



for a toxics-free future

IPEN Intervention on Releases

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Thank you, Mr. President-

IPEN supports the development of comprehensive methods to identify and reduce mercury releases. However, the decisions at COP 2 mean that the inventory and BAT BEP guidance development process to address releases from *point sources not addressed in other provisions of this Convention* would be very slow.

An expert group has been tasked intersessionally with identifying releases from point sources that are not covered under other provisions of the treaty. A key issue they have identified is how the COP should address wastewater contaminated with mercury. One option is to address wastewater through Basel Convention technical guidelines, the other option is to address such wastewater under article 9 of the mercury treaty. IPEN supports addressing the matter of wastewater through the provisions of article 9 and thereby consolidating guidance within the mercury treaty.

The previous proposals from the COP to develop BAT BEP measures for sources of releases, only after an extended inventory guidance development process had been finalised, would result in a very long timeframe before parties would be able to access BAT BEP guidance on releases. Perhaps it would not be available until COP 5 in 2023 or beyond. Fortunately, the expert group has recognised that parties cannot wait this long for BAT BEP guidance to address releases and have recommended to develop inventory and BAT BEP guidance in a much shorter timeframe. This greatly improved timeframe could see BAT BEP guidance developed much earlier than previously suggested.

IPEN supports such an approach and encourages the COP to endorse a roadmap that results in earlier delivery of both inventory and BAT BEP guidance for releases. This is a very important consideration as some release sources identified by the expert group are very large including releases to land and water from:

- primary mercury mines up to 15 years from entry into force;
- manufacturing processes not listed in Annex B;
- the point source categories listed in Annex D which require BAT/BEP for emissions but not BAT/BEP for releases;
- waste rock, overburden and tailings from mining other than primary mercury mining.

IPEN encourages the COP to address these large-scale mercury pollution sources as soon as possible by accelerating the development of inventories and BAT BEP guidance.

Thank you.