

Factsheets for the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes

As of March 2026

About these factsheets

- This is a series of technical factsheets developed by the Waste Management Area (WMA) of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership to support the environmentally sound management (ESM) of mercury wastes to assist countries facing challenges in the management of mercury wastes.
- These factsheets are intended to complement the technical guidelines for the ESM of mercury wastes developed under the Basel Convention, by providing general information to practitioners, particularly in developing countries, that is common to specific mercury waste streams at different stages of waste management. Therefore, the factsheets should not be used as the sole source of information for the implementation of the Minamata Convention and Basel Conventions, but rather as a technical note that the audience may wish to consider when taking relevant actions.
- The audience is strongly encouraged to refer to other documents including the technical guidelines under the Basel Convention. *The Catalogue of Technologies and Services on Mercury Waste Management* developed by the WMA is also a useful tool to identify specific technologies and potential entities to cooperate with.
- Be noted that the contents of the factsheets may be updated as necessary.

- About Waste Management Area

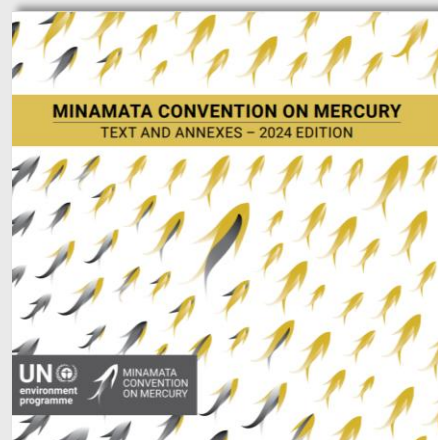
The WMA is one of the Partnership areas of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. The WMA is currently led by Dr. Misuzu Asari and the Ministry of the Environment, Japan. The WMA consists of more than 100 partners from different types of stakeholders and regions.

See our website for more details. [Mercury waste management | Global Mercury Partnership](#)

Overview of the ESM of Mercury wastes

About the Minamata Convention and mercury wastes

- The Minamata Convention on mercury is a globally treaty aimed at protecting human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury. The Convention is adopted in 2013 and entered into force in 2017. As of October 2024, there are 151 Parties to the Convention.
- The Convention reflects an innovative and comprehensive approach, addressing mercury throughout its lifecycle from its mining to its management as waste.
- In its Article 11 (Mercury wastes), each party is required to take appropriate measures so that mercury waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner, taking into account the guidelines developed under the Basel Convention and in accordance with requirements that the Conference of the Parties (COP) shall adopt.
- At the previous COPs, parties have agreed on the threshold to define the scope of mercury wastes, but have not agreed on the requirements to be adopted. Therefore, parties need to take measures to manage mercury wastes in an environmentally sound manner, mainly taking into account the technical guidelines for the ESM of mercury wastes adopted at the COP to the Basel Convention.



About the ESM

- Article 2 of the Basel Convention defines that “Environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes or other wastes means taking all practicable steps to ensure that hazardous wastes or other wastes are managed in a manner which will protect human health and environment against the adverse effects which may result from such wastes”.
- Although the scope of the Minamata Convention (mercury wastes) and the Basel Convention (hazardous wastes and other wastes) do not fully coincide, the relevant definitions of the Basel Convention apply to wastes covered under the Minamata Convention. Therefore, parties may wish to consider the definition of ESM under the Basel Convention when taking appropriate measures to manage mercury wastes.