**Small intersessional working group on the update of the Technical guidelines on**

**mercury wastes**

**Teleconference**

**30 July 2020 – 14h to 15h, Geneva time**

For the list of attendees, please see Annex I of this document.

**Agenda of the meeting:**

1. Introduction and adoption of the agenda
2. Update on OEWG-12
3. Discussion on way forward for updating of the TGs and revision of the workplan:
   1. Path to adoption at COP15;
   2. Possibility of a virtual meeting;
   3. Revision of the workplan
4. Discussion on:
   1. Draft roadmaps for applying the guidance to particular wastes or waste management conditions;
   2. Items on which specific information is requested from SIWG by 31 July 2020;
   3. Items on which additional information requested from SIWG by 15 September 2020
5. Next steps and concluding remarks

**Summary:**

1. **Introductory remarks**

The Secretariat provided an overview of documents that had been made available to members ahead of the teleconference (Provisional agenda, draft revised workplan, comments on the proposal for additional information collection, possible work to be done by the lead country and other SIWG members on updating of Technical guidelines on mercury wastes before BC COP15). She further introduced representatives of the lead country who would chair the teleconference.

1. **Update on OEWG-12**

* The Secretariat provided an overview of the upcoming 12th meeting of the OEWG to be held online on 1 and 3 September 2020. During the meeting, a representative of Japan would provide a brief report on progress on the work of the SIWG on mercury wastes. Subsequent to the online meeting, a face-to-face meeting of the OEWG could take place in March 2021 pending availability of financial resources and global sanitary conditions that would allow for the organization of such a meeting.
* The representative of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention enquired about the relevance of an intervention during the online meeting of the OEWG-12 to highlight interlinkages between the work of the SIWG and the Minamata Convention, including the Expert group on mercury waste thresholds under the Minamata Convention. It was agreed that the representative from Japan could highlight such interlinkages during the progress report to the meeting.

1. **Discussion on way forward for updating of the TGs and revision of the workplan**

* The representative of Japan introduced the document on possible work to be done by the lead country and other SIWG members on updating of Technical guidelines on mercury wastes before BC COP15, explaining that the table presented showed the planned revisions to the draft of the updated guidelines and served as an invitation for assistance from members whose names were shown therein. One such member had already indicated to Japan that it did not have capacity to respond to that invitation and another member asked for clarifications which Japan agreed to provide after the teleconference. One member indicated that he had some comments on the table which he had already sent to the Secretariat and Japan. The latter indicated that such comments would be considered and relevant actions implemented where possible.
* Members exchanged views on whether the SIWG should work towards preparing draft updated TGs that would be presented for adoption by COP15. Some members were of the opinion that it was premature to make such a decision which would depend on the comments received from Parties and observers on the second draft of the TGs and the quality of the draft developed in response to such comments. The SIWG could provisionally aim for adoption at COP15 and further decide on this matter at the proposed online meeting of the SIWG in December 2020. A member indicated that the group should strive for adoption at COP15 so as to provide Parties and others with updated TGs that contain better guidance on the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes and that there would be further opportunities to improve the TGs to take into account decisions to be adopted by the COP of the Minamata Convention at its fourth meeting in October/November 2021. It was agreed that the group would proceed accordingly.
* Members exchanged views on the possibility of holding an online meeting to advance work on revising the TGs. It was discussed that such a meeting would be important to prepare draft TGs that could be ready for adoption by COP15. Japan indicated that the meeting would also provide the opportunity for the group to resolve elements of the TGs on which conflicting comments that had been provided by Parties and observers. Regarding the third draft of the updated TGs to be discussed at the meeting, members agreed that 3 weeks would be allowed for their review so to provide more time for Japan to prepare it. Regarding timing of the meeting, it would take place between the 7 and 18 of December 2020; the Secretariat would confirm the exact dates and duration, after consulting the lead country and taking into account logistical constraints within the Secretariat as well as the need to balance the demands of the meeting of the SIWG on plastic wastes planned during the same period.

1. **Discussion on:**
2. **Draft roadmaps for applying the guidance to particular wastes or waste management conditions**

The member that had taken the lead on preparing the draft roadmaps informed the group that members working on the draft had encountered delays in their preparation. Instead of preparing the draft roadmaps, he suggested to provide texts for more specific guidance on the environmentally sound management of some types of mercury waste such as those on which additional information had been requested from the SIWG by Japan (see 4(c) below).

1. **Items on which specific information is requested from SIWG by 31 July 2020**

Referring to annex 1 of the document on possible work to be done by the lead country and other SIWG members on updating of Technical guidelines on mercury wastes before BC COP15, Japan reminded the members to provide their comments on the items listed therein. Based on the request SIWG members, the deadline has been changed to 15 September 2020.

1. **Items on which** **additional information requested from SIWG by 15 September**

Regarding additional information requested from SIWG by 15 September, as set out in annex 2 of the document on possible work to be done by the lead country and other SIWG members on updating of Technical guidelines on mercury wastes before BC COP15, members discussed whether there would be benefit in making the request more widely to Parties and observers. The representative of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention highlighted that the invitation could also be sent to the members of the Expert group on mercury waste thresholds established under the Minamata Convention. It was agreed that the Secretariat would shortly send such an invitation to Parties and observers, taking into consideration comments provided by one member on annex 2. The Secretariat would take this opportunity to remind Parties about the invitation to provide comments on the draft of the updated TGs set out in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/INF/13.

1. **Next steps and concluding remarks**

The Secretariat indicated that the workplan of the SIWG will be updated to reflect the outcomes of the teleconference and will be shared with the group together with a summary of the teleconference. The representative of Japan indicated that he would no longer be working on the TGs as he was moving to a different position in August 2020 but that work would continue under the leadership of Japan. He thanked all participants for their collaboration during his tenure.

**The meeting was closed at 15:00h.**

**Annex I – List of attendees**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Representing** |
| Christopher Mariano | Environment and Climate Change, Canada |
| David Lennett | Natural Resources Defense Council |
| Eisaku Toda | Secretariat of the Minamata Convention |
| Erik Westin | Swedish EPA |
| Greg Helms | U.S. EPA |
| Irina Talamoni | Ministry of Environment, Argentina |
| Kaoru Oka | EX Research Institute, Japan |
| Kathia David | EPA-Guyana |
| Lee Bell | IPEN |
| Lighea Speziale | CEWEP |
| Michael Ernst | Federal Environment Ministry, Germany |
| Peter Wessman | European Commission |
| Tadashi Teranishi | Ministry of the Environment, Japan |
| Takashi Nishida | EX Research Institute, Japan |
| Toru Terai | Ministry of the Environment, Japan |
| Zheng Yang | China |
| Melisa Lim | BRS Secretariat |
| Carla Valle-Klann | BRS Secretariat |