



Distr.: General
18 October 2019

English only



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

**Conference of the Parties to the
Minamata Convention on Mercury
Third meeting**

Geneva, 25–29 November 2019

Items 5 (j) and 6 (b) of the provisional agenda*

International cooperation and coordination

**Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations
Environment Programme to the third meeting of the
Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on
Mercury**

Note by the secretariat

1. The annex to the present note sets out the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to the third meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The report highlights the activities undertaken by UNEP in relation to work on mercury and to the decisions taken at the first and second meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
2. After an introduction referring to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly that contribute to the implementation of the goals of the Convention and the decisions of the Conference of the Parties, the report is divided into three sections. Section I contains updates on the programmatic collaboration between UNEP and the secretariat of the Minamata Convention. Section II contains updates on administrative actions taken by UNEP. Section III contains updates on UNEP support to the organization and holding of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties and on cooperation among the Chemicals and Health Branch of UNEP, the secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

* UNEP/MC/COP.3/1.

Annex

Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury

Geneva, Switzerland, 25–29 November 2019

Introduction

1. The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) has adopted the following resolutions, which contribute to the implementation of the strategic goals of the Convention and decisions of its Conference of the Parties as listed in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Relevant UNEA Resolutions

No	Relevant UNEA Resolutions
1.	UNEA4/7: Environmentally sound management of waste
2.	UNEA4/8: Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste
3.	UNEA3/4: Environment and Health
4.	UNEA3/5: Investing in innovative environmental solutions for accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
5.	UNEA3/6: Managing Soil Pollution to Achieve Sustainable Development
6.	UNEA 3/8: Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally
7.	UNEA3/10: Addressing water pollution to protect and restore water-related ecosystems
8.	UNEA2/7: Sound management of chemicals and waste
9.	UNEA2/8 Sustainable consumption and production
10.	UNEA2/18: ‘The relationship between United Nations Environment Programme and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements for which it provides the Secretariats’
11.	UNEA1/5: Chemicals and waste

2. Table 2 below, highlights decisions from the first and second meetings of the Conference of Parties to the Minamata Convention mandating the Secretariat, the Conference of Parties (COP) and to the Parties that are relevant to programmatic collaboration with UNEP.

Table 2: Minamata Decisions relevant to Programmatic Collaboration with UNEP

No.	Minamata Decisions relevant to Programmatic contributions of UNEP
1.	MC-1/4: Guidance in relation to mercury emissions
2.	MC-1/5: Guidance to the Global Environment Facility
3.	MC-1/6: Specific international programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance
4.	MC-1/9: Establishment of arrangements in regard to effectiveness evaluation
5.	MC-1/10: Financial rules for the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury and any of its subsidiary bodies, as well as financial provisions governing the functioning of the secretariat
6.	MC-1/11: Secretariat
7.	MC-1/13: Guidance on the preparation of national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining
8.	MC-1/14: Mercury emissions related to the open burning of waste
9.	MC-1/15: Programme of work of the secretariat and proposed budget for the biennium 2018–2019
10.	MC-1/16: Guidance in relation to mercury emission
11.	MC-1/17: Guidance in relation to mercury releases
12.	MC-1/19 : Mercury waste
13.	MC/2/1: Secretariat
14.	MC-2/2: Mercury waste thresholds
15.	MC/2/3 Releases

No.	Minamata Decisions relevant to Programmatic contributions of UNEP
16.	MC-2/7: Cooperation between the secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions
17.	MC-2/9: Harmonized System codes
18.	MC/2/10: Effectiveness evaluation

Section I: Programmatic collaboration between UNEP and Minamata Convention.

a. Support to the Global Mercury Partnership

3. The UNEP provides secretariat support to the Global Mercury Partnership, which gathers to date 190 stakeholders¹ representing governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry and academia, all committed to protecting human health and the environment from the impacts of mercury, and to reducing global environmental releases of mercury. It is structured around 8 priorities for action or so-called “partnership areas”: (1) artisanal and small-scale gold mining; (2) mercury cell chlor-alkali production; (3) mercury air transport and fate research; (4) mercury in products; (5) mercury releases from coal combustion; (6) mercury waste management; (7) mercury supply and storage; and (8) mercury releases from cement industry.

