



Update on Minamata Convention on Mercury

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Background

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- At its 25th session, the Governing Council of UNEP agreed to elaborate a legally binding instrument on mercury. It asked UNEP to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) with the mandate to prepare the legally binding instrument, commencing its work in 2010.
- Five sessions of the INC have been held with the final session in January 2013 seeing the completion of drafting.
- The Convention will be open for signature at the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention in Japan 7-11 October 2013 (next week).

Background

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- The Convention addresses a range of issues relating to the use, storage, disposal and trade of mercury and mercury containing products.
- A number of types of mercury containing lamps are encompassed by the Convention (listed in Annex A)
- The approach to mercury containing products was a matter not resolved until the final meeting in January 2013.



Specifically for Lighting: *Manufacture, import or export of the product shall not be allowed after 2020*

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Mercury-added Products

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) for general lighting purposes that are ≤ 30 watts with a mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp burner

Linear fluorescent lamps (LFLs) for general lighting purposes:

- (a) Triband phosphor < 60 watts with a mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp;
- (b) Halophosphate phosphor ≤ 40 watts with a mercury content exceeding 10 mg per Lamp

High pressure mercury vapour lamps (HPMV) for general lighting purposes

Mercury in cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent lamps (CCFL and EEFL) for electronic displays:

- (a) short length (≤ 500 mm) with mercury content exceeding 3.5mg per lamp;
- (b) medium length (> 500 mm and ≤ 1500 mm) with mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp; (
- (c) long length (> 1500 mm) with mercury content exceeding 13 mg per lamp

Phase-out Date

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- Parties to the Convention Date shall not manufacture, import or export these products after 2020 (phase-out date).
- Exclusions include:
 - Products essential for civil protection and military uses;
 - Products for research, calibration of instrumentation, for use as reference standard;
 - Where no feasible mercury-free alternative for replacement is available, switches and relays, cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent lamps (CCFL and EEFL) for electronic displays, and measuring devices;

Exemptions

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- Parties may register for an exemption from the phase-out dates listed in Annex A for a five year period.
- Applications to extend an exemption for a further period of time must take into account information justifying the need to extend the exemption and outlining activities undertaken and planned to eliminate the need for the exemption as soon as feasible.
 - The availability of mercury free alternatives will also be taken into consideration.
- No exemptions for longer than 10 years after the phase-out date.

Review and Reporting

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- Annex A will be reviewed no later than 5 years after entry into force of the Convention.
- Parties may submit proposals for the listing of further mercury containing products (to be considered by the Conference of Parties).
- Article 4 requires the Secretariat to (on the basis of information provided by Parties), collect and maintain information on mercury-added products and their alternatives, and shall make such information publicly available

Implementation

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- Prior to the Convention coming in to force, the intergovernmental negotiating committee will meet to put in place arrangements to implement the Convention.
- This will include further negotiation on the detailed implementation of provisions such as the reporting arrangements, format for registering exemptions, product definitions, etc.
- Parties must sign, then ratify the Convention to become parties.
- The Convention shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Implications for Lighting?

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- CFLs – minimal impact as CFLs with less than 5mg of mercury are readily available.
- Linear Fluorescent Lamps – similarly lamps are available to meet these requirements.
 - Some manufacturers may need to improve mercury dosing to comply.
- Countries may wish to consult with their lighting manufacturers regarding ability to comply with these mercury levels.

Implications for Lighting?

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- High pressure mercury vapour lamps (HPMV) – These lamps are used in street lighting, warehouses etc.
- Definition does not seem clear – does this include metal halide etc?
 - Alternatives to mercury vapour lamps are available, however –
 - Long life of street lighting luminaires may require early retirement if replacement lamps are not available after 2020.
 - Countries may wish to brief managers of street lighting (and any other uses) of upcoming phase-out to avoid investment in further luminaires that require these products.
 - Some retrofit alternative lamps may be available.

Implications for Lighting?

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- Cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent? We are not so familiar with these lamps, not as commonly used, but:
 - Includes neon lighting?
 - Includes induction lamps?
- If these are used, would need to examine whether lamps used are meet the maximum mercury levels, or whether such compliant lamps are available.

More Information?

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- In line with recommendations in the Australian Government/Eco-Asia co-funded:
“Policy Makers Guide to Mercury in CFLs”
(being updated with an Addendum on the Minamata Convention, but will be available at <http://www.energyrating.gov.au/resources/program-publications/?viewPublicationID=2441>)
- Information on the Minamata Convention available at:
 - General overview of the negotiations process and outcomes:
<http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/Negotiations/tabid/3320/Default.aspx>
 - Draft Minamata Convention:
http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/INC5/5_7_e_annex_advance.pdf

Thank You