

ZMWG and EnvMed Statement on Dental amalgam, 3 November 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

Thank you, Mr. President,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Network for Environmental Medicine and the Zero Mercury Working Group, an international coalition of over 110 public interest NGOs from more than 55 countries, celebrating our 20th anniversary this year. Since it's the first time we are taking the floor, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Switzerland as well as UN Environment, the Bureau and the Secretariat for all efforts to make this meeting happen.

Dental amalgam is composed of 50% mercury. An average posterior filling is made of 0,6 grams of Mercury, 600mg! This is enough to pollute more than 100.000 litres of drinking water. When we talk about minimizing releases from the use of dental amalgam by installing separators, restricting the use to capsules or installing filters in crematoria, we speak about reducing the ultimate release of mercury from 100% to maybe 40%-60%. Sustainable use of amalgam is therefore an illusion.

We have banned mercury added medical devices, batteries, and lamps – now it's time to stop placing mercury in the mouths. More than 60 countries have banned dental amalgam use, stopped its import, replaced it in public programs or declared its phase out. Among those, the European Union has banned the use of dental amalgam since 1 January 2025.

The deadline of 2030 is consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and supported by WHO, which says: “ 🌟 *A global phase-out by 2030 is not only feasible — it is necessary. It will drive innovation, reduce costs through market shifts, and protect both people and the planet. It is especially important for the ambitions to achieve Universal Oral Health coverage by 2030.* ”

No new public programs should be set up or extended to cover dental amalgam in line with new ambitions for Universal Oral Health Coverage. On the Contrary: Countries should start working on replacing dental amalgam with alternatives in existing programs as proposed by the African region. The experience from European Countries demonstrates that this is feasible without substantial financial burden.

This is consistent with the direction Parties are heading in adopting measures to phase down use; phase out use in pregnant women and children; and the overall phase out of dental amalgam.

Since non-mercury dental fillings are cost effective, perform as well, and are available and used worldwide, we support the objectives of the proposed amendments calling for the discontinuation of dental amalgam by 2030 along with complementary measures.

Thank you