



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

Minamata Convention on Mercury

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Chemicals & Wastes

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally-binding treaty

STATUS:

- Treaty is not in force internationally.
- Ratified by Canada on April 7, 2017.
- Signed by Canada October 10, 2013

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Environment and Climate Change Canada

Partners: Health Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Global Affairs Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**Web Links:**

- [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#)
- [Text of the Minamata Convention](#)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

April 2017

REFERENCE #:

M-C&W-4/EN

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Minamata Convention is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.

KEY ELEMENTS

The Convention takes a life-cycle approach to the management of mercury. Controlling and reducing mercury globally will occur through Parties meeting treaty obligations relating to supply, trade, products, manufacturing processes, artisanal and small-scale gold mining, atmospheric emissions, releases to land and water, environmentally sound interim storage and waste.

A financial mechanism consisting of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund and voluntary Specific International Programme on capacity building and technical assistance will assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement and meet their obligations.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The Minamata Convention is expected to lead to decreasing levels of mercury entering the environment from anthropogenic sources, over time as a result of controlling or reducing mercury throughout its life-cycle.

An effectiveness evaluation will be undertaken no later than six years after the date of entry into force of the Convention and periodically thereafter. This evaluation shall be conducted on the basis of available scientific, environmental, technical, financial and economic information including: i) reports and other monitoring information, ii) regular reports from Parties, iii) information and recommendations provided by the implementation and compliance committee, and iv) reports and other relevant information on the operation of the financial assistance, technology transfer and capacity-building arrangements.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

This international agreement on mercury is important to Canada. While Canada has reduced its mercury emissions by over 90% in the past forty years, 95% of anthropogenic mercury deposited in Canada comes from foreign sources. Canada's priority is to reduce the



long range transport of mercury, especially to Canada's Arctic where it adversely impacts the health of Northern people and our fragile ecosystem.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Canada actively participated in all five sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme that took place from 2010 to 2013.

On October 10, 2013, Canada signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Kumamoto, Japan at a Diplomatic Conference, along with 92 other governments.

From 2014 to 2015, Canada was a member of a technical expert group on atmospheric emissions that developed guidance on best available techniques and best environmental practices for adoption at the first Conference of the Parties (COP1). In February 2014, Canada hosted the first technical expert group meeting in Ottawa. This guidance will be especially helpful to developing countries in controlling and reducing mercury emissions from the industrial sectors that release the highest quantities of mercury.

Since the Diplomatic Conference, Canada has participated in two further meetings of the INC in 2014 and 2016, aimed at developing a work programme for treaty implementation.

In conjunction with the Departments of Justice Canada and Global Affairs Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada conducted a detailed implementation analysis regarding the measures required to implement the treaty obligations in consultation with provinces, territories and stakeholders. In order to ratify the treaty, Canada needs to be in compliance with the treaty requirements. On February 22, 2017, comprehensive measures were put in place to control mercury exports. On April 7, 2017, Canada ratified the the Minamata Convention on Mercury, becoming the 41st future Party to the treaty.

Reports

The Minamata Convention on Mercury will enter into force after 50 governments have ratified, which is anticipated in spring 2017. The first meeting of the COP is expected to be held from September 24-29, 2017, in Geneva, Switzerland. The COP shall decide upon the timing and format of the reporting to be followed by Parties.

Results

A total of 128 governments have signed the Minamata Convention, and as of April 2017, 41 governments have ratified the treaty.