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**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

**Global Mercury Partnership
Partnership Advisory Group, Sixth meeting**
Bangkok, Thailand, 31 October – 1 November 2014

**Report of the Sixth Meeting of the UNEP Global Mercury
Partnership Advisory Group**

1. Opening of the meeting

1. The sixth meeting of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Advisory Group (PAG) was held at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok from 31 October to 1 November 2014. The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. on Friday, 31 October, by Mr. Jacob Duer, representative of the secretariat of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

2. Mr. Duer welcomed the participants on behalf of UNEP, and noted the importance of the meeting as the first one following the opening for signature of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. He said that currently, there were 128 signatories to the Convention and 7 ratifications and acknowledged that the success in adopting the Convention was largely due to work undertaken by the Partnership, which had initiated science-based work on mercury that had eventually led to legally binding work and the adoption of the Convention.

3. He said there were clear links between the Partnership Areas and the articles of the Convention as noted in the UNEP “Acting Now” publication. Prior to the development of the Convention the Partnership had afforded scientific and technical support to countries. He suggested that now is the time to develop a new role for the Partnership and determine how to best support countries’ ratification and early implementation of the Convention. This would form an important theme of the current meeting.

4. He encouraged the participants to have a discussion on financing issues, some seeds for which were included in the meeting documents, especially the thought starter. There was a need to address how to strengthen the financial base. The resources were out there, he said, but they needed to be identified and accessed in order to best assist countries in need.

5. In conclusion he recalled that the PAG meeting had been organized back to back with the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop a global legally binding instrument on Mercury (INC) for logistical convenience but also to honour their close links. He said that Article 14 of the Convention on capacity

building, technical assistance and technology transfer acknowledged the important role of partnerships, and that side events during INC6 would demonstrate not only what the Partnership had done but what it would be doing. He said it would be important to engage with all stakeholders, stressing the Partnership as a logical choice for implementation, and looked forward to a clear recommendation from the meeting to take forward.

6. Mr. Atle Fretheim (Norway), chair of the meeting, welcomed the participants, acknowledging the broad participation, and reiterating that it was the first PAG meeting following the adoption of the Minamata Convention. The Partnership supported negotiation of the Convention and the time was now ripe to discuss its new role in assisting with ratification and implementation of the Convention.

7. Outlining the topics for current discussion, he said that the meeting would first review the results of the Partnership survey that UNEP had conducted in early 2014, which would provide an idea of what the partners think that the Partnership is doing well, and where it needs to improve. He expected candid discussion on the state of the Partnership and the opportunities that it had to offer, noting that it would feed into later discussions on the future role of the Partnership, especially with respect to the Minamata Convention. The meeting also would review the work of the Partnership during the past year with Partnership area leads presenting one especially relevant project that their area has undertaken.

8. He noted that communication and outreach strategies would be addressed given that for the Partnership to be effective it was important to advertise and sell itself and make its capabilities known to governments and to the INC.

9. He concluded by noting that, with the adoption of the Minamata Convention, the Partnership was at a turning point and fresh ideas and direction were required if the Partnership was going to adapt to its new role supporting ratification and implementation. He proposed that he inform the INC at the beginning of its sixth session of the results of the current meeting.

10. Mr. Duer reported on the well-attended training session on the Principles of Effective Partnering that was held on the afternoon of Thursday, 30 October 2014. The session had identified the core principles of effective partnering as equity, transparency and mutual benefit. The meeting had noted the partnering cycle as scoping and building, managing and maintaining, reviewing and revising, and sustaining outcomes. An exercise in partnership mapping had been undertaken that suggested that of the 130 partners, some were active, some not and some who were active were not on the list. That mapping needed updating. In addition, he said, a more formal and structured evaluation survey should be undertaken, preferably by an external evaluator. Demonstration projects had been identified as a means of providing expertise in terms of capacity building and a discussion had taken place on financial and human resources. He said that many valuable suggestions had been made that could be brought forward to the current meeting for the benefit of recommendations that might be reported to INC. There might also be value in further explaining what it means to be a partner for the seventh meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group.

2. Organizational matters

Adoption of the agenda

11. The meeting agreed to adopt the agenda as set out in document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.6/1.

Organization of work

12. The meeting agreed to conduct its business from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, 31 October 2014 and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, 1 November 2014.

3. Discussion on the findings of the survey of the Partnership

13. The representative of the secretariat introduced the summary of survey results as set out in document UNEP(DTIE)Hg/PAG.6/3 and referred to the INF document containing the more detailed results on the individual partnership areas - UNEP(DTIE)Hg/PAG.6/INF.1. He said the survey had been conducted to take stock of how well the Partnership has performed since the previous review undertaken in 2012. The document provided a compilation of results as well as proposals to address the observed challenges and opportunities.

