Wednesday 7 July 2021
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm CEST

MERCURY IN PRODUCTS PARTNERSHIP AREA
- 2021 MEETING -

UNEP GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP

Mercury in products Area*

AGENDA

1. *Update on Partnership Area overarching activities and new partners*
2. *Draft guidance document on the use of customs codes under the Minamata Convention*
3. *Organization of online information-sharing sessions by the Partnership Area*
4. *Updates by partners on ongoing work related to mercury in products*
5. *Any other topic*

Item 1. Update on Partnership Area overarching activities and new partners

Welcome to New Members!

- Joined in 2020-2021
  - Ministry of Environment of Gabon
  - National Energy Technology Laboratory
  - European Center for Environmental Medicine
  - 3s Group Inc
  - Picoyune LLC
  - Centre Africain pour la Santé Environnementale (CASE)
  - International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
  - Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC)
  - University of Florence, Department of Earth Sciences
  - Institute of Geosciences and Earth Resources (IGG) of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR)

- Membership now at 89 members

Annual Highlights

- Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS Codes)
  - Assisted in developing report submitted to COP-3
    - Describe the existing universe of HS Codes and protocol
    - Review the various coding strategies used by the World Customs Organization, as well as national governments and regional entities
    - Suggest potential approaches to be considered by the COP, which draw from the totality of research conducted
  - At COP-3, a directive relevant to "mercury-added products listed in Annex A to the Convention"
    - A list of possible customs nomenclature codes of more than six digits that could be used by parties
    - A compilation of examples provided by national experts of customs nomenclature codes of more than six digits currently in use by parties
    - Examples of good practices of customs nomenclature codes at the national level
    - An assessment of whether the subsequent development of six-digit harmonized codes would be a useful complement to codes of more than six digits
  - Assisted in developing report to submit to COP-4
    - Posted for comment in June 2021 on website for intersessional work and submissions for COP-4
    - http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Meetings/Intersessionalwork/tabid/8279/language/en-US/Default.aspx

- Product-Specific Webinars
  - Medical Devices (October 13, 2020)
    - Presentation of information, guidance and knowledge on mercury-added medical measuring devices and exchange of experiences, best practices and challenges, in phasing out such products by the end of 2020
  - Cosmetics (November 30, 2020)
    - Overview of current knowledge on mercury in skin-lightening products and experiences and lessons learned at a country level

Potential Future Activities

- Survey – Article 4 Implementation Challenges
  - Asking if countries faced challenges in finalizing 2020 phase-out measures and how potential capacity-building could assist in required reporting in 2021 with respect to those measures
  - Asking if countries, per review of Annexes A and B, continue to face challenges in achieving consistent assessment of imports/exports of products
- Additional Webinars
  - Lighting
  - Dental amalgam
- Phase-out Planning and Outreach
  - Ongoing and future work in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean

More Information

Thomas Groeneveld

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
OCSPP/OPPT/ECRMD
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. (MC 7404T)
Room 5213J
Washington, DC 20460
P: (202) 566-1188
E: groeneveld.thomas@epa.gov

Mercury in products website:

https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/our-work/mercury-products

Item 2. Draft guidance document prepared for COP4 on the use of customs codes under the Minamata Convention

Overview of the draft guidance document

by Peter Maxson

Concorde East/West Sprl

Background

- Better harmonized customs codes may be expected to:
- Facilitate the implementation of Article 4 of the Convention
- Improve national reporting under Article 21
- Foster better communication among trading partners
- COP-2 Decision MC-2/9 requested information on:
- Suggesting possible approaches for customs codes to identify and distinguish non-mercury-added and mercury-added products listed in Annex A to the Convention

Report to COP-3: UNEP/MC/COP.3/INF/12

- "Approaches to identify and distinguish non-mercury-added and mercury-added products listed in Annex A, based on the Harmonized System framework"

  (A collaboration between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Products Partnership Area of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership)

  - What are customs codes?
  - Customs codes survey
  - Follow-up research and consultation
  - Focus on Annex A products
  - Possible approaches going forward