4. Initiated in 2005 by a decision of the UNEP Governing Council, the Partnership has been instrumental in helping build momentum for a global legally-binding instrument on mercury, and contributed knowledge to negotiators, other stakeholders and the public during the negotiation process through the entry into force of the Convention. Examples of such contributions by the Partnership included a global inventory of mercury-cell chlor-alkali facilities² as well as guidance for countries to develop their National Action Plans on reducing mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining³. In both cases the Partnership’s contribution was invited by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee⁴.

5. The Partnership currently focuses its work on supporting countries for timely and effective implementation of the Minamata Convention; on providing state of the art knowledge and science on mercury and on delivering outreach and awareness raising towards global action on mercury.

6. In response to decision MC-2/9 of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention, the Global Mercury Partnership, through its partnership area on mercury in products, collaborated with the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention in developing a report to approaches for customs codes to identify and distinguish non-mercury-added and mercury-added products listed in annex A to the Minamata Convention on Mercury based on the Harmonized Tariff System (document UNEP/MC/COP.3/5). This report built amongst others on the results of a survey on the Harmonized System initiative previously developed by the Global Mercury Partnership. The survey, taken in July 2018, by 40 countries, helped determine the level of interest and support for a coordinated process to consider mercury-product specific customs codes. An overwhelming majority expressing support for this initiative.

7. Contributing to the work of partnership areas, a number of key guidance and tools to support countries in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention have recently been developed, amongst which for instance a “Socio-economic ASGM Research Methodology”⁵, which provides a suggested approach for collecting and analyzing socio-economic information about the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector or a “Catalogue of Technologies and Services on Mercury

¹ as at 15 July 2019, the Partnership gathers 190 stakeholders from governments (33), intergovernmental organizations (9), non-governmental organizations (67), industry (43), academia and others (38), information on partners available at: <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/partners>

² <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/global-estimate-global-mercury-cell-chlorine-capacity-global-inventory-updated-2013>

³ <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/nap-guidance-document>

⁴ See para.147 of documents UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.1/21 and para. 148 of document UNEP(DTIE)/Hg/INC.6/24, reports of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury on the work of its first and sixth sessions, available at

http://mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/inc1/English/INC1_21_final.pdf and

http://mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/inc6/English/6_24_e_report.pdf

⁵ <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/socio-economic-asgm-research-methodology>

Minamata Initial Assessments (MIA) and pre-MIAs implemented by UNEP

12. UNEP is also supporting 25 countries in the development of their National Action Plans to reduce mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining (NAP), by providing technical assistance and guidance in mercury-free technologies, formalization, baseline assessments, amongst others.



NAPs to reduce mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining implemented by UNEP

13. Supported MIAs have been completed in 9 countries and NAPs in 2 countries. Reviewed projects reports have been submitted to the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and have been made publicly available through the website of the Convention⁹.

14. UNEP also executes the global component of NAPs in 25 countries. This work encompasses the provision of recommendations, facilitation of experts engagement, assistance in the planning and development of the components, support to the development of baseline estimates, provision of in-house and peer review of the national overview reports on artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) and draft NAP documents, “help desk” services and responses to various requests from participating countries. Key tools and original guidance materials have been developed through this global component on topics such as baseline estimates, formalization, mercury-free processing techniques, mercury trade, and rapid environmental assessments. Regional trainings, including the African NAP lessons-learned workshop in Eswatini, held in May 2019, are regularly organized by UNEP to ensure NAP countries are able to use and benefit from guidance materials and share experiences in their actions to address mercury use in ASGM and development of their NAPs.

15. UNEP executes a similar global component for MIAs. Through this component, reviews of final MIA reports are being undertaken, using a standard checklist. UNEP is currently undertaking an analysis of the data from the inventory reports produced as part of the Minamata Initial Assessments to identify trends and national priorities for future technical assistance and capacity building activities.

16. UNEP is the lead agency of planetGOLD (formerly known as the GEF GOLD programme), a 45-million USD collaborative effort funded by the GEF to develop innovative models to support artisanal and small-scale gold miners improve their livelihoods while reducing mercury use. UNEP is working with Conservation International, UNDP and UNIDO, with the support of the Global Mercury Partnership area on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, in Burkina Faso, Colombia, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Mongolia, the Philippines and Peru to assist the sector in reducing and where feasible eliminate mercury use in the sector. The Programme focuses on formalization, access to

⁹ <http://mercuryconvention.org/Countries/Parties/MinamataInitialAssessments/tabid/6166/language/en-US/Default.aspx> and <http://mercuryconvention.org/Countries/Parties/NationalActionPlans/tabid/7966/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

finance and international markets, technology transfer and knowledge management and communication.

