

UNEP GC24: contact group on chemicals

Co-chairs' text for draft omnibus decision as amended by the secretariat to reflect written submissions by China, EU, Gambia, Norway and Switzerland, 1 p.m., Wednesday 7 February. (Not reflected: proposals by Egypt in forthcoming UNEP/GC/CW/CRP.6)

Preamble (not complete yet)

Mercury and other metals part of « Omnibus » chemicals decision.

Recalling its decisions 18/12 of 26 May 1995, 19/13 of 7 February 1997, 20/23 of 4 February 1999, SS.VII/3 of 15 February 2002, 22/4 of 7 February 2003, 23/9 of 25 February 2005 and SS.IX/1 of 9 February 2006 concerning global policies related to chemicals management and the development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management,

Acknowledging the widespread concerns over the serious adverse effects of mercury on human health and the environment and the urgent need for international action,

Welcoming the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management by the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 6 February 2006,

Further welcoming the Budapest Statement on Mercury, Lead and Cadmium developed at the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety held in Budapest from 25 to 29 September 2006,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on chemicals management contained in document UNEP/GC.24/7 and the associated documents;

Lead and Cadmium issues

1. *Concludes* from the UNEP Interim Scientific Reviews on Lead and Cadmium that further action is needed to fill data gaps, compile an inventory of existing risk management measures and evaluate possible international measures to manage the challenges posed by lead and cadmium taking into account the specific situation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
2. *Encourages* efforts of Governments and others to reduce risks to human health and the environment of lead and cadmium throughout the whole life cycle;

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to promote such action in the short term by expanding the Mercury Programme to fill the information needs on lead and cadmium identified by paragraph 2 taking into account existing information;

Mercury issues

4. *Acknowledges* the progress made within the mercury program since 2005, including the establishment of and progress made under several partnerships;

5. *Recognizes* that current efforts to reduce risks from mercury are not sufficient to address the global challenges posed by mercury;

6. *Commits to* increased efforts to address the global challenges to reduce risks from releases of mercury including risks from;

- a) the production and supply of mercury and mercury containing compounds and products;
- b) the storage of mercury stocks and disposal of mercury and mercury containing wastes;
- c) the use of mercury including industrial processes and sources, including but not limited to the chlor-alkali industry, the production of vinyl chloride monomers and other industrial production processes;
- d) unintended releases of mercury from combustion sources, including coal combustion in the energy sector and waste incineration;
- e) sites contaminated with mercury.

7. *Recognizes* that a range of activities are required to address these challenges including substitution of products and technologies; technical assistance and capacity building; development of national policy and regulation; data collection, research and information provision;

8. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to continue and increase developing and implementing partnerships, in a clear, transparent and accountable manner;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director to develop further the UNEP mercury program by continuing efforts to develop inventories, to issue risk communication, guidance and training materials, to publicize and administer the small grants program and to promote technical and financial assistance activities including but not limited to the partnership approach outlined in paragraph 8;

10. *Decides* to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group open to Governments, regional economic integration organisations and stakeholder representatives to review and assess how the mercury programme can be further enhanced to address the issues set out in paragraphs 6 and 7, in the context of agreed global objectives, and to identify options for achieving priority objectives, including:
- legal measures, including either a new legally binding agreement for mercury or utilizing relevant elements of existing international agreements;
 - a global programme of action, or
 - partnerships, or
 - any combination of the above;
11. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group should, in accordance with paragraph 10 of the present Decision:
- a) consult with Governments, in advance of its first meeting, to identify priority objectives for the consideration;
 - b) agree to priority objectives from among those set out in the Global Mercury Assessment, the Annex to Decision 22/4 V and from the responses to paragraph a);
 - c) Prepare an analysis, taking into account the priority objectives and the report on supply, trade and demand, of the options which address, singly or in combination, the priority objectives identified in b);
13. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group will provide a progress report to the 10th Special Session of the Governing Council, and a comprehensive report to the 25th Session of the Governing Council putting forward recommendations as to preferred options to reduce uses and releases of mercury;
14. *Encourages* the Governing Council to consider the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group, and to consider taking a decision to implement such recommended work.
15. *Invites* Governments and others in a position to do so to supplement the United Nations Environment Programme's resources available for the implementation of this decision, in particular with regard to the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the Ad Hoc Working Group;
16. *Asks* UNEP Chemicals to serve the Ad Hoc Working Group as secretariat and to prepare the analytical and summary reports necessary for its work;
17. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group apply the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council *mutatis mutandis*.