

PROJECT SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

ON

Mercury in products

9th October 2018

India International Center

Committee Room No. 1, Annex Building

New Delhi

Report by



Toxics Link
for a toxics-free world

Minutes of the meeting

India has ratified the Minamata Convention on mercury which is an important step forward to eliminate mercury and protect human health and environment. During these years the Government of India and some of the state governments have also taken affirmative actions to reduce use of mercury from various products. The Govt of India has issued regulations to restrict the use of mercury from the lighting industries and also has put a ban on the use of mercury in cosmetics. Further, there are major shift in the mercury free health care instruments by the private as well as government run hospitals.

However, there are some areas of concerns on use of mercury in products which needs to be addressed. In this context Toxics Link has undertaken a project to supplement the Government of India's efforts to phase out mercury from various products as per the Minamata convention.

Toxics Link organized a Round table expert group meeting on mercury in products on 9th October, 2018 at India International Center, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. The meeting was conducted to discuss following objectives:

- To conduct research study on availability and cost of alternatives for mercury free products.
- To draft a model law to phase out mercury containing products.

Inaugural Address:

Mr. Piyush Mohapatra, Sr. Programme Coordinator, Toxics Link briefed the participants about the meeting objective “Mercury in Products” research project that Toxics Link has undertaken with Zero Mercury.



He briefly explained that the present study largely focuses on the economics of mercury products, availability of alternatives in India

and cost etc. He also outlined that India has ratified the Minamata Convention and doing the initial assessment of mercury (MIA). He further emphasized the need for the regulation to phase out of Mercury products.

Mr. Satish Sinha, Associate Director, Toxics Link; gave an overview of the project and emphasized on the need of taking steps to phase out mercury based products as the country has ratified Minamata Convention. He highlighted the importance of Inventorization to identify what we have achieved in this direction till date. This project also aims to capture some the



details which entails (manufacturer of Mercury products, mercury stockpiles, existing regulation in the country, as the number of companies that have shifted to mercury free products, and the disposal mechanism currently being followed for mercury products, the availability of alternative in the market and the cost difference between mercury containing and mercury free products would aid the MIA process in the country.

He further emphasized the d the awareness levels of SMEs (Small Medium Enterprises) on the issue. It is imperative for them to know that they are required to shift to mercury free products and the government agencies/bodies should provide them with the technical and financial assistance in order to shift. He also asserted that a number of products are going to be affected with the creation of the new law.

Mr. Anshuman Mohanty from SMEs stated that an overarching policy can be made by the ministry since there are many stakeholders are associated with the issue and the awareness on the topic is quite low.

Mr. Sinha concluded by pointing out the importance of this Project Support Group meeting and stated that all the views expressed will be incorporated in the project.

Presentation on Mercury in Products: Piyush Mohapatra and Bikash Chetry

Mr. Piyush Mohapatra started his presentation by discussing the key issues of Minamata convention and its possible implication for India. . He gave an overview of mercury based products and stated that the country's current export import data points out towards an increase in the mercury and mercury containing products for last 5 years in the country as well there has been import of metallic mercury from countries which has ratified the Minamata Convention . He further emphasized on the importance of Article 10 of Minamata Convention for the country as India is facing predicament with storage of discarded mercury containing products/waste. He stated that the country can take some learning from European countries which have developed storage facilities for this purpose. He quoted an example of the healthcare facilities which doesn't have access to TSDF and hence keep piling up their mercury waste.

Mr. Mohapatra also mentioned that India is currently conducting MIA and under its purview will decide which products will be phased out by 2020 and then by 2025 as India has sought extension till 2025 to phase out mercury in products. The country also needs to develop some mechanism to check mercury products coming to India.

Mr. Bikash Chetry spoke on the economics of the mercury based products. He explained the findings of a field survey conducted by the project team of Toxics Link in which 15 dealers and wholesalers of mercury containing/free products were interviewed mostly in Chandni chowk and Bhagirath Place area of New Delhi. The study found that 12-18% products sold in the market are mercury based.



The study also depicted that the alternatives have higher cost than mercury based product and most of the alternatives are imported in the country from China. Recalibration and standardization is still a major issues and it is mostly being done by third parties.

He further shared the findings of the export import data of mercury containing/free products showing an increasing trend of mercury containing products since 2015 of Hygrometer, thermometer, sphygmomanometer and other mercury in products.

Mr. Satish pointed to the need for developing an inventory of the available alternatives in the country and their cost difference with the existing mercury based. The healthcare facilities majorly suffer from the non-availability of standardized brands thus, it is imperative to develop this inventory and thus standards.

Mr. Satish Sinha also mentioned that COP 2 will also discuss the need of new HS codes for mercury containing/free products.