17. UNEP is also the lead agency for the multifocal GEF Programme “Mediterranean Sea Programme (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security”. In this Programme, UNEP will work with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in the region to address land-based pollution sources. Mercury pollution from operating and closed chlor-alkali industries will be one of the focus. The projects under this Programme have been submitted for GEF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) endorsement.

18. UNEP is developing the CEO endorsement document for a project addressing primary mercury mining in Mexico. The project will assist the country in its efforts to comply with Article 3 of the Convention (Mercury supply sources and trade) and will introduce sustainable alternative livelihood options for the communities currently relying on mercury mining. The project will be submitted to the GEF for CEO endorsement in the first part of 2020.

19. UNEP is the lead agency for the GEF Programme “Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States”. In this Programme, UNEP is working with Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist 27 Small-Islands Developing States with the management of chemicals and chemicals-containing products. The Programme contributes to the implementation of the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions as well as SAICM. The Programme concept was approved by the GEF council at its 56th meeting in June 2019 and projects are currently under development.

20. In GEF6, UNEP has increased its support to member states on the mercury issue with a total of 42-million USD of new projects approved in the cycle. With the entry into force of the Convention and the priorities identified during the MIA projects, UNEP will continue to implement its current portfolio and develop new initiatives in GEF7 (the primary mercury mining project and the ISLANDS Programme are part of the GEF7 replenishment).

21. Looking forward in GEF7, UNEP is working with World Health Organization (WHO) to develop projects addressing some of the priorities identified in MIA projects. These include mercury use in dentistry, mercury-containing medical measuring devices and mercury in cosmetics. Additionally, UNEP is developing mercury trade projects in order to reinforce control capacity of Parties as well as support their reporting obligations. Finally, UNEP is working with other GEF agencies to develop interventions to address mercury emissions from sources listed in Article 8 and Annex D.

22. With funding from the Government of China, UNEP is supporting a selection of Asian countries, namely China, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, in the implementation of chemicals and waste Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including the Minamata Convention. This 2-year 1 million USD project aims at strengthening the capacity of participating countries in the sound management of chemicals, through better understanding of safe and sustainable alternatives to new chemicals listed under the MEAs and SAICM, while meeting the requirements of chemicals and waste conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals. Based on national situation analysis and needs expressed by countries, activities related to the Minamata Convention will include the development of online-courses and targeted national capacity building activities. This includes for instance the organization of a regional training workshop on the reduction of mercury emissions and releases which will be convened from 31 October to 1 November 2019, in Hanoi, Vietnam. These activities will be implemented in close cooperation with the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention.

d. Development of the Global Mercury Assessment 2018

23. In September 2019, UNEP and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme published the technical background report to the Global Mercury Assessment 2018¹⁰, which had been launched at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention. This report was prepared by teams of experts and peer-reviewed for scientific quality. It is accompanied by a summary for policy makers.

¹⁰ www.unenvironment.org/resources/publication/global-mercury-assessment-2018

24. This update to the Global Mercury Assessment 2013 provides the most recent information available for the worldwide emissions to air, releases to water, and transport of mercury in atmospheric and aquatic environments. The main focus is on updated global emissions and releases inventories, especially for sectors of relevance to the Minamata Convention. The report reflects progress made by the scientific community, national authorities and organizations in better understanding mercury cycling, atmospheric mercury emissions, mercury levels in air, atmospheric transport and fate, releases to water, and the cycling and methylation of mercury in the aquatic environment. New sections are included on observed levels of mercury in biota and observed levels and trends of mercury in humans.

