



a toxics-free future

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International SAICM Implementation Project (ISIP)

In 2010, in an effort to demonstrate SAICM implementation via IPEN Participating Organizations, IPEN launched an International SAICM Implementation Project, also known as ISIP. ISIP aims to mobilize resources for initial enabling activities pertaining to national priorities, in keeping with the work areas set out in the strategic objectives of section IV of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy.

In particular, the ISIP supports the Governance objective of SAICM's Overarching Policy Strategy paragraph 26, which calls for enhanced "cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels."

In addition, ISIP builds on the 2008-2009 Global SAICM Outreach Campaign to raise awareness about SAICM and strengthen collaboration among the public interest, health and labor sectors.

ISIP Objectives

ISIP's four objectives include:

- Promoting the need for sound chemicals management
- Advancing National SAICM Implementation
- Promoting global SAICM implementation by global civil society
- Building capacity among NGOs developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Title of activity: Information and awareness-raising on mercury meant for government, NGOs, professional organisations and the press

NGO: Association d'Education Environnementale et de Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc (SEEPOM)

Country: Morocco

Date: June, 2011

Elements of SAICM Covered:

Promote reduction of the risks posed to human health and the environment (57); Help develop comprehensive national profiles or country situation reports about mercury (1, 166); Programs to monitor mercury to assess exposure (66, 82); Promote the development and use of products and processes that pose lesser risks (44); Take immediate action to reduce the risk to human health and the environment posed on a global scale by mercury in products and production processes (59); Participation in activities related to the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on mercury

Description of mercury that is available in the market:

Fluorescent low energy consumption lightbulbs, batteries, dental amalgams, blood pressure devices, thermometers, electric and electronic devices, pharmaceuticals products such as vaccines, and some cosmetics.

Description of the most common forms of mercury exposure:

Atmospheric, aqueous and solid emissions. Total: 9 tons

Description of human sources of mercury:

Major emitters of mercury into the environment are sectors of energy, industry and wastes.

Description of the levels of mercury release and exposure:

- A small amount of mercury is produced by a company in southern Morocco.
- A single chlorine alkali manufacturing business using mercury persists in Morocco.
- All mercury-containing products are imported: inorganic chemicals for the laboratory, pharmaceutical products consisting essentially of metallic mercury and amalgams of precious metals, and electrical and electronic measuring devices.
- Releases of mercury are estimated at 9 tons per year. Major emitters of mercury into the environment are sectors of energy, industry and wastes.

Description of the damage caused by mercury:

- Current known or reported mercury threats are mercury releases by the energy (coal), wastes and some industry sectors.
- There is no data on mercury problems in the past that have caused damage to the public, environment, food and/or workers.
- Groups vulnerable to mercury exposure are populations living near the Mediouna landfill in Casablanca and persons using devices containing mercury (when devices are broken).

Description of the laws currently regulating mercury:

In 2010, the Ministry of Health prohibited trade in mercury thermometers.

Description of the efforts to deal with mercury:

Priority actions on mercury that the government has taken to reduce mercury exposure are:

- Carrying out a study on mercury which concludes that: The first steps are awareness-raising, establishment of agreements and partnerships (related to mercury issues) with private companies, development and dissemination of guidelines, trainings, visits to companies, and sharing complementary expertise in order to identify a polluted soils and food contamination study.
- Participating in the mercury INCs.

Description of what forces support and oppose the Mercury Treaty, the public participation consultation process, and the level of public awareness of the treaty process:

- All the government actors, NGOs and press support the Mercury Treaty.
- We do not have information on the public participation consultation process.
- The level of public awareness is still low. More meetings should be organized and more awareness-raising should be carried out.

Project Outcome:**Description of the activity conducted:*****Development of press releases:***

- Two press releases were published on November 22, 2010 at the site www.tanmia.ma and were widely consulted by NGOs. Links:
http://www.tanmia.ma/article.php3?id_article=26619
http://www.tanmia.ma/article.php3?id_article=27494
- A press release was published on December 2, 2010 in the newspaper “le Soir Echos”, titled «Le mercure, nouvelle préoccupation du Maroc ». Link:
<http://www.lesoir-echos.com/2010/12/02/ahmed-jaafari-ingenieur-agronome-etsecretaire-general-de-la-seepom-le-mercure-nouvelle-preoccupation-du-maroc/>
(a scanned copy of the article is in the annexes)
- A press release was published on January 19, 2011 in the newspaper “le Soir Echos” titled “Mercure, un “tueur” omniprésent”. Link:
<http://www.lesoir-echos.com/2011/01/19/mercure-un-%c2%ab%e2%80%89tueur%e2%80%89%c2%bb-omnipresent/>
(a scanned copy of the article is in the annexes)
- A press release was published on January 26, 2011 in the newspaper “le Matin” titled “Mercure, Les industriels snobent l'atelier national”. Link:
<http://www.lematin.ma/Actualite/Journal/Article.asp?idr=116&id=145565>
(a scanned copy of the article is in the annexes).

