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**Enhancing Communication and Outreach of the UNEP Global
Mercury Partnership**

Note by the Secretariat

The 2014 evaluation survey undertaken among Partners of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership reveals a need to strengthen the communication for the Partnership, both internal communication (between and among Partners) and external communication (Partners to stakeholders such as governments, private sector and civil society).

The survey available as meeting document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/PAG.6/3 suggests that the insufficient internal and external communication could be attributed to inadequate secretariat capacities such as lack of a dedicated staff to act as the focal person for communication, lack of capacities of Partners themselves, and/or lack of modalities that allow for timely and effective communication and information sharing.

Among communication areas that are identified in the survey as requiring improvement are, in particular Partner-Partner communication, the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership website, development and distribution of information and awareness raising materials, and dissemination of technical and guidance documents related to the different Partnership areas.

At the fourth and fifth meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group, a communication strategy was presented by the secretariat where the activities to enhance Partnership communication were outlined. At both meetings brief discussions took place with limited outcome.

The Partnership Advisory Group may wish to discuss and possibly adopt a the communication and outreach strategy contained in the Annex exploring ways of enhancing communication which is key to Partnership success.

The proposed communication strategy is also envisaged to be a component of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership project under UNEP's subprogramme on Chemicals and Waste.

Annex

UNEP Global Mercury Partnership Communication and Outreach Strategy

A. Background: The UNEP Global Mercury Partnership and the Minamata Convention on Mercury

1. The Governing Council at its 27th session in 2013 affirmed the role of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership (the “Partnership”) as a vehicle for immediate action and urges all partners to continue their efforts, and urges Governments and other stakeholders to continue to support, participate in, and contribute to the Partnership. UNEP Chemicals Branch developed the project on “The Global Mercury Partnership” as one of UNEP’s projects under its Programme of Work in 2014- 2015. The project will contribute to the expected accomplishment of the chemicals and waste subprogramme where countries, including major groups and stakeholders, increasingly use the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed to implement sound chemicals management and waste and the related MEAs.

Currently, the Partnership has 131 partners drawn from Governments, IGOs, industry, civil society and academia and is working in eight partnership areas:

- Reducing Mercury in Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining,
 - Mercury Control from coal combustion,
 - Mercury Reduction in Chlor-alkali Production,
 - Mercury Reduction in Products,
 - Mercury Reduction from Cement production,
 - Mercury Supply and storage,
 - Mercury Waste management, and
 - Mercury Air Transport and Fate Research.
2. This communication and outreach strategy is being developed as a component of UNEP’s “UNEP Global Mercury Partnership project “ and is a tool aimed at facilitating the attainment of the goal of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership which 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.
 3. Governing Council decision 25/5 specified the role of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership as a vehicle for immediate action during the negotiations of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Many countries have emphasized the key role of the Partnership in supporting the work of the INC and stressed the importance of continual support of the Partnership in implementing the Minamata Convention on Mercury. This communication strategy seeks to provide guidance to the Partnership as it continues to provide assistance to countries during the interim period of before the Minamata Convention enters into force.
 4. The Partnership communication and outreach strategy is also being developed in response to the 2014 evaluation survey done among Partners of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. The strategy highlights areas that need improvement: the Partnership website, development and dissemination of awareness raising materials,

utilization of technical guidance documents, and institutional strengthening of Partnership communication.

5. The nature of this Partnership communication strategy is overarching, and will encourage the Partnership leads to develop specific communication plans relevant to partnership area needs. Each partnership area communication and outreach plan will identify measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound objectives, activities, and indicators of success.

B. Strategic Objectives

6. The Partnership communication and outreach strategy aims:
 - i) to enhance internal communication of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership defined as communication among Partners within and between Partnership areas;
 - ii) to foster effective external or outreach of the Partnership to its stakeholders;
 - iii) to support the scale-up of successful partnership activities in supporting countries towards ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury;
 - iv) to identify timely and strategic outreach opportunities in 2014-2016; and
 - v) to leverage funds to support Partnership activities.

C. Partnership communication types, target audience and expected action

7. Partnership **internal communication** refers to communication between and among Partners within the partnership areas and across partnership areas. **External communication** or outreach is targeted at stakeholders including but not limited to governments, civil society, industry, and the private sector. Whether internal or external, Partnership communication is generally categorized into two types, each type having target audiences that will be addressed differently. Each target audience is expected to have concrete action points.

