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UNEP Global Mercury Partnership

Draft proposed report to the Executive Director on overall progress March 2009

Note by the Secretariat

The Overarching Framework of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership outlines the responsibility of the Partnership Advisory Group to report on overall progress of the Partnership to the UNEP Executive Director.

The Chemicals Branch of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics has drafted an overall progress report which is set out in the annex to the present note. The current version reflects input received from the partnership areas within the 2007-2008 partnership area evaluations and outlines a series of questions for consideration of the Partnership Advisory Group in the aim of encouraging the future work of the partnership areas. A separate report on activities undertaken under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is available as document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.1/3.

The Partnership Advisory Group may wish to discuss and provide input on the proposed overall progress report taking in mind the individual partnership area evaluations as well as the outcome of UNEP Governing Council Decision 25/5.

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

Annex I:

UNEP Global Mercury Partnership

Draft report on overall progress

Introduction

1. The Operational Guidelines of the Overarching Framework of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership specify that one of the responsibilities of the Partnership Advisory Group is to report on overall progress to the Executive Director. Related to this, UNEP is to facilitate reporting on progress to governments, including the UNEP Governing Council or its subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, and the partnership areas are to report biennially to UNEP in accordance with the UNEP reporting format.

2. Reporting is to include tracking of partnership activities and partner contributions as well as assessing effectiveness, and measuring the impact of partnership activities on the achievement of the overall goal. The reports are to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

3. This document is a report on overall progress of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. It reflects input received from the partnership areas within the 2007-2008 partnership area evaluations and considers the future direction of the Partnership.

4. A separate report on activities undertaken under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is available as document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.1/3.

Section I: Assessment of overall progress (2007-2008)

5. In paragraph 20 of UNEP Governing Council Decision 25/5, the Executive Director of UNEP and members of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership were commended for the progress in developing and implementing the Partnership as a vehicle for immediate action on mercury and the progress made by the Partnership in creating an overarching framework for immediate action in the priority areas identified in decision 24/3 IV was welcomed. The continued involvement of UNEP in the Partnership was also endorsed.

6. Overall interest in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is strong. Partners agree that the partnership areas are a good venue to share and exchange relevant information.

7. This section provides an assessment of overall progress of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership in 2007-2008.

(a) Development of the Overarching Framework

8. In line with paragraph 27 (a) of UNEP Governing Council Decision 24/3, an overarching framework for the partnerships has been developed under the auspices of the Executive Director and in consultation with Government and other stakeholders. The Overarching Framework was developed in consultation with governments and other stakeholders and was finalized at the Meeting of Partners in April 2008.

9. The Overarching Framework establishes an overall goal for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership: to protect human health and the global environment from the release of mercury and its compounds by minimizing and, where feasible, ultimately eliminating, global anthropogenic mercury releases to air, water and land.

10. UNEP Governing Council Decision 24/3 also called for the development of business plans in the Partnership. The Overarching Framework outlines a Business Plan Template that provides guidance to the partnership areas in structuring the partnership area business plans. Business plans have been drafted for the following partnership areas: artisanal and small-scale gold mining; mercury cell chlor-alkali production; mercury air transport and fate research; mercury in products; mercury releases from coal combustion; and mercury waste management. The business plans are available as meeting document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.1/2 - Partnership area business plans.

(b) Expanding the number and scope of partnerships

11. Decision 24/3 IV called for the expansion of the partnership programme to include new growing or related sectors such as vinyl chloride monomer production, non-ferrous metals mining and cement production and waste combustion. UNEP sought feedback from Governments and other stakeholders on these new and emerging areas, together with other emerging areas outlined in paragraph 19 of decision 24/3 IV, such as mercury supply and storage.

12. Initial feedback indicated that vinyl chloride monomer production is a regional issue and may be addressed in a regional context within Asia. A project has been initiated in this area where UNEP is working with the Government of China to facilitate regional discussions on the issue to foster regional action planning, awareness-raising and technical information exchange on best practices and innovative approaches. A two day workshop on Mercury Reduction in Carbide PVC Production is planned in Beijing, China for the May-June 2009 timeframe. An investigative Report on carbide PVC production is currently being prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection in China that will inform the workshop. As a final result of this project, the Ministry of Environmental Protection in China will prepare a Carbide PVC Analysis Report to be completed in late 2009.

13. The European Cement Association is compiling worldwide data on the status of mercury emissions from cement kilns collected from public literature, scientific databases and individual company measurements. Along with the UNEP report on atmospheric emissions requested by the Governing Council in its decision 24/3 IV, this information will provide a basis for informed decision on the best means to address the challenge of mercury releases from cement production. The Partnership Advisory Group recommends continued activity in this area. Furthermore, the Partnership Advisory Group would recommend that UNEP, together with the partnership area leads and key stakeholders, develop a proposal for consideration at the next Partnership Advisory Group meeting on how to best incorporate this sector within the Global Mercury Partnership with the aim to foster sustained activities in this area.