25. The Global Mercury Assessment 2018, produced by UNEP in response to a request from its Governing Council¹¹, is the fourth such assessment undertaken, following earlier reports in 2002, 2008, and 2013. For the second consecutive time, the work was carried out in close cooperation and with the support of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme secretariat. The Global Mercury Partnership contributed to the development of estimates of emissions and releases of mercury to the environment, to updating the information on environmental levels and trends in air and to the development of the new sections on humans and biota.

e. 2019 update of the Mercury Inventory Toolkit

26. Since 2005 UNEP has developed and maintained the Mercury Inventory Toolkit to provide countries a scientifically robust methodology to assess their mercury emissions and releases. Over 90 countries have used the Toolkit to set their national priorities as a part of their MIA projects. The Toolkit is also one of the methods recommended in guidance from the Minamata Convention on preparing inventories of emissions pursuant to Article 8¹².

27. In light of the most recent technical and scientific knowledge, UNEP, in collaboration with United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), has updated the Toolkit with new default input factors for large-scale gold mining, municipal solid waste and certain mercury containing lamp types. The updated toolkit will be available in November 2019 on the UNEP website¹³.

f. Mercury monitoring

28. Responding to the need for further guidance on the establishment of a global monitoring system, UNEP, in collaboration with partners and with support from the GEF, has been implementing the project "Development of a Plan for Global Monitoring of Human Exposure to and Environmental Concentrations of Mercury"¹⁴

29. The project compiles and synthesizes available information on: existing mercury monitoring networks globally including (i) air monitoring, (ii) human biomonitoring, (iii) biota monitoring, and (iv) soil monitoring; and on worldwide capacities to analyze mercury and mercury compounds.

30. Building on existing experiences in mercury monitoring, the project has created the scientific bases for monitoring of mercury in air and in humans at global, regional and local levels. The applicability of the proposed techniques has been pilot tested for human biomonitoring (HBM) and air globally.

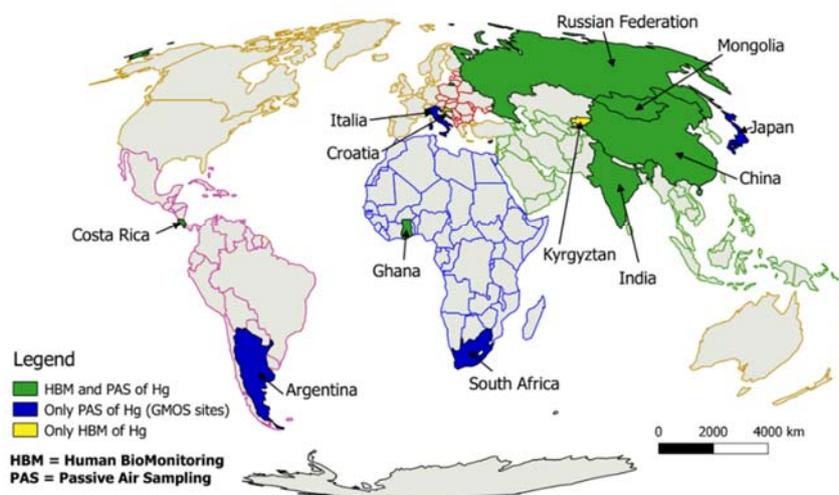
¹¹ decision GC-27/12

¹² Guidance on the methodology for preparing inventories of emissions pursuant to Article 8 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury" available at http://mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/forms-guidance/English/guidance_Article8_inventory.pdf

¹³ <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/mercury-inventory-toolkit>

¹⁴ Further information may be found at: <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/mercury-monitoring>

Selected Pilot Sampling Sites for a Global Monitoring Network



31. Key technical outputs which can contribute to collecting reliable and comparable data, among others, include:

- Global Review of Mercury Monitoring Networks¹⁵
- An Overview of the worldwide capacity to analyze mercury
- Assessment of prenatal exposure to mercury: Standard operating procedures¹⁶
- Assessment of prenatal exposure to mercury: human biomonitoring survey – The first survey protocol – a tool for developing national protocols¹⁷
- Recommendations on quality control of mercury human biomonitoring and practical instruction on the use of passive air samplers for mercury;
- Templates for storage, statistical analysis and assessment of results of human biomonitoring and air monitoring.

32. Additionally, to provide further contribution in line with the discussion on the establishment of arrangements for an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Minamata Convention, two reports on soil and biota as matrices will be presented to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties as part of an information document to contribute in the discussion of the effectiveness evaluation of the Convention.