General awareness raising materials that are solution-oriented and in simple language

Target audience:

- Governments/Policy Makers- to facilitate ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention;
- Donors - to support scaling up of successful partnership actions;
- Government, NGOs, practitioners - to raise awareness about mercury issues and implement immediate action to reduce mercury pollution ;
- Professionals and practitioners/ of different areas involved with mercury management including product and processes manufacturers - to improve knowledge, attitudes and practices towards mercury free management;
- All stakeholders - to advocate for existing Partners to become more active and for new partners to join the Partnership.

Technical documents such as guidance documents, technical publications that are brief and concise

Target audience:

- Governments/Policy makers to facilitate ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention;
- Practitioners (miners, industry, healthcare, dentists, etc.) - to improve knowledge, attitudes and practices towards mercury free management;
- Partners - to advocate use of technical documents by stakeholders.

D. Enhancing internal communication

8. Within available resources, UNEP will seek to identify a dedicated staff member from the **UNEP Partnership secretariat** who will serve as the **focal person for communication and outreach**. The person will be tasked to review and support the upgrade, development and maintenance of the **Partnership website**. Deemed as an effective information sharing amongst partners and stakeholders, recent information about the partnership areas will be disseminated via the website. UNEP will continue to send a **regular e-mail update** to partnership area leads (approximately every two months) and will **host teleconferences** of partnership area leads, as requested by partners and as deemed appropriate.
9. To ensure regular communication between the secretariat focal person for communication and the **partnership areas**, **each partnership area** will be invited to designate a **focal person for communication**. Partnership area communication focal persons will be invited to coordinate directly with the Partnership secretariat focal person on communication; review regularly the partnership area webpage, inform the UNEP Partnership secretariat on current activities, provide links and references to relevant reports and other information materials, and suggest updates to keep the site active and interesting. A special **closed chat-area** can be created in the UNEP Partnership website where Partners will be able to communicate and have discussions across partnership areas.
10. The Partnership may consider having a **web-based platform**, which could include information about the Partners, projects, and contact details. A web-based platform could serve as an online forum where Partners can update and regulate their profile, recent activities, and contact details by themselves. The platform could be linked to an **automated system to give UNEP notifications of new and relevant information, changes in profile and contact details**. This would likewise provide a means by which the Partnership can determine why Partners are joining, what their current/recent activities are, and how/whether or not they are active.

E. Fostering external communication

11. Recognizing the need to increase its visibility, the Partnership may wish to consider a tab-access page on the Minamata Convention website. A single page where all of the key documents can be found, and having a platform that is linked to the Minamata Convention would facilitate external communication.
12. The Partnership areas may also explore the possibility of having a regional focal person or network as the hub of regional information sharing and dissemination.
13. Based on special topics proposed by the partnership areas, UNEP Partnership secretariat could organize special e-forum sessions/webinars where Partners and stakeholders will have a chance to participate in the discussions.

F. Communication tools and channels

14. Whether for internal or external communication, the Partnership may wish to maximize tools and channels that will feature case studies, best practices and demonstration projects to take immediate action towards reduction of mercury pollution.
15. The following are suggested communication tools and channels:
 - UNEP's website
 - The website of Partnership leads
 - Conferences, workshops, webinars, and specialized briefings
 - Media relations, press briefings and short documentaries on television channels
 - Print media: banners, fact sheets, brochures, posters, magazines, newsletters, traveling exhibits
 - Broadcast media: audio-visual documentaries, newsfeeds and radio programmes (for example UNifeed and UN radio), Public service announcements
 - Social media
 - Special/celebration events
16. The partnership areas are encouraged to continue using successful communication tools and channels such as webinars (ASGM), brochures (products), audio-visual documentaries (coal), on-line guidance materials (chlor-alkali, coal) among other examples. Partnership areas are encouraged to continue developing technical guidance documents that are brief and concise, and preferably in the 6 UN languages. The Partnership may also wish to consider **publishing such guidance documents in scientific and/or industry journals**.
17. In order for the Partnership to have its own identity and attract more Partners, a **Partnership logo and branding** may be developed using Partnership branding and logo guidelines.
18. UNEP will continue to coordinate the "Story of the Month" that features recent and interesting topics and activities from the partnership areas. The Story is published on the Partnership website and is distributed to partners via an e-mail distribution list. UNEP will be seeking input from the partnership areas. The Story will increase the profile and raise awareness on a certain topic/activity that can be considered a

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