14. The partnership area on mercury waste management has been established, and will be led and supported by the Government of Japan initially for two years. The business plan is available within meeting document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.1/2 - Partnership area business plans.

15. In response to needs identified in UNEP Governing Council Decision 24/3, draft partnership area business plans have been prepared for Mercury Supply and Storage as well as Non-Ferrous Metals Production. They are posted on the website of the Chemicals Branch of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics at http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/partnerships/new_partnership.htm. No lead has been identified for these areas. A lead is necessary for coordinated activities to be pursued actively in these areas.

(c) Partner Membership

16. As of 4 February 2009, the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership was comprised of 27 members. In addition, there are a number of participating organizations that have yet to submit official support letters to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. The Partnership Advisory Group would encourage such participating organizations to signal formal support to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership through a formal letter of support as specified in the Overarching Framework.

17. The Partnership Advisory Group would recommend that UNEP and the partnership areas continue to encourage new partners to join the partnership.

(d) Endeavouring to secure adequate funds

18. The Executive Director sent a fund-raising letter dated 26 March 2007 to UNEP official focal points drawing attention to decision 24/3 IV and the need for funding to support the implementation of the decision, including work on partnerships. The United States of America subsequently pledged $1,000,380 to support the work of partnerships.

19. A number of strategic activities have recently been supported:

i) The Government of Norway is supporting $1,500,000 of activity in three strategic areas: the primary mercury mining project in Kyrgyzstan, the mercury storage projects in Asia and South America, and the UNEP mercury waste project.

ii) The European Commission is supporting a three year, $1,303,000 project aimed at reducing mercury emissions from coal combustion in the energy sector.

20. UNEP has also taken other steps to secure funding, such as through the establishment of the Mercury Small Grants Programme and through raising limited funds through the Strategic Approach's Quick Start Programme (in particular for activities relating to artisanal and small-scale gold mining).

21. In addition, partners in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership have directly supported a number of projects. Other donors have expressed interest.

22. UNEP has approved the support of one P-03 level staff to support the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership with funding from the core Environment Fund.

23. A common weakness identified in the partnership area evaluations for 2007-2008 includes the lack of funding for partnership area activities. Additional funding is required to implement activities under the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership in line with priority actions established in the partnership area business plans.

(e) Status of the partnership areas

24. Business plans have been drafted for the following partnership areas: artisanal and small-scale gold mining; mercury cell chlor-alkali production; mercury air transport and fate research; mercury in products; mercury releases from coal combustion; and mercury waste management. The business plans are available as meeting document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.1/2 - Partnership area business plans.

25. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is acting as lead in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnership area. The objective of this partnership area is the continued reduction and elimination of mercury uses and releases in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. The partnership area has set a target of a 50 per cent reduction in mercury demand in artisanal and small-scale gold mining by the year 2017.

26. The United States of America is acting as lead of the mercury cell chlor-alkali production partnership area. The objective of this partnership area is to minimize significantly and, where feasible, eliminate global mercury releases to air, water and land that may occur

from chlor-alkali production facilities. The partnership area has set a target of 29 per cent reduction in mercury demand by the year 2015.

27. Italy is acting as lead of the mercury air transport and fate research partnership area. The objective of this partnership area is to increase global understanding of international mercury emissions sources, fate and transport by accelerating the development of sound scientific information to address uncertainties and data gaps in global mercury cycling and its patterns (e.g., air concentrations and deposition rates, source-receptor relationships, hemispheric and global air transport and transformation and emission sources), by enhancing information sharing among scientists and between them and policymakers and by providing technical assistance and training, where possible, to support the development of critical information.

28. The United States of America is acting as lead of the mercury-containing products partnership area. The partnership area objective is to phase out and eventually eliminate mercury in products and to eliminate releases during manufacturing and other industrial processes via environmentally sound production, transportation, storage, and disposal processes. Numeric reduction targets have been established for the various product categories.

29. The International Energy Agency (IEA) Clean Coal Centre is acting as lead of the mercury releases from coal combustion partnership area. The objective of this partnership area is the continued minimization and elimination of mercury releases from coal combustion where possible. At this stage, no numerical targets are established for this partnership area.

30. The Government of Japan is acting as lead in the mercury waste management partnership area, which was initiated in early 2008 by the Government of Japan. The objective of the partnership area is to minimize and, where feasible, eliminate unintentional mercury releases to air, water, and land from waste containing mercury and mercury compounds by following a life cycle management approach.