14. The main thematic areas of the survey were: information clearing house mechanism; representation within partnership areas, sufficient partner to partner and partnership area involvement and cooperation; finances and transparency; communication and outreach; and role in implementation of the Minamata Convention. He said all partners had received the questionnaire and 15 had been interviewed to supplement the responses which had been received from 48 partners out of the 131 contacted.

15. The responses showed that the key challenges were as follows: lack of representation of stakeholders, and in particular a desire for more government participation was mentioned. Members are organisations, but when the active individual move, quite often the organization becomes a passive member; a need for improved communication among partners and within the partnership; poor website accessibility and with relevant information often being “hidden” in reports and/or meeting documents; low satisfaction with resource use efficiency and transparency; and a need for increased visibility through public outreach. At the same time the survey showed that the key strengths of the partnership was the excellent quality and relevance of publications, their availability free online, and the key role of the Partnership could play in implementation of the Minamata Convention in the future.

16. In terms of solutions it was suggested that the Partnership be restructured to more clearly define the roles and expectations of UNEP, the leads and the partners; differentiate between partners and members; and possible merging some Partnership areas. Improved representation could be obtained through advertising in targeted journals, improving connections to the Minamata Convention and having focal points for each sector. Improving communications and outreach would require a dedicated staff member to focus on this, an improved website, and perhaps the creation of an online forum for Partners. With regard to making financing more inclusive and transparent it was suggested that partners be informed before fund allocation, there be increased communication concerning activities and a breakdown of how resources had been used.

17. In the ensuing discussion many participants emphasized the importance of having co-leads to lighten the burden of the leads of the Partnership areas. All who spoke noted that funds available were allocated to projects and activities and that the Partnership leads were providing their time voluntarily and absorbing costs. It was suggested that resources could perhaps be identified to alleviate some administrative costs currently borne by Partnership leads.

18. Many participants stressed the need for additional partners, especially from governments. To this end it was important to publicize the benefits of being a partner and the simplicity of joining. Some Partnerships benefit from a strong participation of industry that have solutions to control issues, such as in the Partnership area on coal, but lack of governments in the Partnership means that countries are not contacting Partnership areas to identify areas of need and are not informed about possible options for control of releases. The need for improved contact with governments, and provision

of information on the Partnerships was stressed. It was suggested that clear instruction on how to become a partner be given to the INC.

19. Information dissemination on the work of the Partnerships was key. Although the Minamata Convention supported partnerships as indicated both within the text of the Convention and in the Final Act, many countries were not aware of the relationship between the Partnership and the Convention and what the Partnership could provide in terms of assistance. Donor countries, too, would benefit from consulting the Partnership to better target resources.

20. Many participants noted the benefits of publicizing the past and current work of the Partnerships that would demonstrate how the Convention had been built on the scientific and technical work of the Partnership and its importance as a tool for implementation. To that end a clear vision on how the Partnerships could cooperate with the Convention was essential and the INC could provide information for that purpose. There is a need to reinforce the relationship between the Partnership activities and implementation of the Minamata Convention. One participant suggested that establishing regional focal points for dissemination and outreach would be useful. Additionally, the need to improve the website was stressed. One suggestion was to create a web portal where partners could create and update a profile of their interests and contributions.

21. One participant, supported by others, suggested the need for a review of the entire Partnership priorities and development of a Partnership wide plan to address those priorities. An assessment of the Partnership areas might suggest which ones were effective and serving the Convention and which might be merged or work together. It was suggested that the interconnections between different partnerships be further examined for mutual benefits. Additionally cooperation with other multilateral environmental agreements might serve to harmonize the work of the partnerships.

22. It was suggested that there be a meeting convened between leads, co-leads and the secretariat to consider, for example, the current structure and role of the Partnership, identifying links between Partnership areas and priorities across Partnerships. It was also suggested that there should be an external evaluation of the Partnership which may serve to highlight priority issues, how to engage stakeholders and where there could be maximum benefit for all partnerships.

23. It was proposed that the results of the survey and suggestions for solutions should be brought to the attention of the INC as it was clear that the Partnership is a vital tool in the implementation of the Convention.

4. Review of the overall progress and activities of the Partnership

24. Turning to agenda item 4, the Chair invited Partnership area leads to make presentations on a selected successful project in their area, including lessons learned, that could be replicated by other Partnership areas, and underlining which aspects of the projects worked well and which had faced challenges.