Challenge: Identify and track mercury-added products

Customs code	Purpose	Product definition
90	Chapter	Optical, photographic, cinematographic, measuring, checking, precision, medical or surgical instruments and apparatus; parts and accessories thereof
9025	Heading	Hydrometers and similar floating instruments, thermometers, pyrometers, barometers, hygrometers and psychrometers, recording or not, and any combination of these instruments
9025.1	HS Subheading (5-digit)	-Thermometers and pyrometers, not combined with other instruments
9025.11	HS Subheading (6-digit)	--Liquid filled, for direct reading
9025.11.10	National subdivision (typically determines duty)	---Clinical thermometers
9025.11.10.10	National subdivision (statistical suffix)	-------Containing mercury

Source: Based on codes developed by Uruguay

COP-3 Decision MC-3/3

The Secretariat and the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (involving relevant experts) were requested to draft a guidance document in preparation for COP-4:

- For Annex A products, suggest possible customs codes of more than six digits;
- For other mercury-added products, give examples of customs codes of more than six digits in use by Parties;
- Provide examples where customs codes are supplemented by other tools for controlling trade;
- Assess whether new six-digit codes would also help to control the trade of mercury-added products.

Annex A products – more than 6 digits

Measuring devices

HS reference	Proposed statistical codes	Description
		Other instruments and appliances including sphygmomanometers
9018.90.92		Devices for measuring blood pressure
	9018.90.92.10	Sphygmomanometers containing mercury
	9018.90.92.90	Other
9025.11.10		Clinical thermometers, liquid filled, for direct reading
	9025.11.10.10	Containing mercury
	9025.11.10.90	Other
9025.11.40		Liquid-filled thermometers, for direct reading, not combined with other instruments, other than clinical thermometers
	9025.11.40.10	Containing mercury
	9025.11.40.90	Other

Other mercury-added products - Examples

8539.31		Fluorescent, hot cathode discharge lamps, other than ultraviolet lamps	Diverse
	8539.31.00.20	Lamps for general lighting purposes incorporated with other equipment, and including an E 27 socket	Uruguay
	8539.31.00.30	Lamps for general lighting purposes incorporated with other equipment, and including E 14 and E 40 sockets	Uruguay
	8539.31.00.19	Others	Uruguay
	8539.31.01	Fluorescent lamps or tubes in the form of an “O” or a “U”	Mexico
	8539.31.99	Other hot cathode fluorescent lamps	Mexico

Other measures supporting customs codes

- As in previous slides, any country can easily add 10-digit codes to identify mercury-added products

- Alternatively, if customs officials find import or export of products with relevant six-digit codes, they may request information from the importers or exporters on whether the goods are mercury-added products listed in Annex A to the Convention

Assessment of 6-digit customs codes

6-digit codes could be implemented for a number of products

- Advantages
  - "Automatic" international harmonization via World Customs Organisation
  - More comprehensive and consistent data

- Disadvantages
  - Long WCO formal procedure (5-year cycle)
  - No guarantee of approval, which often depends on the volume of trade
  - Not easy to accommodate future amendments to Annex A

Discussion on selected key aspects

- Other examples of the use of customs codes of more than six digits
- Other examples of good practice with respect to the use of measures to supplement customs codes
- Views on the assessment of developing six digits harmonized codes, taking into account experience concerning such codes under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements
- Any suggested improvements to the proposed codes

Next steps and ongoing commenting process

- The guidance document will be submitted as COP-4 document
- Call for comments open until 19 July 2021
- Input may be sent to the Minamata Convention Secretariat at: mea-minamatasecretariat@un.org

Item 3. Organization of online information-sharing sessions by the Partnership Area

Information sharing sessions

- Launch of Global Mercury Partnership Webinars in 2020

- Contributions to « Minamata Online » and joint events

Information sharing sessions

Topics identified for future webinars include two of relevance to the work of the Mercury in Products Partnership Area:

1) Implementing the products phase out: focus on mercury-containing lamps
2) Phasing down mercury use in dental amalgam

Item 4. Updates by partners on ongoing work related to mercury in products

Item 5. Any other topic

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Yellowfin Tuna, Courtesy NOAA Fisheries, © Photo by Jeff Muir

Closure