



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

**Cooperation with international organizations
and bodies established under other conventions**

**Mercury Pollution and Biodiversity: Contribution of the Minamata
Convention on Mercury to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity
Framework**

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Executive Secretary circulates herewith, for the information of participants in the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a report on the contributions of the Minamata Convention on Mercury to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
2. The report summarizes the relevant decisions from the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, held in November 2023, as well as recent work under the Convention to help reduce the impacts of mercury pollution on biodiversity, particularly in the context of targets 7, 11, 21 and 22 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
3. The report is circulated in the form and language in which it was received by the Secretariat.

* CBD/COP/16/1.

MERCURY POLLUTION AND BIODIVERSITY – CONTRIBUTION OF THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY TO THE KUNMING-MONTREAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

*Submission by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury to the sixteenth meeting of the
Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity*

This note provides an update on the contribution of the Minamata Convention on Mercury to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It highlights relevant decisions of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention, including a decision on mercury and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Additionally, the present note provides an overview of activities undertaken by the Secretariat, in collaboration with other organizations, to demonstrate the impacts of mercury on biodiversity and to support Parties in enhancing their contributions to global efforts aimed at conserving and sustainably using biodiversity through the implementation of the Convention and of the Framework.

Mercury is a highly hazardous chemical that poses significant risks to both wildlife and humans due to elevated exposure levels stemming from anthropogenic sources. In aquatic environments, mercury can be transformed into methylmercury, an organic and highly toxic form that bioaccumulates in organisms over their lifespan and biomagnifies throughout the food web. While the full extent of mercury's impact on biodiversity remains to be comprehensively assessed, its detrimental effects on various animal taxa, including aquatic mammals, birds and reptiles, are well documented. Species at higher trophic levels are particularly vulnerable, and the additional pressures imposed by mercury may exacerbate the challenges faced by species already threatened by other drivers of biodiversity loss.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is an international treaty designed to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury from anthropogenic sources. Adopted in 2013 and named after the Japanese city where mercury poisoning caused severe health and environmental crises, the Convention addresses the mercury throughout its lifecycle, including by regulating emissions and trade, phasing out mercury use in products and processes, and addressing the safe management of mercury waste.

In response to a request by the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention, in paragraph 7 of [decision MC-4/12](#) on international cooperation and coordination, the Secretariat prepared a report how the implementation of the Minamata Convention could contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

At its fifth meeting, held in November 2023, the Conference of the Parties considered document [MC/COP.5/20](#) and adopted [decision MC-5/17](#) on mercury and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, recognizing that mercury pollution impacts ecosystems as a direct driver and underlying cause of global loss of biodiversity, and that Parties, through the implementation of the Convention, can significantly contribute to global efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity. In the decision, the

Conference of the Parties, among other things, welcomed the adoption of the Framework, noted the absence, in the monitoring framework, of indicators regarding the overall risk from highly hazardous chemicals and invited the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to consider additional indicators, under Target 7, to cover highly hazardous chemicals and mercury; and encouraged Parties to integrate mercury action into projects developed under the biodiversity focal area and integrated programmes of the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, as well as through the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund. The decision requested the Secretariat to continue supporting the relevant processes to improve coherence among multilateral environmental agreements, including the Liaison Group of Biodiversity related Conventions, and to prepare a draft road map, including possible actions and indicators, to support parties in demonstrating and maximizing the co-benefits arising from the implementation of the Minamata Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting, to be held from 3 to 7 November 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties, in its [decision MC-5/7](#), noting the critical importance of full implementation of article 7 of the Minamata Convention, on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, to achieving the objective of the Convention and to contributing to the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, called on Parties and the Global Environment Facility to make further efforts to seek opportunities to advance implementation of article 7 in the context of projects relating to biodiversity. In [decision MC-5/11](#) on review of the financial mechanism to the Convention, the Conference of the Parties provided additional information to supplement its guidance to the Global Environment Facility, in planning for its ninth replenishment period, to promote synergies with other focal areas, including the biodiversity focal area, as it advances work under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

In accordance with the above-mentioned decisions, the Secretariat has undertaken several activities to support Parties to demonstrate and enhance the contribution of the Minamata Convention to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The following is a brief overview of such activities.

Information sharing among Parties

To support national implementation across the biodiversity and the chemicals and waste agendas, the Secretariat organized, in collaboration with the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions and of the Convention on Biological Diversity, two information sessions for national focal points and other government officials:

(a) The first information session took place on 18 April 2024 and focused on national contributions, through the implementation of the chemicals and waste conventions, to Target 7 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The session aimed to facilitate exchange among national focal points to the five conventions (Minamata, Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and on Biological Diversity) on how Parties are incorporating control measures for highly hazardous chemicals in their revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, as well as on the need for additional indicators related to highly hazardous chemicals, under Target 7, in the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The recording of the session is available through the Convention's [website](#).

