



“GLOBAL MERCURY SUPPLY, TRADE, AND DEMAND” SEPTEMBER 2017 REPORT

A response by the World’s nations to the abundant evidence of the negative effects of mercury pollution on human health and the environment, the Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force on 16 August 2017. The Convention includes provisions covering the entire lifecycle of mercury, including to control the supply, trade and use of mercury.

A new report by UN Environment details global mercury supply, trade, and demand on the eve of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention (Geneva, 24 to 29 September 2017). The report investigates where mercury comes from, how it moves in commerce, and how it is used in products and industrial processes.

Among the findings is a worrisome trend of new mercury mining activity in several countries, with the mercury likely making its way into the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector. However, other supply sources, such as decommissioned chlor-alkali plants, are now yielding less mercury to global markets.

Overall global trade in mercury has decreased significantly over the last 10 years, in part due to export bans in the United States and the European Union. These bans have also changed global trade patterns, with new trade hubs emerging to replace the old ones.

Global demand for mercury has increased moderately since 2005. Artisanal and small-scale gold mining remains the largest user of mercury, followed by vinyl chloride monomer production. Mercury use in the chlor-alkali sector is decreasing as more facilities embrace non-mercury technologies.

Combining the new data available on mercury supply and demand, the report models the global material flow of mercury in intentional use. Understanding how mercury moves in society underscores the challenges faced by countries implementing the Minamata Convention, and is critical for policymakers to take the steps needed to reduce the health and environmental impacts of this toxic metal.

DOWNLOAD REPORT & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most important findings and observations are summarized in the Executive Summary:

wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/21726/global_mercury_summary.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y,

The full report is available at:

wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/21725/global_mercury.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y



Global mercury supply and demand, 2015