25. Presentations were made by the following participants: Ms. Susan Keane (Natural Resource Defense Council) and Mr. Ludovic Bernaudat (UNIDO) on Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining; Mr. Vagner Maringolo (European Cement Association) for the Cement Sustainability Initiative of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development; Mr. Nicola Pirrone (National Research Council of Italy – Institute of Atmospheric Pollution Research) on Fate and Transport; Ms. Ana Garcia (Spain) and Ms. Judith Torres (Uruguay) on Supply and Storage; Mr. Masaru Tanaka (Japan) on Waste Management; Ms. Karissa Kovner (USEPA) on Products; Ms. Marianne Bailey (US Environmental Protection Agency) on Chlor-Alkali; and Ms. Lesley Sloss (International Energy Agency, Clean Coal Centre) on Coal Combustion.

26. Ms. Keane and Mr. Bernaudat presented the ASGM Partnership area and recalled article 7 of the Minamata Convention on artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) and the requirement for all countries with a more than insignificant level of ASGM to prepare and implement a national action plan (NAP) in accordance with Annex C to the Convention. They described how the Partnership had contributed to the elaboration of the guidance for the development of the national action plans and what those plans aimed to achieve as called for in the Final Act of the Convention. The guidance has been structured in two parts: procedural recommendations for developing a NAP, and technical information on the required elements of annex C. Interagency coordination was noted to be a challenging aspect of creating NAPs. The guidance also provides information on creating an enabling a policy framework, which includes included setting national objectives and reduction targets for mercury, facilitating formalization and/or regulation, managing trade and preventing diversion of mercury, involving all stakeholders in plan development and providing information to miners and affected communities.

27. The second part of the guidance provides information on more technical topics, such as approaches to eliminate worst practices and to collect baseline data. The guidance presents information on ways to reduce mercury use and emissions in the short term – through elimination of worst practices and mercury exposure; and to transition to mercury free techniques in the long term – for example through gravity and other concentration processes or chemicals leaching processes. Finally, the NAP guidance references WHO efforts to provide separate guidance on protecting vulnerable populations and developing a public health strategy.

28. It was noted that the Partnership created this draft guidance based on an existing document that was created as part of a project funded by the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) on strategic plans to reduce and where feasible eliminate mercury in ASGM in Cambodia and the Philippines.

29. In the ensuing discussion it was noted that GEF had allocated funding for the development of the ASGM national action plans. One participant highlighted the importance of identifying contaminated sites subsequent to cessation of activities. In response it was noted that, with GEF assistance for a new project, 3 sites covering chloralkali plants, VCM and ASGM would be identified to collect background data on contaminated sites for monitoring purposes.

30. Mr. Nicola Pirrone presented the fate and transport Partnership area and noted it had contributed to the development of the Global Mercury Assessment on sources, emissions, releases and environmental transport. He said that the overall goal was the development of a global monitoring network to produce comparable monitoring data to assess the effectiveness of the Convention as elaborated in Article 22.

31. The European Commission had provided assistance to develop a ground-based observational network by which background measures were taken from over 40 monitoring sites with strong cooperation with on-going regional programmes that ensured the involvement of countries in the Global Mercury Observation System (GMOS). Additionally, an oceanographic campaign to understand the mercury cycle between the ocean and the atmosphere had been carried out; knowledge gaps on mercury distribution in the troposphere and lower stratosphere was being filled through intercontinental and regional aircraft campaigns; a task force on regional and global scale modeling was established involving major modeling groups worldwide to validate different scenarios of emission reduction strategies and a centralized repository archive and advanced web service was developed to ensure timely and up-to-date sharing of information on mercury in the environment including humans. The work undertaken under these different activities was relevant to Articles 14, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 22 of the Convention.

32. The Partnership on Fate and Transport recognized the need for a coordinated Global Mercury Monitoring Network that provides accountability to all stakeholders to track the success and gaps of mercury control measures, establishes bilateral agreements with relevant existing regional and national atmospheric mercury monitoring stations and includes data to determine standard biotic endpoints.

33. Mr. Pirrone described a GEF-funded UNEP project to develop a plan for global monitoring of human exposure to and environmental concentrations of mercury that aimed to harmonize approaches and strengthen analytical capacity for accurate monitoring of mercury concentrations at the global level. The project would build on an existing European project of WHO, in collaboration with the Consortium to Perform Human biomonitoring on a European Scale to develop a standard protocol for human biomonitoring surveys in maternities in order to monitor prenatal exposures to mercury and other metals. WHO would further develop standardized protocols to conduct five pilot surveys in selected developing countries.

34. In the future the Fate and Transport Partnership planned to support the Minamata Convention's technical needs, continue to develop the GMOS with strong effort in developing advanced sensors for mercury monitoring, contribute to develop a unified emission inventory point-by-point sources – for which cooperation with other partnerships was essential, and continue work of the GMOS task force on modeling. The Partnership revised its Business Plan by expanding its focus and goals to include mercury transport and fate in biota, with added emphasis on collecting information within contaminated sites. The Partnership would also continue its information dissemination activities. He concluded by noting that monitoring programmes were complex and that easy and affordable technology was needed.