(b) A second information session took place on 12 September 2024 and provided an overview of matters related to the impacts of chemicals and waste pollution on biodiversity in the context of the upcoming meetings under the Convention on Biological Diversity, namely, the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-5; 16–18 October 2024) and the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-16; 21 October–1 November 2024) to be held in Cali, Colombia. The recording of the session is available through the Convention's [website](#).

Global data on mercury levels

Under the first effectiveness evaluation of the Convention, a compilation and analysis of temporal and spatial trends in mercury levels is being carried out by the Open-ended Scientific Group. The analysis is expected to be completed by mid-2026. Future exercises to analyze global levels of mercury may take place periodically thereafter at intervals to be decided by the Conference of the Parties. Global data on mercury levels can contribute to monitoring Target 7 of the Framework and may be particularly relevant for measuring progress towards reducing the overall risk and impacts of pollution on biodiversity.

Financial mechanism

The Minamata Convention, under Article 13, sets up a financial mechanism to support developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. The financial mechanism is composed of the following two components:

(a) *The Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF)* – the Secretariat continues to engage with the GEF Secretariat and implementing agencies in the development and implementation of projects, including with UNEP in the development of the recently approved [Global Chemicals Monitoring Programme](#) to support implementation of Stockholm and Minamata Conventions (GCMP), and in the ongoing Phase 2 of the [PlanetGOLD](#) programme to support the transition away from mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. Decisions [MC-5/1](#) (The effects of mercury pollution on Indigenous Peoples and on local communities), [MC-5/7](#), (Artisanal and small-scale gold mining) and [MC-5/11](#) (Review of the financial mechanism) may provide further entry points to eligible countries to strengthen their contribution to global efforts under the GEF biodiversity focal area.

(b) *The Specific International Programme (SIP) to support capacity-building and technical assistance* – Project applications submitted under the fourth round of the SIP are currently being reviewed, and arrangements for the implementation of approved projects is expected in April 2025. During the previous three rounds of the SIP, a total of 24 projects, in 22 countries, were implemented. More information on the SIP is available through the Convention’s [website](#).

Publications

A report “[Mercury and biodiversity](#)”, prepared by the Secretariat, demonstrated how the Minamata Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework could mutually reinforce each other. The report identified opportunities for contribution in 21 of the 23 targets of the Framework. Artisanal and small-scale gold mining, where mercury is used to extract gold from soil and sediments, often carried out in areas of high biodiversity importance and causing serious negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples and local communities, was highlighted as a key programmatic area under the Minamata Convention with the potential to significantly contribute to the goals and targets of the Framework.

A report on “[The socio-economic impacts of mercury pollution on fisheries and livelihoods](#)”, prepared by the Secretariat, emphasized the importance of understanding the effects of mercury on fish populations, as well as the often overlooked social, environmental and economic costs associated with mercury pollution. The report highlighted the urgent need for action at all levels to protect human health, livelihoods and biodiversity, and explored how a natural capital approach may support the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

A special issue of the journal *Ecotoxicology* “Assessing Global Environmental Mercury Exposure in Biota and Potential Impacts on Biodiversity” was co-edited by the Secretariat. The special issue, divided in [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#), contains a collection of studies focusing on major biomes (Arctic, Temperate and

Tropical) and their associated freshwater and marine waters, as well as for major taxa (elasmobranch and teleost fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals).

Furthermore, the Secretariat is currently developing other reports, at the request of the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its sixth meeting, that will further contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. They include: (i) a roadmap to support Parties in demonstrating and maximizing the co-benefits arising from the implementation of the Minamata Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; (ii) supplemental guidance on engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the development and implementation of national action plans regarding artisanal and small-scale gold mining; and (iii) a report on the needs and priorities of Indigenous Peoples, as well as local communities, with regard to the effects of mercury on their health, livelihoods, culture and knowledge, with a view to identifying possible solutions and guiding future work.

International cooperation

Finally, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention is working in close cooperation with other secretariats and international organizations to further promote coherence across the biodiversity and the chemicals and waste agendas. Recent examples include: participation in the UNEP “Bern III Conference on Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” (23–25 January 2024), organization of a side-event, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, on “Linkages on chemicals and waste pollution and biodiversity loss and possible actions to support the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” during the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (26 February–1 March 2024), and by co-organizing the “Forest and Water Day” to be held on 25 October 2024, in Cali, Colombia, on the occasion of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
