

## RAPID CHANGES IN MERCURY SUPPLY AND TRADE REQUIRE FREQUENT MONITORING

| Causes of rapid change in supply or trade                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Examples                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Speed with which significant change may occur |
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| Decommissioning mercury-cell chlor-alkali plants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | When a chlor-alkali plant using the mercury-cell process is closed, a large quantity of elemental mercury may be recovered from the plant. The amount of mercury is proportional to the plant production capacity, and may vary from tens to hundreds of metric tons.                                 | 6 months or less                              |
| Mobilization of existing mercury stockpile                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | In 2016 a Russian company offered specialty metals traders a stock of 14 000 flasks (approx. 483 metric tons) of reportedly post-1990 Kyrgyzstan mercury.                                                                                                                                             | 6 months or less                              |
| New trade (import or export) restrictions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | The EU export ban eliminated the potential annual export from the EU of about 650 metric tons of mercury per year. The USA export ban had a smaller but similar effect. Core mercury trading activities shifted mainly to Asia. Additional countries recently enacted or are considering export bans. | 12 months or less                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | When Peru placed restrictions on its imports of mercury in 2014, there were rapid changes in documented imports, decreasing from 169 metric tons in 2013, to 12 tons in 2015. As documented imports declined, however, mercury may have also reached Peru through informal routes.                    | 12-24 months                                  |
| New primary mercury mining                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Indonesia and Mexico have experienced a recent and substantial surge in production and exports resulting from new primary mercury mining activity. Estimates are in the hundreds of metric tons for each country.                                                                                     | 12-24 months                                  |
| <p><i>Sources:</i><br/> UN Environment, 2017. Global mercury supply, trade and demand. United Nations Environment Programme, Chemicals and Health Branch. Geneva, Switzerland.<br/> Comtrade database &lt;<a href="https://comtrade.un.org/data">https://comtrade.un.org/data</a>&gt;, accessed 8-10 September 2017.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                               |