35. Ms. Ana Garcia Gonzalez presented the supply and storage Partnership area, highlighting that the Partnership needed to work with many stakeholders as it was not linked to one specific sector. She noted the two objectives of the Partnership as: the minimization and where feasible, elimination of mercury supply taking into account the hierarchy of sources, and the transfer of mercury from the market to environmentally sound management; the reduction of the amount of mercury available in the environment.

36. The priorities of the Partnership were: working with governments and relevant stakeholders to reduce or eliminate mercury product and export, to develop national inventories and to assess potential illegal sources of mercury supply; working with the chlor-alkali, non-ferrous, ASGM and oil/gas sectors to compile knowledge on how much mercury will enter the commodity market and when and to understand industry sector plans; and assess solutions for environmentally sound management and storage looking at national infrastructures and methodologies.

37. She focused her presentation on a national workshop held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in October 2014 on stabilization technologies for mercury containing waste, funded by Switzerland and carried out through the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to support the early ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention. There had been a characterization of mercury wastes generated by a plant during the past 20 years and the development of a pilot project for the treatment and stabilization of 2 types of mercury wastes. High mercury content waste would require stabilization and micro-encapsulation in a sulphur polymeric matrix and low mercury content waste would require stabilization with sulphur micro-cements. The project involved one Chlor-alkali facility of Uruguay, the Basel Convention Coordinating Center for the LAC region, the National Technological Centre for Mercury Decontamination and the Cement International Technologies (Spain), the waste treatment sector and Academia. The project results would provide input to the development of the roadmap for early implementation of the Convention in Uruguay.

38. She said the lessons learned showed the value of involving all relevant stakeholders. She added that collaboration between partners, including the perspective of the BRS regional centres could facilitate the exchange of information and

methodologies. She noted that pilot projects in the field could provide solutions to real problems related to mercury and could easily be replicated in the region and elsewhere. She said the Partnership was exploring options to have additional workshops in the future. As a final comment she mentioned that export bans from the European Union and the United States had resulted in an increase in the price of mercury often leading to illegal traffic.

39. Ms. Lesley Sloss presented the coal Partnership area and highlighted the work undertaken thus far in that the Partnership had produced a Process optimisation guidance document (POG), an online tool for optimising mercury control (iPOG), the US EPA monitoring toolkit, a global agreement on measurement methodologies (ISO/CEN) (in progress), country studies helping with inventory work in China, India, Russia and South Africa, demonstration projects in Russia and South Africa with new projects planned in Asia, and undertaken outreach through papers published and presented in various journals and at numerous international meetings. In addition the partnership area had held the Mercury Emissions from Coal (MEC) experts workshop every 2 years.

40. She said the experience and skills gained through the project work would be valuable to assist in the implementation of the Minamata Convention and she highlighted the work done to develop the best available techniques/best environmental practices (BAT/BEP) guidance with the BAT/BEP working group established under the Convention. She said the text of the BAT/BEP guidance document was largely based on the POG document produced by the Partnership and was being completed by the leads and members of the coal partnership area. The Partnership members were providing case studies in support of the document and would form a steering review committee to review the case studies. She said there was a need for a list of volunteers from the coal partnership area to act on the steering committee and a list of proposed case studies and a plan for a case study matrix that must be populated with appropriate studies.

41. The future vision for the coal partnership area was that it would continue to be an invaluable resource to the Convention in terms of knowledge and experience, that it would continue to provide information and outreach and, where possible, project work in target regions and that funding and support would be provided to the Partnership in order to ensure that the level of commitment and quality of output can be maintained.

42. In response to a request for clarification she said that it was difficult to replicate projects undertaken in other countries due to differing local situations and that it was very source specific. Noting the gap between the demonstration projects and policy she said reduction in emissions and increase in efficiency in a cost-effect way would require the Partnership area to go to each country to state what was best in each case.

43. Mr. Tanaka presented the waste management partnership area noting there had been some joint projects and some individual ones. He said there were 4 effective tools for promoting activities: face-to-face meetings, good practice documents, a resource persons list, and information integrated into the business plan. He recalled the third Waste Management Area Meeting of December 2013 that had discussed ways to support countries towards early ratification and implementation of the Convention, collaboration possibilities with other Partnership areas, local authorities and private-sectors, updating/developing relevant documents (e.g. Good Practice Document, Basel Convention Technical Guidelines, UNEP's Sourcebook on Mercury Waste Storage and Disposal), and taking action on implementing the Partnership's future projects. The meeting had agreed that priorities included support to updating or developing the above-mentioned resource materials, and increasing public awareness, at the local regional and global level, on mercury and mercury added products and wastes and their impact on human health and the environment.

