

Minamata Convention COP-4 focuses on global commitment to end mercury

pollution

Picture: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/minamata-convention-cop-4-focuses-global-commitment-end-mercury>

Source of picture: [Adriel Prastyanto/Unsplash / 02 Nov 2021](#)

Geneva, 02 November 2021 - The first segment of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-4) takes place online from 1 to 5 November with over a thousand participants and an ambitious programme of work.

Under the presidency of Indonesia, the first segment of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (COP-4) is taking place online from 1 to 5 November 2021. More than 1,000 representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, UN bodies, academia, and civil society, are participating in the plenaries, working groups and several side events.

At the opening ceremony, the Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, Siti Nurbaya Bakar, underlined that “the work to make mercury history cannot be carried out only by a single country. Each of us needs do their part based on respective national circumstances and conditions. I can assure that it is not an easy task but also it is not impossible: as long as we have the conviction and remain loyal to our global commitment, together we can gradually reduce and eliminate the use of mercury as mandated by our Convention”.

She added: “Here in Indonesia, as the host of COP-4, we are trying our outmost efforts to facilitate member parties to resolve pressing issues such as Effectiveness Evaluation and National Reporting and encourage understanding and collaboration amongst member parties to have a smooth and fruitful conference”.

Her remarks were followed by the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme, Inger Andersen, who highlighted that the Convention’s work this week and, in the months, ahead “will define some of the bold and urgent

steps we must take to make our planet healthy again. It will also contribute to building positive momentum towards the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of UNEP at the UN Conference on the Environment held in Stockholm in 1972”.

She also took the opportunity to “encourage other countries to join soon and make the Minamata Convention a truly global endeavour. Together, we can find sustainable alternatives to mercury and contribute to healthier people and a healthier planet”.

From Indonesia, Jakarta, Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, stated that “this week`s meeting is a celebration of the global commitment to putting mercury pollution to an end, built on the tragic history of people whose health has been affected by mercury and on the recognition that people throughout the world continue to be put at grave risk due to mercury exposure”.

She added: “Importantly, it is also opportunity for you, the Parties, to advance the work under the Convention, and when doing so, to embrace the strong voices from civil society and indigenous peoples”.

After the opening ceremony, Rosa Vivien Ratnawati, President of COP-4 officially opened the proceedings of the meeting. The President said: “Despite numerous challenges related to the pandemic, we, as the Minamata Convention family, have been working hard to remain creative and innovative, as we fully understand that no action is not an option. Elimination of mercury at global and national levels should continue”.

She stressed that “it is our collective obligation to contribute to ensuring health and wellbeing of our future generation by phasing out mercury. Despite all challenges, I believe that, this week, we can take important steps which contribute to our concerted efforts to create a free-mercury world”.

During the plenary sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, the official meeting documents will be discussed in order for the COP to make decisions on matters such as an ambitious work programme for the next year, as well as to advance in Convention processes, including strong implementation support to parties in conjunction with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) next replenishment cycle, the effectiveness

evaluation of the Convention, and preparing for the first full national reporting on the implementation of the Convention.

The COP will decide on the dates of the resumed segment of COP-4 in Bali, Indonesia, expected to take place in-person from 21 to 25 March 2022.

For further references: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1103842>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80KJ9gqHrYo>

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Minamata Convention

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is the most recent global agreement on environment and health, adopted in 2013. It is named after the bay in Japan where, in the mid-20th century, mercury-tainted industrial wastewater poisoned thousands of people, leading to severe health damage that became known as the “Minamata disease”. Since it entered into force on 16 August 2017, 135 Parties have been working together to control the mercury supply and trade, reduce the use, emission and release of mercury, raise public awareness, and build the necessary institutional capacity.

About the UN Environment Programme

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

For more information please contact

Anna García Sans, Communications and Knowledge Management Officer,
Minamata Convention on Mercury

