

National Training on Strengthening Country-Level Inter-Agency Coordination on Trade of Mercury

Date: 23rd – 24th June 2025

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Tentative Programme Agenda

Background and Objectives

Effective mercury trade enforcement requires tailored national strategies that align with each country's regulatory and operational context. This in-country training focuses on practical, hands-on exercises to enhance coordination among customs officers, environmental regulators, and law enforcement authorities. Strengthening inter-agency collaboration is essential for detecting, monitoring, and preventing illicit mercury trade, which remains a persistent challenge across the Asian Region.

This initiative aims to equip national enforcement agencies with the technical skills and enforcement tools necessary to combat mercury smuggling. By integrating regional collaboration with country-specific training, the program fosters a comprehensive enforcement network, enhancing national and cross-border cooperation to improve compliance with the Minamata Convention and other trade regulations. Ultimately, this approach will bolster national enforcement capacity and contribute to regional efforts to eliminate mercury trade.

Objectives

1. Build country-specific enforcement capacity through hands-on training.
2. Improve coordination between national agencies to close enforcement gaps.
3. Train officers in forensic detection and risk assessment for mercury shipments.
4. Initiate a national action plan for mercury trade control.

Expected Outcomes

1. Strengthened inter-agency coordination for mercury trade enforcement.
2. Improved capacity of national authorities to detect and prevent mercury trade.
3. Standardized procedures for customs and law enforcement authorities.
4. Initiation of country-specific action plans and policy recommendations.
5. Gather up to date information on mercury trade data and national challenges.

Tentative Agenda

Day 1- Monday 23 June 2025		
8:30 - 9:00	Registration – housekeeping announcements.	AIT
9:00 – 9:30	Opening remarks	Mr. Thomas Verbaere, Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch, Industry and Economy Division of UNEP Mr. Ts. Urtnasan, the State Secretary of MOECC Dr. Guilberto Borongan, Director, Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT RRC.AP)
9:30 – 9:50	Introduction of Participants	All
9:50 – 10:00	Objectives, expected outcomes, and schedule of the training.	Ashley Bastiansz, Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI)
10:00 – 10:15	Implementation of the Minamata Convention in Mongolia [with simultaneous interpretation]	Mr. L. Batzorig, Senior Officer responsible for Chemical Impact Policy, MOECC
10:15 – 10:30	Mercury Use and Environmental Impacts	Mark Burton, BRI
10:30 – 10:45	Human Health Impacts of Mercury	Elena Jordan, World Health Organisation (WHO) - <i>virtual</i>
10:45 – 11:00	Overview of Mercury Trade and Related the Minamata Convention Obligations	Tahlia Ali Shah, BRI - <i>virtual</i>
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Group Photo and Health Break</i>	
11:15 – 11:35	Mercury Mass Flow in Mongolia	Kyaw Nyunt Maung, UNEP

11:35 – 11:50	National Customs Existing Procedures for sound handling of seized commodities	Mr. Tegshbayar Tumurbaatar, Senior State Customs Inspector, Quarantine Division, Customs General Administration of Mongolia
11:50 – 12:30	Atmospheric Survey and Analysis (Manual Active Sampling Method)	AIT
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30 – 14:00	Understanding the role of Customs and the available resources for enhancing implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury/other environmental agreements	Anna Kobylecka, World Customs Organisation (WCO)- <i>virtual</i>
14:00 – 15:45	Practical exercises on customs inspection procedures and mercury shipment profiling (to include case studies on smuggling tactics and interception methods and identifying and handling illegal mercury shipment scenarios)	Facilitator: Ashley Bastiansz, BRI All participants Note-takers: Mark Burton, BRI and AIT
15:45 – 15:55	<i>Health Break</i>	
15:55 – 16:15	Risk-assessment methodologies: Mercury detection and forensic analysis techniques- XRF	Mark Burton and Ashley Bastiansz, BRI
16:15 – 16:30	Wrap up of day's outcomes and plans for day 2.	BRI and all participants.

Day 2 – Tuesday 24 June 2025

9:00 – 9:40	Cross-Agency Collaboration in Mercury Trade Enforcement- - Working with environmental, police, other relevant law enforcement authorities, and health agencies - Information-sharing protocols and joint operations - Developing national action plans and SOPs for enforcement agencies	Ashley Bastiansz, BRI Anna Kobylecka, World Customs Organisation (WCO)- <i>virtual</i>
9:40 - 11:00	Practical Exercise: Planning a Joint Operation Group activity: Simulate planning a joint operation with Customs and other agencies	Facilitator: Ashley Bastiansz, BRI All participants Note-takers: Mark Burton, BRI and AIT

11:00 – 11:15	<i>Health Break</i>	
11:15 – 11:30	Handling and Disposal of Mercury Waste	Tahlia Ali Shah, BRI - <i>virtual</i>
11:30 – 11:50	Experiences in the region - Indonesia's Experience in Managing Mercury Trade, Storage and Disposal in ASGM	Krishna Zaki, Nexus3 Foundation - <i>virtual</i>
11:50 - 12:10	ASGM Experience in Mongolia - PlanetGOLD	Khishgee Dondov PlanetGOLD
12:10 – 12:30	Summary of Discussions and Next Steps for Potential Development of National Action Plan for Mongolia – <i>Open Discussion</i> Closing Remarks	Ashley Bastiansz, BRI, Mongolia Customs Representative All Participants

Half Day Field Visit is scheduled after Lunch with BRI, AIT and MOECC