(f) Assessing effectiveness of the partnership areas

31. Table 1 and Table 2 on the following pages provide a baseline of available data that might be considered a basis to track partnership area progress in the future.

Table 1: Possible mercury demand baseline data

	Demand 2005 (tonnes)	Demand Projection 2015 (tonnes)		Partnership target (tonnes)
Partnership areas				
Artisanal and small scale gold mining*	650-1000	650		410 (Hg demand by 2017)
Mercury cell chlor alkali production	450-550	350		250 (Hg demand by 2015)
Mercury containing products				
Batteries	300-600	200		50 (Hg demand by 2015)
Lamps*	100-150	125		100 (Hg demand by 2015)
dental amalgam*	240-300	270		230 (Hg demand by 2015)
measuring and control devices	150-350	125		50 (Hg demand by 2015)
electrical and electronic devices	150-350	110		50 (Hg demand by 2015)
others such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and traditional and ritual uses*	30-60	40		30 (Hg demand by 2015)
Mercury Releases from coal combustion (numbers are for overall fossil fuel consumption)				
Waste incineration				
Total	**2070-3360**	**1870**		**1170**[1] **(37 % reduction from the 2015 projections)**
Other significant areas with demand				
Vinyl Chloride Monomer Production*	600-800	1000		1000 (2015 projection, no target established)
Overall Total Demand (including VCM)		2870		2170 (24 % reduction from the 2015 projections)

* Area where the availability of suitable economically feasible alternatives is limited or non-existent.

Data based on: Supply of Supply, Trade and Demand Information on Mercury, UNEP 2006
The Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment: Sources, Emissions and Transport, UNEP 2008.

[1] For simplicity in the table, the overall total target includes the artisanal and small scale gold mining 410 tonne, 2017 target in the calculation for the overall 2015 total.

Table 2: Possible mercury release baseline data

	Releases to air 2005 (tonnes)	Releases to air projection 2020 (tonnes)	Partnership target (tonnes) NOTE: No partnership area release targets established.
Partnership areas			
Artisanal and small scale gold mining	350	330	
Mercury cell chlor alkali production	47	0	
Mercury containing products	120-236	146	
Batteries	20-31	20	
Lamps	13-28	13	
dental amalgam[2]	24-28	25	
measuring and control devices	33-74	33	
electrical and electronic devices	26-47	26	
others such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and traditional and ritual uses	29-58	29	
Mercury Releases from coal combustion (numbers are for overall fossil fuel consumption)	880	1200	
Waste incineration	125	35	
Total			
Other significant source areas			
Vinyl Chloride Monomer Production	Not available	Not available	
Metal Production (ferrous and non-ferrous, excluding gold)	200	190	
Large scale gold production	110	110	
Cement Production	190	280	
Overall Total Demand			

Data based on:The Global Atmospheric Mercury Assessment: Sources, Emissions and Transport, UNEP 2008.

32. The Partnership Advisory Group notes that the information included in Table 1 and Table 2 is useful baseline that assists in identifying areas of priority action. However, the Partnership Advisory Group also notes that the uncertainty with current existing global data sets make it difficult to use such data as a benchmark to measure partnership area progress.

33. In order to effectively track partnership area progress in future overall progress reports, the Partnership Advisory Group recommends that the partnership areas include more specific indicators of progress in the next draft of their business plans. Such indicators might include, for example, tracking progress on specific projects, in specific countries, at the facility level or other smaller scale.

34. Furthermore, the Partnership Advisory Group recommends that the partnership areas use the indicators that are developed as a baseline for tracking in future partnership area reporting to UNEP.

[2] Dental figures based on cremation statistics. They do not include data for production, handling and disposal of dental amalgam.

Section II: Encouraging the work of the partnership areas in moving forward

35. As specified in the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Overarching Framework, the partnership areas should support the overall goal of the Partnership through contributing to the following objectives, consistent with the priorities set out in paragraph 19 of Governing Council Decision 24/3:

- Minimization and, where possible, elimination of mercury supply considering a hierarchy of sources, and the retirement of mercury from the market to environmentally sound management.
- Minimization and, where feasible, elimination of unintentional mercury releases to air, water, and land from anthropogenic sources.
- Continued minimization and elimination of global use and demand for mercury.
- Promoting the development of non-mercury technologies where suitable economically feasible alternatives do not exist.

36. In addition, the work of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership must be consistent with UNEP Governing Council Decision 25/5.