33. The first round of an Interlaboratory assessment was organized, 38 laboratories from 28 countries and all 5 UN regions delivered results. Laboratories were invited to choose to analyse one or all of three types of samples: a) Standard solution, b) Hair and c) Fish.

Table. Results received per matrix and percentage of laboratories reporting satisfactory results

Type of samples	Number of laboratories delivering results	Percentage of satisfactory results ¹⁸
standard solution	34	79.4 %
fish sample	32	84.4 %
human scalp hair	28	82.1 %

34. As part of this project, UNEP, has also developed a “Global Mercury Laboratory Databank”, which 210 laboratories registered, on a voluntary basis, from all UN regions capable of analyzing

¹⁵ <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/publication/global-review-mercury-monitoring-networks>

¹⁶ <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/publication/assessment-prenatal-exposure-mercury-standard-operating-procedures-2018>

¹⁷ http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/386893/survey-mercury-eng.pdf?ua=1

¹⁸ Were considered satisfactory results if the z-scores were in the interval > -2 and < +2, questionable results between -3 and -2 or +2 and +3, and unsatisfactory results < -3 and > +3.

mercury and mercury compounds. This tool is accessible online¹⁹ and will be periodically updated. It will serve as a resource for stakeholders, including governments, seeking to identify laboratories capable to analyses mercury and mercury compound analysis.

35. Some of the key highlights of the projects include: a) cost effective methodologies to assess human exposure to and environmental concentration of mercury are already well established and limited effort is needed to fill gaps; b) it is possible to build on existing initiatives a global monitoring plan for mercury; c) the project contributed to the generation of comparable global data by producing standard operating procedures, survey and national protocols and manuals; and d) the performance of laboratories undertaking mercury analyses all over the world shows potential of building on already existing captancies and networks.

36. An Information document will be presented to COP3, this document will include a complete summary of the key finding of the whole project, the main outcomes and lessons learnt, and additional information relevant to the topic of mercury monitoring.

g. Mercury waste

37. UNEP, through the International Environmental Technology Centre, cooperated with the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention, with the support of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment supporting discussions on mercury waste management with a number of governments and experts, and assisting as well in the organization of a workshop on synergies in Osaka, Japan, on 30 and 31 May 2019, back to back with the meeting of the group of technical experts established by the Conference of the Parties to develop threshold(s) for mercury waste pursuant to paragraph 2 of article 11 (decision MC-2/2). The meeting discussed in particular the needs of developing countries in terms of capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer for the environmentally sound management of mercury wastes, synergies between the Minamata Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements as well as the linkages between article 11 (mercury waste) and other provisions of the Convention. Key findings from the workshop may be found on UNEP's website²⁰.

38. UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre has been implementing since 2015 with funding from the Government of Japan, a project to support Parties to the Minamata Convention and other countries to develop and implement environmentally sound management of mercury waste.

39. A number of tools and publications were developed as part of the project, including an online training course on the environmentally sound management of mercury waste²¹, a regional study on mercury waste in the Member States of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)²² as well as the Global Mercury Waste Assessment²³, officially launched in 2017 at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties and available in the 6 official languages of the UN.

40. Based on fact-finding missions to about 30 countries, the Global Mercury Waste Assessment provides an initial survey of current practices in mercury waste management. The Assessment concluded that many countries still face fundamental challenges related to waste management generally, and mercury waste management in particular. Many countries continue to manage mercury waste as part of municipal or industrial waste and dispose of it as mixed waste in landfills or at open dumping sites. Even countries that implement some waste management practices may not have specific control measures for mercury waste, and the challenge of separate collection of mercury waste, in particular household mercury waste, remains.

41. The International Environmental Technology Centre has also been investigating the issue of open burning of mercury waste since 2018. It has monitored emissions of mercury from open dumping and open burning of wastes on site in three countries and plans to conduct monitoring in two more countries in 2019 and 2020. Results are expected to be published during the course of 2020.