Design, writing and production of brochures on mercury,

SEEPOM has produced 1500 brochures dealing with:

- Uses and natural and anthropogenic sources of mercury;
- Mercury hazards on health and the environment,
- Mercury symptoms of poisoning and the precautions;
- Mercury risks management;
- Alternatives to mercury; and
- International action on mercury.

Awareness-raising

Awareness-raising of 69 NGOs (members of the PAN Morocco);

Contact with government agencies including the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health, Industrials, and the National Office of Drinking Water;

Contact with journalists:

- 4 journalists have shown their interest in the mercury issue;
- 2 press releases in www.tanmia.ma;
- 2 interviews with Moroccan newspaper “Le Soir Echos” have been done with Ahmed Jaafari from SEEPOM;
- Broadcast of the interviews on mercury with Ahmed Jaafari from SEEPOM on the National radio on Sunday, January 16th, 2011;
- Press releases were sent by email to some international institutions based in Morocco, including: UNDP, USAID, FAO, WHO, International Institute for Water and Sanitation and World Bank, and the GEF-SGP based in Rabat.

National workshop on mercury

SEEPOM organised a national workshop on mercury on January 17th, 2011 in Rabat (Morocco) in collaboration with the National Drinking Water Office, International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), PAN Morocco and Institution of Day Hospital. The workshop aimed to develop the current status of mercury both at the national and international level and to discuss issues related to the production, uses, emissions and alternatives of mercury, its risks on health and the environment as well as national and international action to implement sustainable mercury solutions in order to protect health and the environment.

Twenty seven (27) experts and managers participated in this meeting. They represent Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment (Department of the Environment), Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fishing, Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies, the Ministry of Health (Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control, Department of

Hospitals and Ambulatory Care, Department of Medicine and Pharmacy), the National Drinking Water Office, the National Office for Food Safety, the Poison Control Centre, the National Institute of Hygiene, the Regional Council of Rabat Salé Zemmour zear, SEO/Birdlife International, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and press from the newspaper "Le Matin."

The presentations were:

- Mercury Issues in the World, by Ahmed Jaafari, SEEPOM.
- Mercury in Morocco: Uses and impacts on the environment and health, by Samira Azzaoui, the Directorate of Surveillance and Risk Prevention (Department of the Environment).
- Mercury in the health sector: Uses and poisoning, by Benaceur Himmi, President of the Commission for Health at the Regional Council of Rabat Salé Zemmour zear.

Impact on target groups:

Once the hazard of mercury is explained, all actors are interested to be engaged in this awareness-raising on mercury activities:

The only constraint that we have met is non-participation of industries and professionals in mercury activities that we have carried out, especially in the national workshop on mercury.

We noted that Department of the Environment was very helpful by presenting its mercury study in the national workshop and also this department shares with us the strengthening of actions on awareness-raising.

The result of the activity on the target groups are:

- Institutions and NGOs are aware of the mercury hazards;
- All actors request for a deep study on mercury in Morocco; and
- All actors have suggested priority actions in the short term and in the medium and long.

Impact on target policies:

Morocco has a national strategy for chemicals and wastes sound management and regulatory chemicals; for example:

- Law No. 11-03 on the protection and enhancement of the environment
- Law No. 12-03 on the impact on the environment
- Law No. 28 -00 on wastes management and it disposal

Also, Morocco has ratified the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

Outreach to stakeholders:

Stakeholders and sectors engaged in this activity are:

- Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment (Department of the Environment);
- Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fishing, Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies;
- Ministry of Health (Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control, Department of Hospitals and Ambulatory Care, Department of Medicine and Pharmacy);
- National Drinking Water Office;
- National Office for Food Safety;
- Poison Control Centre;
- National Institute of Hygiene;
- Regional Council of Rabat Salé Zemmour Zear;
- SEO/Birdlife International;
- Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs); and

- National Press.

There is no potential to follow-up to advance the relationships with these stakeholders.

Deliverables, outputs and/or products:

- Brochure on mercury;
- Five press releases;
- National workshop on mercury report (French);
- National workshop on mercury report (English); and
- Final project report.

Communication efforts:

- SEEPOM contacted Moroccan media and explained mercury issues in the world;
- Four press releases were produced; and
- The interviews on mercury were broadcast on the national radio.

SAICM National Focal Point:

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Recommendations, from a public interest, NGO perspective, on reducing and eliminating human sources of mercury:

In the short term:

- Strengthen communication activities;
- Advocacy for professionals, users, NGOs and citizens;
- Organization of regional and national meetings on mercury;
- Production of communication tools (posters, brochures), especially in Arabic;
- Production of a spot and its broadcast on national television;
- Involvement of professionals in this process in order to prepare them to be ready to prepare and to implement the National Action Plan, once the global mercury treaty comes into force; and
- Implementation of actions in dental offices in order to stop amalgams containing mercury.

The medium and long term:

- Diagnosis of the mercury situation in Morocco (deep study);
- Establishment of collection plan for batteries, fluorescent lamps and other mercury waste system, and management of them in a manner which will not affect the health and the environment;
- Establishment of necessary regulations and standards to support the international instrument once it comes into force; and
- Strengthening of national capacity-building in order to manage mercury issues.