
5. Is your country presently using data generated by the HS codes to identify or quantify trade in any mercury-added products?
6. If you answered "yes" to Question 5, which codes and/or which products has your country been tracking?

Survey responses

Global level of support¹ by region for a Harmonized System (HS) code initiative, based on current responses² to the Products Partnership survey³



¹ 40 total responses to the survey.

² 39 responses are supportive and/or interested in following progress of the HS initiative. For one country (Africa), support was not clearly expressed.

³ As the co-lead of the Mercury Products Partnership, the United States (WEOG) did not submit a response to the survey.

Further information

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