44. He highlighted the need for coordination between partnership areas by noting the lead person on the supply and storage partnership area had been invited to assist in the development the Good Practice Document. Partners in other partnership areas would be approached to provide additional input following the sixth session of the INC. The document, entitled Good Practice for Management of Mercury Releases from Waste, would be updated and would form a compilation of information of practices/technologies related to mercury waste management. To that would be added a description on preconditions to replicate the practices and suggestions to enhance environmentally sound management of mercury wastes for each practice/technology as well as to provide readers with further information.

45. He noted the importance of face-to-face meetings and the need to secure funds to maintain a network. Although 31 persons were currently on the resource persons list that could provide technical advice on the Partnership and activities to reduce mercury releases from waste management, only 5 had been approached, which emphasized the need for more public awareness. He stated that additional resource persons were welcome.

46. With regard to the business plan, he said there were 42 projects listed as of July 2014. He urged a life-cycle approach to managing mercury recalling the public health problems created by mixed collection and disposal and open dumping and burning that lead to both air and water pollution. He said disposal was insufficient and that an end-of-pipe approach was necessary. For that to be successful, contaminants had to be reduced and a move made from individual chemical management to an integrated approach thereby improving total waste management.

47. In the ensuing discussion, one participant suggested, and the Partnership agreed, to take on the issue of environmentally sound management of waste containing mercury in small-island developing states as a priority issue. Another participant highlighted the cost involved with environmentally sound management of wastes that took many years and stressed the value of working in cooperation with the Basel Convention that, he added, might crosscut with several partnership areas. Mr. Tanaka added that while the costs of environmentally sound management of waste might increase as laws became stricter, the quantity of waste would simultaneously decrease.

48. Ms. Kovner presented the products partnership area whose overall objectives were to phase-out and eventually eliminate mercury in products and to eliminate releases during manufacturing and other industrial processes through environmentally sound production, transportation, storage, and disposal procedures; identify and implement successful approaches for reducing or eliminating mercury in products where there are effective substitutes; and foster a partner-driven forum for discussing strategies for achieving goals and objectives.

49. She said the project areas covered health care facilities and schools; the development of inventories and risk management, retirement, collection and management of mercury containing products; and batteries, lighting, dental amalgam and cosmetics. Cross-cutting issues included improving awareness - through data collection and information about substitutes - and life-cycle management including reflection of cost-benefits.

50. The representative of the Groundwork (Mr. Euripides Euripidou) reported on an initiative to substitute mercury-based medical devices around the world undertaken in cooperation with WHO and Health Care Without Harm. Work was begun prior to the establishment of the partnership area on products but subsequently worked in collaboration with the Partnership and has produced guidance documents, technical and policy support to hospitals, health systems and ministers of health and the environment. Several cities' and countries' health systems are now mercury free.

51. He noted that the projects worked well where there were partners on the ground but less well without them. In addition there was sometimes a disconnect

between those present at regional workshops, who were very keen to have something happen, and those who are at governance level. With a view to having mercury-free health care by 2020, he said the initiative supported the commitment to end the manufacture, import and export of mercury-containing fever thermometers and sphygmomanometers, by supporting the deployment of accurate, affordable, and safer non-mercury alternatives. The initiative would provide guidance for governments, ministries and health systems, technical expertise and support for implementation and awareness raising on mercury and health.

52. The initiative was preparing an advisory document for ministries of health and health care systems that would suggest action that governments could take to implement nationwide phase-outs of mercury-added medical devices. He closed by noting that the Partnership could act as the catalyst to determine next steps on this issue. The representative of WHO said that while they were not in a position to be a “Partner” to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership they stood ready to increase their collaboration and were scaling up their activities in response to the recent resolutions from the World Health Assembly. In that respect they were working to determine how to achieve phase-out of mercury –added medical devices.

53. Ms. Bailey presented the chlor-alkali partnership area, reminding the meeting that chlor-alkali is a process producing chlorine and caustic soda from brine using electrolysis with a mercury cathode. She said alternatives to the mercury-cell process existed. Those plants were more energy efficient and had lower operating costs. The industry trend was a steady reduction in the number of active mercury-cell facilities. Currently there were about 75 facilities in 40 countries with an estimated 10,500 tons of mercury currently at facilities. The goals of the partnership area were to prevent the construction of new mercury-cell chlor-alkali production facilities; reduce mercury emissions and use from existing mercury-cell facilities; encourage conversion to non-mercury processes; reduce or eliminate mercury releases from waste generated by chlor-alkali production facilities including waste from conversion to non-mercury processes; and promote environmentally-sound options for storage and disposal of surplus mercury

54. She recalled that the inventory listed the number of facilities, chlorine capacity, purchases/sales, use, environmental releases and total amounts of mercury on site and said the inventory had been updated and expanded. Since 2005 data the number of facilities had reduced from about 140 to 75 with many facilities planning closure or conversions before 2020. She said Euro Chlor had made a voluntary commitment to phase out all mercury-cell chlor-alkali (2018), and to dispose of all surplus mercury not reused in European chlor-alkali units. She indicated that the inventory includes the estimated amount of total mercury on-site at chlor-alkali plants.

55. She mentioned the key partnership area activities as follows: sharing information on best practices and mercury use and releases; producing a paper on the economics of converting mercury-cell facilities to membrane cell technology; technical assistance and capacity building; and a global inventory of mercury-cell facilities.

56. Mr. Maringolo presented the cement partnership area noting that the inventory had indicated that 10 per cent of mercury emissions in 2010 came from cement and hence the partnership area was launched with cement industry partners in 24 countries. No additional partners had joined since the launch and the cement sustainability initiative was contributing with in-kind contributions. The business plan was currently being revised and the group work on the guidance document was ongoing. Contributions had been received and compiled on mercury in raw materials and fuels, sampling methodology for solids and gases, analysis of samples, mass balance approaches, use of CEMs, dust shuttling experience and efficacy and use of sorbets. The data was based on company experience.

57. The Partnership was working in parallel with the INC expert group on development of BAT/BEP to develop complementary approaches to the guidelines

development. The guidance document aimed to demonstrate the practical application of what was being developed in the guidelines along with the means for implementation at plant level. With regard to the inventory data management, further internal discussion was ongoing on how to develop the inventory, including which data, data capture methodology, data entry and management, inventory host, outputs and links to reporting.

58. He described the mass balance approach as a method that could be widely utilized to capture true emissions in order to establish sectoral mercury inventories and baseline scenarios for the cement industry. Guidance on how to conduct a mass balance and make the relevant measurements was being developed. Currently it was at the information-gathering stage on the experience of using CEMs and mass balance together to confirm accuracy of this approach.

59. He then described dust shuttling as a technique whereby cement kiln dust, enriched with mercury, was removed from the kiln system and re-injected into the cement mill. By removing the mercury-enriched dust, mercury that would otherwise end up in the cement kiln stack is safely removed from the kiln system. With reference to this technique there was a plan to develop a tool that would estimate long-term dust-shuttling efficiency and a preliminary draft has been shared that presented the approach and outlined the calculations.

60. Additionally the partnership area was planning communications and capacity building activity areas, although no firm decisions had yet been taken on the issues. He recalled the forthcoming meeting of the partnership area in November that would discuss next steps for the area.

61. In the ensuing general discussion, it was noted that the most successful programmes were the ones for which the outcomes were achievable, implementable in the short term, measurable, and easily accessible to partners. It was important to have tangible results in line with the Convention requirements in a reasonable amount of time. Concrete examples were the coal partnership area that worked with the BAT/BEP technical expert group, the ASGM partnership area that would work on national action plans or the mercury free medical devices projects that worked in the products partnership area.

62. Participants also noted the importance of including the BRS regional centres in Partnership activities, since they had much expertise to share. It was noted that care should be taken in mixing different objectives of the Partnership and its role and that principally it was important for the Partnership to be able to show possible and practical solutions. It was further noted that Parties to the Convention must be made aware of the need to build on the capacity and quality of the Partnership to ensure the implementation assistance that many countries will need. Many participants reiterated the importance of attracting government partners to the Partnership.

5. Discussion of the future work of the Partnership

63. Under this agenda item, the representative of the secretariat introduced a 'thought starter' on the possible direction for the future work of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership, available as UNEP(DTIE)Hg/PAG.6/5. He said the objectives of the Minamata Convention and the Partnership were essentially identical. Drawing attention to Article 14 of the Convention and to the Final Act, he stressed the clear and formal link between the Partnership and the Convention and paragraph 18 of the Final Act that invited the Global Mercury Partnership to continue its work. He said that capacity building and technical assistance could be delivered through the Partnership including with the private sector. He stressed the need to remind governments about why the partnerships exists and what it could deliver to them.

64. He recalled the matrix in the "Acting Now" booklet that showed the links between the partnership areas and the Convention articles, from which areas where the

Partnership could support specific obligations of the Convention could be identified. He said that while the past work of the Partnership had been the foundation to develop the Convention there appeared to be a disconnect on how the Partnership could now support countries to implement the Convention requirements. He stressed the need to define the role of the Partnership in the future and what needed to be conveyed to the INC reinforcing the need for the Partnership as a support to countries at the national and regional level.

65. In the ensuing discussion, participants considered the best way for the Partnership to serve the Convention and whether the current model was suited to that purpose. Participants explored how best the Partnership could support tasks under the Convention without duplicating ongoing work. It was suggested that there was a need to determine some priority areas on which to work that could be identified with the assistance of the secretariat and would respond to critical needs under the Convention. That would also require interacting with countries to respond to their needs and hence working through the Bureau of the INC.

66. While some participants suggested that the Partnership could look towards being a part of or acting as technical bodies under the Convention once it entered into force, others urged caution such that flexibility and effectiveness of the current structure was not lost. Additionally others noted the particular mandate of the INC or the Conference of the Parties under the Convention and advised care to not blur the boundaries or overstep the Partnership role.

67. One participant suggested the need to institutionalize the relationship between the Convention and the Partnerships. Another urged finding a means to make countries aware of the Partnerships and its work. Another encouraged working closely with regional offices to identify people dealing directly with mercury. Given the adoption of the Convention, one participant suggested that a means to complement and guide each other should be sought. She suggested that the visibility of the Partnership should be increased and the Partnership streamlined. It was reiterated that the secretariat and the partnership areas should work together to improve on the challenges and weaknesses in order to better contribute to the Convention.

68. For the future role of the Partnership, it was clear that it needed to work with the INC and expert groups established under the Convention and improve its ability to help countries to implement the Convention. One participant highlighted the need to have a reporting channel to the INC to ensure coordination. It was proposed that the chair of the Partnership Advisory Group be invited to a meeting of the INC bureau to discuss issues related to the Partnership.

69. One participant said that the Partnership was not only a platform but a knowledge reserve. A change was necessary in the operation of the Partnership and there should be more information sharing including between partnership areas. He reiterated the need to publicize the Partnership and raise awareness on its activities.

70. Another participant suggested areas on which to focus: providing information to parties to assist in the implementation of their obligations; sharing information on pilot projects – what countries can do that other have done to implement obligations; increasing visibility of the Partnership including the secretariat role; improving the website; improving communication among partnerships.

71. The representative of WHO valued the collaboration within the Partnership as an informal setting. She urged further collaboration with and between the intergovernmental organizations.

72. The Chair of the INC outlined some key elements that he said were important: encourage all to give visibility to the Partnership which had been so important to the development of the Convention; an intervention from the PAG chair at

the start of INC6, as it was important for all to hear about the Partnership; how to cooperate and establish the links between the Convention work and the Partnership.

73. In conclusion, the Chair of the Partnership Advisory Group said that there were soft issues, such as information sharing, visibility and communication between the partnerships and outside the partnerships, and hard issues such as continuing to work with the INC and subsidiary bodies on technical issues where the Partnership has expertise.

74. The meeting raised the question of what funds were available for secretariat/administrative work and what part was earmarked for projects. In that respect funding for Partnership leads, perhaps in kind and from the private sector was highlighted. Referring to the GEF as the main funding mechanism for the Convention clarification was requested on how the Partnership could interact with GEF and whether the Partnership could act as an executing agency.

75. The representative of the secretariat provided an update to the meeting on current funding issues. He said to have an effective Partnership that supported countries needs based on requests, it was important to know how to mobilize funding. In the past, Governments of the Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America, as well as the European Commission, among others, had provided funds for the work of Partnership. He acknowledged that funding for the Partnership had slowed down as resources were shifted to support the negotiations process; now funding would be directed to ratification and early implementation of the Convention. Recognizing that the secretariat for the Convention and the Partnership were within the same branch in UNEP, some funds had been sourced for the Partnership through activities to implement the Convention.

76. At this juncture, he said, there was a need to secure and enhance funding for a strengthened Partnership and to respond to its needs. He said there was need to broaden the existing donor base and, in that regard, establish a role for the private sector. Additionally there might be a way to tap into the 141 million US\$ available through GEF to support implementation, perhaps through mercury initial assessments or ASGM national action plans.

77. In the ensuing discussion the representative of UNIDO informed the meeting of mercury work undertaken in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP with GEF funding. He highlighted the difficulties faced by some countries in identifying resources for co-financing GEF projects and said that while donor countries were assisting it would help to have the private sector support some of the funding. He reiterated the need to have leads of the partnership areas involved in deciding where funding for a Partnership activity should be disbursed. He noted that there was a difference between using the name of the Partnership and that of a member of the Partnership and said partners, too, could serve as executing agencies.

78. Other participants agreed that it was important to know how UNEP was allocating funds for projects under specific partnership areas, and in that respect the leads must be kept aware of how money was being spent, for example, whether for projects, terms of reference or consultants. Currently, lack of transparency on how funds were spent was a weakness. They also raised the challenge faced in trying to obtain funding from GEF, the difficulty of identifying resources for co-financing and the lengthy lead time to acceptance of proposals and obtaining funding.

