

ZMWG blog/summary of COP 4.1

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation, it was agreed that the fourth Conference of the Parties (COP-4) would take place in two segments: a first segment (**COP4.1**) to be conducted **online within the period of 1 to 5 November 2021** and a second segment (**COP 4.2**) to be conducted **in-person in the first quarter of 2022 in Bali, Indonesia**.

COP 4.1 had a restricted agenda covering only a few time-sensitive items: Programme of Work and Budget for 2022-23, Financial mechanism and the GEF, National reporting and Effectiveness evaluation. ([ZMWGCOP 4.1 summary and notes](#))

Around 1000 persons participated in the on-line COP4.1, from 1-5 November 2021.

Two decisions were to be taken mainly during this COP4.1 – one on the Programme of Work and Budget for 2022 – to allow the functioning and continuation of work of the Minamata Convention , and one on the dates of next meeting, COP 4.2. Discussions were also held around Effectiveness evaluation and the national reporting which is due by end of the year 2021 for the years 2017-2020, as well as the GEF's 8th replenishment.

The floor was given only for regional statements; other statements had to be submitted in writing. ZMWG also submitted its [opening statement](#).

In short- a decision was indeed taken concerning the programme of work and budget for 2022 allowing the Minamata Secretariat and the Convention to work and prepare for COP4.2, the dates of which were confirmed for 21-25 March 2022 in Indonesia.

On the different items:

Item 4 (e)(i):Financial resources and mechanism; GEF – documents 4.10, INF 8, <https://www.thegef.org/gef-8-replenishment>

Overall regions commented on the support from the GEF so far and underlined its importance is supporting the implementation of the Minamata Convention. At the same time however, they called for additional support and increased allocation for the Minamata Convention, from the GEF in its 8th Replenishment as the replenishment negotiations will conclude in February 2022. Parties underlined that the GEF Chemicals and Waste focal area needs to receive sufficient funding to ensure that it can carry out essential work and support timely implementation of the Minamata Convention.

The GEF confirmed that it sees the Minamata Convention as a critically important convention and takes its responsibility as its financial mechanism very seriously. GEF's CEO, mentioned that GEF-8 will build on guidance on programming priorities received from the COP, and work with parties to address issues relating to products, storage, trade and other topics necessary for a successful outcome in the short-term implementation of the Convention.

Item 4 (h) National reporting, documents 4.17 and [Decision MC-3/13](#)

The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/MC/COP.4/17, which contains the draft guidance for completing the national reporting format for the Convention. The guidance will be finalized at COP-4.2 but it was proposed that parties may decide to use it to assist them with preparing and submitting their first long-form national reports, due by 31 December 2021.

Many parties supported the interim use of the draft guidance, while some expressed concerns on some of its elements, and noted that ambiguities and gaps will need to be addressed during the discussion at COP 4.2. Some developing countries asked for more support via webinars and in the regional languages.

Item 4 (i) Effectiveness evaluation – documents 4.18, 4.18 Add1, INF 11, 4.18 Add2, INF 12, INF 25, and [Decision MC-3/10](#)

Work on effectiveness evaluation started already at COP 1. Since then a lot of work has been done and intersessional work has been going in between COP3 and COP4.1.

Norway and Canada proposed a framework for the first effectiveness evaluation of the Minamata Convention, and introduced a Conference Room Paper with a proposed text to start of the discussions at COP4.2. Written comments will be requested and a on line session for parties to exchange views was requested to be organized by the Secretariat.

Many Parties supported the CRP and also further dialogue ahead of COP4.2.

Given that the current knowledge does not seem to allow linking global monitoring data to the effectiveness of the Convention, it was suggested by the EU that the first effectiveness evaluation focuses on Convention's effectiveness in reducing mercury demand, supply, use emissions and releases.

Some Parties stressed the need for more discussions during COP 4.2.

[ZMWG also welcomed](#) that CRP from Norway and Canada and expressed our interest in participating in the intersessional work before COP4.2.

Item 6 - Programme of Work (PoW) and Budget 2022-23 – documents 4.24, INF 22, INF 21

The Programme of work (PoW) and Budget adopted by COP3 is expiring in 2021 therefore it was crucial a new PoW and budget are adopted for 2022. To that end a contact group was established to negotiate and agree on a decision. Nearly 200 delegates took part.

Parties identified the need for adoption of a PoW and budget for 2022. Many parties called for ensuring that the budget supports essential activities and is fully operational. They further asked that it supports parties in timely implementing their obligations.

A final decision was reached after 3 days of deliberations based on CRP4 submitted by the Cochairs of the contact group to the plenary. The COP *Approves*, on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent, the budget for the general trust fund for 2022 of 3,397,684 United States dollars as part of the budget for the biennium 2022–2023; It further *Decides to review and agree on* the budget for the general trust fund for 2023 during the in-person segment of its fourth meeting, which will complete the consideration of the full budget of the Convention for the biennium 2022–2023. The COP *authorizes* the Executive Secretary to draw down from the estimated available surplus of the general trust fund the amount of up to 500,962 United States dollars to cover a portion of the additional costs of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to meet the commitment for the P-3 programme management position to be carried forward from the biennium 2020–2021, and to finalize the trade report budgeted for in the biennium 2020–2021. It further *adopts* the indicative scale of assessments for the apportionment of expenses for 2022 as set out in table 2 of the present decision and authorizes the Executive Secretary, consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, to adjust the scale to include all parties for which the Convention is in force by 1 January 2022;

Further details and the 2023 budget will be discussed at COP 4.2.

Item 7: Dates of the resumed fourth meeting; venue and dates of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

The dates proposed for COP4.2 were 21-25 March 2022, in Indonesia. Given the current situation it was initially suggested that delegations are limited to only four members, with possibility of on line access.

Many parties supported these dates and place for COP 4.2. Some parties expressed the preference for a fully in person meeting, whereas others supported a hybrid option where delegations' numbers may be restricted and others could follow on-line. Some parties noted, that limiting delegation size would make discussions difficult and called for flexibility.

Indonesia, took note of the delegates' concerns and asked for flexibility in the effort to strike balance between inclusive participation and safety.

COP 4.1 in it's final decision - *Decides* to adjourn the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention and to resume the meeting in an in-person format in Bali, Indonesia, from 21 to 25 March 2022.

The modalities of the meeting in view of the COVID-19 situation are still to be determined.

Bali Declaration on combatting illegal trade of mercury

Indonesia is proposing a non-binding Bali Declaration on combatting global illegal trade of mercury. The draft text seems that has gone already through some rounds of consultations and is to be finalized at COP-4.2. A consultation, only for Parties, was held in the framework of the COP 4.1; observers were not invited.

Indonesia invited Parties to continue to contribute to the draft of the declaration. It is not clear whether observers are invited to comment.

Highlights from the meeting can also be found at <https://enb.iisd.org/Minamata-Convention-Mercury-COP4-summary#brief-history-minamata-convention>