Discussion:

Mr. Rishi from Phillips stated that a large of SMEs players have exited from the market because of the shift in products from mercury containing to Mercury free also the bigger companies are facing troubles to adapt to it.



Suggestions from the participants for the project:

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT:

- When certain regulations and standards are made, it is done without any feasibility studies/market surveillance/ or market analysis therefore, in a way it has negative impact on the industries and largely SMEs suffered the most. .. Thus, a market surveillance/feasibility study is quite important before putting any regulation in place.
- There is need to capture illegal imports of mercury and mercury products to the country.
- There is a need to develop technology for alternatives, procurement of the technologies and economics analysis considering the SMEs.
- To conducting a situation analysis of existing regulation for the healthcare sector is vital.
- Capturing export/import of mercury (raw mercury) in its elemental form.

- Disposal of mercury waste/products

DATA

- Percentage of healthcare sector that has shifted to mercury free products.
- Data on the calibration market; Third party who recalibrates the instruments.
- Mechanism to check if the imported products are mercury free.
- Development of a list of alternatives, manufacturing sites, technology, cost etc.
- Inclusion of local manufacturing data apart from the government's export/import data.
- Data on mercury trade.

Mr. Piyush Mohapatra thanked all the participants for their inputs and informed that another meeting will be conducted to discuss the draft report and discuss model law to phase out mercury containing products to address the issue.

Key points emerged out of the meeting:

- To tap the association which could provide information about the use and demand of mercury containing and mercury free products in the market. Also Ministry of Health, Bureau of Indian standards, Ministry of Small and Medium enterprises could provide the details of the association.
- To capture data on illegal import and export of mercury products to India.
- To develop technology wise alternatives of mercury.
- To ascertain the Mercury free brands, cost and its availability in the country.
- To find out the percentage of healthcare industries have shifted from the use of health care instruments which was mercury containing to mercury free.
- To capture the data on the calibration market; who are the stakeholders, how accurate are the results of recalibration and what is the methodology being followed for recalibration.

Annexure

Project information Background:

Phasing out strategy of Mercury containing products in India

India has ratified the Minamata Convention on 18th June 2018. This is an imperative step forward to eliminate mercury from products to protect human health and environment. Though, the Government of India has opted for continued use of mercury-based products and processes involving mercury compound up to 2025. However, during these years the Government of India and some of the state governments have also taken affirmative actions to reduce use of mercury from various products.

The Govt of India has issued regulations to restrict the use of mercury from the lighting industries and also has put a ban on the use of mercury in cosmetics. Further, there are major shift in the mercury free health care instruments by the private as well as government run hospitals.

However, there are some areas of concerns on use of mercury in products which needs to be addressed. In this context Toxics Link has undertaken a project to supplement the Government of India's efforts to phase out mercury from various products as per the Minamata convention.

Objectives of the project

1. To conduct research study on availability and cost of alternatives for mercury free products.
 - Study on the economics of mercury-free/ convention compliant products (thermometers, sphygmomanometer, lighting sectors, and measuring instruments) with respect to the mercury containing products involving relevant stakeholders and manufacturers.
 - Collate information on the import and export of mercury free products and mercury containing products.

2. To draft a model law to phase out mercury containing products.
 - Asses the existing laws and regulation in the country on mercury
 - To draft a model regulation for phasing out mercury from the products

Invitees (Expert)

- Government bodies (Govt of India)
 1. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
 2. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
 3. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises
 4. Bureau of Indian Standards
 5. Ministry of commerce and Industry
- Industry:
 1. Lighting Industry (Phillips)
 2. Hicks Thermometers
- Civil Society:
 1. Consumer Voice
 2. Toxics Link

Agenda:

PROJECT SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

ON

MERCURY IN PRODUCTS

Indian International Center,
Committee Room No. 1, Annex Building
9th October 2018

Objective of the Meeting:

- To conduct research study on availability and cost of alternatives for mercury free products.
- To draft a model law to phase out mercury containing products.

11:00- 11.30 pm	Round of Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview of Minamata Convention• Brief introduction about the project
11.30 pm – 12:00 pm	Status of mercury and its alternative products in India: Toxics Link <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secondary data on Import and Export• Data from the Field
12.00-01. 00 pm	DISCUSSIONS & WAY FORWARD <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope of research• Data gap• Availability of alternative• Cost of alternative• Standards and quality of products• Trade of mercury added and alternative products
01-00 – 01. 15 pm	Summing up by Satish Sinha, Associate Director (Toxics Link)
01.15 pm – 02.00 pm	LUNCH

RSVP:

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List of Participants in the PSG meeting on Mercury 2018

Project Support Group on Mercury in Products India International Centre, New Delhi 9 th Oct, 2018				
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