37. In this section, the Partnership Advisory Group makes recommendations based on the efforts identified in the current partnership area business plans to encourage the future work of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

(a) Meeting the overall objective of the Partnership

38. As noted in paragraph 29, the Overarching Framework establishes an overall goal for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. In meeting this overall goal, the partnership areas are to establish objectives for the individual partnership areas. The objectives of the partnership areas are to be clear, measurable, target-oriented and realistic while at the same time clearly linked to the ambitious goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

39. Below, the Partnership Advisory Group reviews the objectives, targets and timelines established in each of the partnership area business plans with the aim of encouraging the work of the partnership areas consistent with the overall goal and operational guidelines of the Partnership.

[In doing so the Partnership Advisory Group may wish to consider the following:

i) Are the targets and timelines identified in the partnership area business plan aligned with the overall goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership? Is the partnership area target ambitious and realistic?

ii) Is there a need to enhance or amend the partnership area activities in order to meet the targets and timelines identified in the partnership area business plan? What are the resource implications?

iii) Does the promotion of the development of non-mercury technologies where suitable economically feasible alternatives do not exist apply to the partnership area? How is the partnership area addressing this element of the overall Partnership goal?

iv) Are additional partners required to maximize effectiveness of the partnership area? How could the Global Mercury Partnership further encourage the engagement of such partners?

40. For the artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnership area:

41. For the mercury cell chlor-alkali production partnership area:

42. For the mercury air transport and fate research partnership area:

43. For the mercury-containing products partnership area:

44. For the mercury releases from coal combustion partnership area:

45. For the mercury waste management partnership area:

46. For the other areas:

47. In line with the comments noted above regarding the individual partnership areas and with the aim of promoting synergy across partnership areas, the Partnership Advisory Group makes the following overall observations and recommendations:

(b) Responding to Governing Council Decision 25/5

48. The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is recognized as a venue for immediate action on mercury. In paragraph 20 of UNEP Governing Council Decision 25/5, the Executive Director of UNEP and members of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership were commended for the progress in developing and implementing the Partnership as a vehicle for immediate action on mercury and the progress made by the Partnership in creating an overarching framework for immediate action in the priority areas identified in decision 24/3 IV was welcomed. The continued involvement of UNEP in the Partnership was also endorsed.

49. Furthermore in paragraph 34, the Executive Director was requested, coordinating as appropriate with Governments, intergovernmental organizations, stakeholders and the Global Mercury Partnership, subject to the availability of resources and concurrently with the work of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, to continue and enhance, as part of the international action on mercury, the existing work, in the following areas:

a. Enhancing capacity for mercury storage;

b. Reducing the supply of mercury from, for example, primary mercury mining;

c. Conducting awareness-raising and pilot projects in key countries to reduce mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining;

d. Reducing mercury use in products and processes and reaing awareness of mercury-free alternatives;

e. Providing information on best available techniques and best environmental practices and on the conversion of mercury-based processes to non-mercury based processes;

f. Enhancing development of national inventories;

g. Raising public awareness and supporting risk communication;

h. Providing information on the sound management of mercury.

50. A number of other elements were decided at UNEP Governing Council 25 that will influence the future path forward of the overall UNEP Mercury Programme, in particular:

i) The preparation of a global legally binding instrument on mercury, commencing its work in 2010 with the goal of completing it prior to the 27th regular session of the Governing Council in 2013 (paragraph 26, 27, and 28);

ii) The launch of a study that will inform the intergovernmental negotiating committee on various types of emitting sources (as well as current and future trends of mercury emissions) with the study analyzing and assessing the costs and the effectiveness of alternative control technologies and measures (paragraph 29).

51. Below, the Partnership Advisory Group reviews the partnership area business plans to further encourage the work of the partnership areas, to promote synergy and collaboration across the partnership areas and to promote synergy and consistency with UNEP Governing Council Decision 25.

[In doing so the Partnership Advisory Group may wish to consider the following:

i) What might the partnership areas contribute to UNEP Governing Council Decision 25/5 to achieve progress? For example, could better baseline data be identified or existing information on best available techniques and best environmental practices be collected and provided? How would such work be supported? Should any of these items be considered priority?

ii) How might progress in this partnership area align with and contribute to the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) process? What are the timing and resource implications?

iii) Is there a need for enhanced cooperation and synergy across partnership areas? How could this work be coordinated most effectively?]

52. For the artisanal and small-scale gold mining partnership area:

53. For the mercury cell chlor-alkali production partnership area:

54. For the mercury air transport and fate research partnership area:

55. For the mercury-containing products partnership area:

56. For the mercury releases from coal combustion partnership area:

57. For the mercury waste management partnership area:

58. For the other areas:

59. In line with the comments noted above regarding the individual partnership areas and with the aim of promoting synergy across partnership areas, the Partnership Advisory Group makes the following overall observations and recommendations: