



Head, UNEP Chemicals Branch, DTIE
11-13, Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Geneva, Switzerland

April 22, 2010

Dear Head of UNEP Chemicals Branch:

This letter is to formally request membership to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

Founded in 1999, Blacksmith Institute is a non-profit organization based in the United States committed to mitigating pollution problems in low and middle-income countries. Blacksmith addresses a critical need to identify and clean up the world's worst polluted places. Blacksmith focuses on places where human health, especially that of women and children, is most at risk. Based in New York, Blacksmith works cooperatively in partnerships that include governments, the international community, NGOs and local agencies to design and implement innovative, low-cost solutions to save lives. To date, Blacksmith has completed more than 50 projects. Blacksmith is currently engaged in about 40 projects in 19 countries.

Joining this Partnership is particularly relevant to Blacksmith's mission. Blacksmith is interested to join this Partnership because it will further support our mission to protect children's health and development from mercury. Blacksmith is particularly concerned with exposures to neurotoxins – primarily mercury and lead, and is firmly committed to the protection of human health from mercury vapors, as is evident in our projects.

Blacksmith will contribute directly to the Partnership's goal by implementing mercury-related projects that mitigate the release of mercury in local communities, offering expertise as needed, and exploring collaboration where relevant. We fully support the efforts of the Partnership to minimize and eventually phase out the release of mercury into the global environment, and protect human health globally.

We pledge to support the Partnership in its efforts to create a mercury-emission free world. Thank you for your consideration of our membership to this important Partnership.

Sincerely,

Meredith Block
Program Director



Mercury Hotspots in Africa

Minimal manufacturing and chemical processing throughout sub-Saharan Africa will most likely return less formal sector hot-spots than other regions with more industrial development. Mercury hotspots in sub-Saharan Africa can mostly be attributed to areas with high incidence of ASGM. Although primary concerns about mercury usage in ASGM activities stem from the release of mercury vapors into the atmosphere during the “burning” phase of processing, large quantities of elemental mercury are lost during the initial amalgamation, contaminating surrounding soils and waterways. Elemental mercury is used, often in copious amounts throughout the grinding, sifting and washing stages of ore processing. The mercury moves from the sediments around sluice boxes and troughs into local waterways often contaminating sediments along riverbanks, where seasonal flooding can spread mercury over farmland. Although the extent to which the environs surrounding a site varies from community to community, rudimentary processing yields similar results in many different countries. Mercury contaminated soils and waterways have been identified by Blacksmith Institute in the following locations:

UGANDA

Nyakaziba Village, Bihanga Subcounty Bushenyi District
Kahengyere Village, Rwengwe Subcounty, Buhwejuu County, Bushenyi District
Bitsya Village Karungu Subcounty , Buhwejuu County, Bushenyi District
Kibimba Village, Buhwejuu Subcounty, Bushenye District
Malinde Village, Bushenyi District
Muti - Village Bihanga Subcounty Buhwejuu County, Bushenyi District

GHANA

I Trust My Legs Mine Site, Nabakah Village, Heman County

KENYA

Rosterman Village, Kakamega, Western Region
Kisimu Village, Western Region
Osiri/Makalda, Western Region

GUINEA

Kouroussa Prefecture, Upper Region
Mandiana Prefecture, Upper Region

MOZAMBIQUE

Munhena Mine, Manica, Chimoio Town
Monhava, Beira City



TANZANIA

Mgusu artisanal gold mine, Geita district, Mwanza
Mtakuja ward artisanal gold mine, Geita district, Mwanza
Nyarugusu artisanal gold mine, Geita district, Mwanza
Rwamagasa Artisanal Gold Mining, Geita District

SENEGAL

Tenkoto Village, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Khossanto, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Faloumbou, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Sabodala, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Kanoumering, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Bantanko, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Tomboronkoto, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Salemata, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Mako, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Tenkotonding, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Bambaraya, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Mamamkono, Kedougou, Tamabacounda
Ngary Sekota, Kedougou, Tamabacounda

This partial list is taken from the Global Inventory Project, an effort by Blacksmith Institute to identify and categorize all toxic hotspots globally as they relate to human health impact. Data regarding each site can be provided as needed, as much of it is pending review. Initiated in 2009, and continuing through 2011, the Global Inventory Project is currently underway in 65 countries, and has approximately 1600 sites to date.

UNEP GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP

INFORMATION ON BECOMING A PARTNER

This information sheet is intended to provide an overview of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Mercury Partnership for prospective partners. Further information is available at the following web address: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/default.htm>

What is the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership?

The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is a voluntary and collaborative relationship amongst various parties, governmental, non-governmental, public and private, in which all participants agree to work together in a systematic way to achieve the goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership.

The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership complements and supports the implementation of UNEP Governing Council Decision 24/3.

As of June 2008, the following partnership areas have been initiated:

- 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.

Other partnership areas are in the process of being considered and initiated.

What is the Overall Goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership?

The overall goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership is 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.

What does joining the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership mean for prospective partners?

- Supporting the overall goal of the Partnership.
- Contributing resources or expertise to the development and implementation of partnership activities.
- Networking with other organizations/agencies/individuals addressing mercury issues.

How does an organization join the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership?

To become a partner, interested entities or individuals should submit a letter to UNEP signifying their support for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and their commitment to achieving its goal, and specifying how they will contribute to meeting the goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. Such letters should be submitted to:

Head, UNEP Chemicals Branch, DTIE
11-13, chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine - Geneva, Switzerland
Fax: (+41 22) 797 3460
E-mail: mercury@chemicals.unep.ch

In submitting this letter, UNEP asks partners to also complete the attached registration form. Participation to the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership will be confirmed by UNEP through a letter of confirmation. Your letter of support will be posted on the UNEP Chemicals web site.

UNEP GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM *

Partnership Area	<p>Please check partnership areas that your organization intends to contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> artisanal and small scale gold mining <input type="checkbox"/> mercury cell chlor alkali production <input type="checkbox"/> mercury air transport and fate research <input type="checkbox"/> mercury in products <input type="checkbox"/> mercury releases from coal combustion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> mercury waste management <p>Please indicate in your support letter how your organization intends to contribute to each of the indicated partnership areas.</p>
Organization Name	Blacksmith Institute
Name, Functional Title of Representative	Meredith Block, Program Director
Address of Organization	322 8 th Avenue, suite 601A, New York, New York 10001
Tel. No	+1 212 647 8330
Email	Meredith@blacksmithinstitute.org
Fax No.	+1 212 779 8044
Website/URL	www.blacksmithinstitute.org
Type of Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Regional economic integration organization <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-government Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific community <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____

* UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Registration Forms are to be accompanied by a letter to UNEP signifying support for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and commitment to achieving the partnership goal. The support letter should specify how the organization intends to contribute to meeting the goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. Please submit the support letter and registration form to:

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