79. One participant stressed the need to prioritize project proposals to better allocate funding recalling that such prioritization of proposals completed after the fifth meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group had, in fact, enabled UNEP to allocate funds or identify a donor. Donors were more inclined to provide funding if a priority list was given to them, and in-kind contributions were also an important input to funding. Another participant cautioned that an executing agency had to have a legal status that the Partnership lacked, and thus the latter, in itself, could not be an executing

agency. However, the intergovernmental organizations participating in the Partnership may be able to execute GEF projects.

80. Citing examples of expert participation and advice within Partnership activities that had not received any funding, a few participants reiterated the need for funding for the Partnership itself. One participant said it might be useful to quantify the amount of time spent by partnership area leads on Partnership activities.

81. The importance of having a sound governance or infrastructure for the Partnership was recognized. With public awareness raising campaigns and outreach it was hoped that the INC could encourage increased participation in the Partnership. The representative of the secretariat concluded by informing the meeting of the current secretariat support to the Partnership. He referred to the establishment of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the first United Nations Environment Assembly in June 2014 and added that the Specific International Programme, as part of the financial mechanism for the Convention along with GEF, would fund activities at the national level. It was suggested that UNEP should explore avenues for increased resources and funding opportunities with GEF and report back to the seventh meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group.

6. Review of the Partnership business plans

82. Under this agenda item, the Chair of the meeting said to go through all the business plans would be too lengthy a process but expressed his wish that the partnership areas would amend the business plans according to needs. He said in working with INC to get some clearer priorities there would come a time when there was a need to adjust the business plans according to specific changes.

83. Several participants suggested that clear and consistent instructions to shape the business plans according to the needs of the Convention would be useful, as would be prioritizing activities and the principle actions for which funding was needed. It would also be helpful to shorten the business plans by moving the list of projects to an annex while highlighting the contributions to implementing the Convention. Additional funding might be attracted in that manner, as well as clearly transmitting objectives and priorities. Further it would be beneficial to highlight the participation of different partners to try such that partners could be in contact with on the ground implementation activities.

84. It was suggested that a text box that took texts verbatim from the Convention relevant for each Partnership area would be a useful tool. It was acknowledged that while there was need to update the business plans, currently the corresponding template and format was set out in Annex 2 of the Partnership Overarching Framework and could therefore not be modified. However the template itself could be updated and could be one of the considerations of the seventh meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group. Alternatively the current business plan could be updated with a superimposed 1-2 page cover page.

85. It was agreed that the updated business plans be completed as soon as possible.

7. Enhancing communication and outreach

86. Under this agenda item the representative of the secretariat introduced document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.6/7, which aims to address some of the issues brought up in the survey, especially pertaining to communication and outreach. The document was prepared with a view to inviting the meeting for proposals on how to further enhance the communication and outreach activities of the Partnership.

87. She acknowledged that the survey on the Partnership conducted in early 2014 had demonstrated a lack in the quantity and quality of communication and

outreach. The representative of the secretariat highlighted the need to disseminate key outreach elements to a well-targeted audience. Participants requested that the outreach materials developed be vetted by the partnership area leads.

88. In the ensuing discussion, in response to a request for clarification on the hosting of the Partnership website the secretariat responded that it was hosted by UNEP in Nairobi, as opposed to the Minamata Convention website, hosted by the combined Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. One participant suggested that a tab on the Minamata Convention website lead to information on the Partnership. It was also suggested there be a means for direct communication between the Partnership secretariat and major donors to attract funding including, for example, from development banks, the World Bank and others, which the secretariat said was already being initiated.

89. It was suggested that a telecom between the partnership areas be organized by the secretariat in order to be in direct contact with the leads and colleagues in the Partnership and maintain regular communication.

90. The representative of the secretariat said that a new web consultant was being taken on board who would work to update the Partnership website. He added that currently it would be difficult to host the Global Mercury Partnership information, which was a part of UNEP's Chemicals Branch, on the Convention website; however it would be possible to link the two together while maintaining a link to the UNEP Nairobi website. Participants recognized the constraints associated with hosting the website through the UNEP website in Nairobi and encouraged the secretariat to explore means to facilitate a move of the website to the Minamata Convention website which may allow for more flexibility.

8. Other matters

91. The representative of the secretariat informed the meeting of its intention to showcase the Partnership at the exhibition space at the sixth session of the INC as well as facilitate the holding of several side events during that session.

92. The representative of South Korea provided the meeting with information on the 12th International Conference of Mercury as a Global Pollutant (ICGMP) scheduled to be held in Jeju, Korea, in June 2015.

9. Closure of the meeting

93. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 12 p.m. on Saturday, 1 November 2014.