¹⁹ <http://informea.pops.int/HgPOPsLabs/index.html>

²⁰ www.unenvironment.org/ietc/news/story/workshop-synergies-mercury-waste-management

²¹ <http://www.mercurywaste.org/>

²² https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/21135/reg_study_mercury_waste_mgt_asean.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

²³ The Global Mercury Waste Assessment 2017 is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish at www.unenvironment.org/ietc/what-we-do/mercury-waste-management

Section II. Administrative and financial management support provided to the Minamata Convention Secretariat by the UNEP

a. Delegation of Authority

42. The United Nations Secretary-General vide ST/SGB/2019/2 issued on 18th December 2018 established a new delegation of authority framework effective 1 January 2019. The objective of the new framework is to transfer centrally held authority closer to the point of service delivery. UNEP has revised its delegation of authority to Executive Heads of Convention Secretariats in order to harmonize it with the Secretary General's new framework. The Executive Director has initiated the process for the recruitment of the permanent Executive Secretary of the Secretariat, the process is near completion and the announcement will be made officially before the forthcoming Conference of Parties in November 2019.

b. Standardized guidelines and procedures for financial matters

43. UNEP continues to prepare new or enhance existing standardized guidelines and procedures for financial and administrative matters in order to continuously improve internal processes with a view to making them more efficient, streamlined and transparent. With the finalization and distribution, on 29 March 2018, of the suite of secretariat services provided to multilateral environmental agreements, UNEP has fully implemented resolution 2/18 on "Relationships between the UNEP and Multilateral Environmental Agreements for which it provides the secretariat", adopted by the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in May 2016.

c. United Nations system-wide enterprise resource planning system (Umoja)

44. The United Nations Secretariat has deployed Umoja Extension 2 (UE2) to strengthen the Organization's enterprise resource planning system. UE2 consists of several key changes that have been released in stages. It is important to note that the release dates are not full product releases. The Umoja team is using a release-develop-release approach for every module. The releases began in 2018 and include the first phases of modules for (a) fundraising, (b) strategic management, (c) portfolio and project management, (d) budget planning and (e) implementing partners. In the first and second quarters of 2019, UNEP conducted training on Implementing Partner's Grantor Module to the programme and finance staff of the Secretariat of the Convention to achieve a successful implementation of the extension of the application. UNEP continues to organize knowledge sharing sessions to build its staff's capacity to further optimize the use of the system and provide support to resolve technical issues and, where necessary, escalate issues to the United Nations Headquarters for problem solving.

d. Support provided to the Convention from programme support resources

45. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/217 and the United Nations procedures stipulated in ST/AI/286, programme support costs at a standard rate of 13 per cent are charged to all extrabudgetary resources to recover the incremental costs incurred when supporting activities financed through such resources. The amount of programme support resources available in any given year is based on the income generated for that purpose in the previous year. In line with UNEP's procedures on management of programme support resources, an agreed portion of the income generated by the multilateral environmental agreements is allocated to the Convention and the balance contributes to the pool that funds central administrative functions and any unforeseen financial liability.

46. UNEP closely monitors its programme support resources, whose fund balance has reduced in recent years due to increasing requests from donors to waive or reduce the programme support rate chargeable. In order to reverse this trend, on 26 April 2018, the Executive Director issued a memorandum to the Heads of all Offices requesting them to re-consider their requests for waivers, review their cost structures and closely monitor utilization of their programme resources.

47. All Convention trust funds continue to be administered by the Executive Director and have been extended to 31 December 2019.

Section III: Updates on the support by the United Nations Environment Programme to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and cooperation amongst the Chemicals and Health Branch of the UNEP and the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

48. The Chemicals and Health Branch and the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (which provides a separate report to the Conference of Parties) will, on the basis of reciprocity, provide the support of expert staff to the secretariat of the Minamata Convention to facilitate the running of contact groups during COP3. The Law Division of UNEP coordinates the preparation of the report of the Executive Director on programmatic and administrative collaboration to the Conference of Parties. When the posts of Communications Officer and Communications Assistant of the Minamata Convention secretariat were under recruitment (now filled), support for communications and outreach activities for the first meeting of COP was provided by the UNEP Europe Office and the Law Division. Support was also provided by the Law Division to COP1 and COP2 for the coordination of in-session documents and provision of legal advisor to the meetings. Law Division also provided support in the preparation and presentation of the budget-related documents to COP1, prior to the recruitment of the Minamata Secretariat's Administrative Officer.

49. Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Secretariat also takes place programmatically, in areas of common concern, and, together with other actors in the chemicals cluster, under the joint task force on programmatic cooperation among the Chemicals and Health Branch of the UNEP and the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The task force which was established in 2014 was reinvigorated in early 2018 with updated terms of reference.
