



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

GEF/UNDP/UNIDO GLOBAL MERCURY PROJECT (EG/GLO/01/G34)

Removal of Barriers to the Introduction of Cleaner Artisanal Gold Mining and  
Extraction Technologies

AIDE MEMOIRE

**Meeting in Washington, DC, for Enhancing Global Policy to  
Reduce Mercury Supply, Demand and Use in Artisanal and  
Small Scale Gold Mining in Developing Countries and  
Countries with Economies in Transition**

---

**October 3 - 4, 2006, Washington D.C.**

## 1. Background

Since 1995, UNIDO has been providing assistance to the small-scale gold mining sector in developing countries. Through numerous projects dealing with the introduction of cleaner technologies and mercury pollution abatement, UNIDO has assessed the environmental and health impacts of mercury pollution caused by artisanal gold miners, *inter alia* in Venezuela, Ghana and Philippines. In the meantime, UNIDO has received new requests from countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Whilst the environmental and health problems related to small-scale gold mining have been ignored over a long time, it is now widely accepted that these problems in different developing countries are similar in nature. As such, solutions to these problems need a globally consistent approach that is effectively coordinated to deal with the interrelationships of the problems.

In August 2002, the implementation of the GMP (Global Mercury Project) was started to help demonstrate ways of overcoming barriers to the adoption of best practices, waste minimization strategies and pollution prevention measures, including where feasible source reduction and elimination, that limit contamination of the international waters environment. The Project is funded by GEF, UNDP and UNIDO and is complemented by a suite of ongoing activities, which are financed through either the participating countries' own resources and/or bilateral programs. The activities aim at removing barriers that inhibit artisanal miners from applying cleaner and more efficient technology. Apart from removing the barriers, the Project will demonstrate the application of cleaner technology and conduct training to the miners in order to enhance the application of cleaner technology and thus reduce and, where feasible, eliminate toxics use and pollution and minimize waste resulting from the currently applied poor practice.

The Global Mercury Project is now in its implementation phase. Accomplishments to this point include sociological, environmental and health assessments related to mercury released in project sites in the six participating countries, as well as the building of capacity in local laboratories to assess the flow of mercury through diverse ecosystems and the impact of mercury pollution. Through a number of assessments, project participants have identified that the principal barriers to the introduction of cleaner gold mining practices are the lack of awareness of the dangers of mercury amalgamation amongst miners, their communities and other stakeholders; the easy and low cost access to mercury; and the lack of awareness and access to alternative technologies and approaches.

The GMP is implementing a program of education and awareness amongst stakeholders in 6 low income countries, to introduce miners to a range of affordable mineral processing technologies. Reflecting the migrant nature of many artisanal mining communities, Transportable Demonstration Units (TDU) containing a selection of cleaner gold processing options and educational materials are to be introduced. These TDUs will provide a multi-purpose forum for community demonstrations and training. In order to insure that financial barriers do not inhibit the acceptance of the cleaner process technologies, a review of **micro financing options** in the six countries will also be conducted during the next phase of the project, with the results circulated among the community stakeholders through a series of workshops and reports. In addition, the project is undertaking initiatives to stimulate capacity-building efforts to sustainably manage health and environmental risks and to strengthen regulatory mechanisms amongst the participating governments.

The GMP is complementing the above activities with a focus on developing legal and policy mechanisms that will build capacity in the sector to **transfer to cleaner technology** and improve environmental management, and decrease mercury supply, demand, use and pollution. In early 2006, the *Global Mercury Project Strategic Plan on Policy and Governance* was prepared, building on the previous legal studies and other assessments and stakeholder consultation processes. Among the conclusions was the need for a **globally consistent and strengthened commitment to support policy** measures to control international mercury trade and reduce mercury supply, demand, and use in developing countries. In this respect, a strengthened collaboration strategy with some of the

world's **leading NGOs advising on these issues** is deemed to be an important priority. The proposed meeting in Washington DC is designed to respond to this need and develop strategic action plans to strengthen and develop global commitments for supporting the GMP's goals in this regard.

The ultimate goals of the GMP are:

- 1) reduce mercury use and pollution caused by artisanal miners on international waters;
- 2) introduce cleaner technologies including mercury free technologies for gold extraction and develop local capacity to manufacture such technology;
- 3) educate and train local miners in the benefits and use of such technology, with the involvement of local NGOs
- 4) develop capacity and regulatory mechanisms within Government that will enable the sector to minimize mercury pollution;

## **2. Objectives of the Meeting in Washington DC**

The objectives of the meeting are:

- To share the Global Mercury Project's goals and strategies (on training, capacity-building, policy and legal development, etc) on the international scale, and particularly in the 6 pilot countries, with international NGOs that are active in mercury policy advocacy
- To incorporate strategic insights of NGOs active in mercury issues (e.g. Mercury Policy Project, Zero Mercury Campaign, European Environmental Bureau, etc) into the strengthening of GMP action strategies for positive development in the small-scale mining sector to **effectively reduce mercury use and pollution**
- To focus on collaboratively strengthening strategies reduce mercury supply, use and demand through coordinated international commitments on mercury trade control measures (Activity 6 in the Strategic Plan on Policy and Governance)
- To coordinate and discuss complementary presentations for the European Commission's October 2006 International mercury conference and other forums
- To coordinate and discuss complementary strategies in advance of the 2007 UNEP Governing Council Meeting (February 2007 in Nairobi) on Global Mercury Strategy
- To create plans for short-term and long-term collaboration on common goals, including but not limited to the development and use of mercury free technologies

## **3. Meeting Format**

The meeting will be conducted in Washington DC from October 3– October 4 2006. The meeting format has several components:

- Presentation of GMP Mandate and Objectives and discussion
- Presentation of NGOs global strategic vision for simultaneously reducing global mercury supply, demand and trade in mercury and challenges for ASM -
- Identification of common goals and discussion of Collaborative Strategies to Pursue Common Goals

- Identification of possible ways to maintain open lines of communication and collaborate over short and longer-term

#### 4. Date and Venue

Meetings will be held during two days - October 3 and October 4:

Tuesday October 3 – Meeting starts at 12:00pm (noon) and continues for the rest of the day.

Wednesday October 4- Meeting resumes

The venue for the meeting is a conference room at

**NRDC – Natural Resources Defense Council:**

**1200 New York Ave., NW,**

**Suite 400, Washington, DC**

**20005, ph: 202-289-6868**

#### 5. Participants

NAME	EMAIL	ORGANIZATION
Marcello Veiga	<a href="mailto:veiga@mining.ubc.ca">veiga@mining.ubc.ca</a>	GMP (Global Mercury Project) Vancouver, Canada
Sam Spiegel	<a href="mailto:samspiegel@gmail.com">samspiegel@gmail.com</a>	GMP Vancouver, Canada
Kevin Telmer	<a href="mailto:ktelmer@uvic.ca">ktelmer@uvic.ca</a>	GMP Victoria, Canada
Michael Bender	<a href="mailto:Mercurypolicy@aol.com">Mercurypolicy@aol.com</a>	Mercury Policy Project Burlington, US
Elena Lymberidi	<a href="mailto:elena.lymberidi@eeb.org">elena.lymberidi@eeb.org</a>	European Environmental Bureau Brussels, Belgium
Rickford Vieira	<a href="mailto:rvieira@wwf.sr">rvieira@wwf.sr</a>	World Wildlife Foundation, Paramaribo, Suriname
Peter Maxson	<a href="mailto:concorde@skynet.be">concorde@skynet.be</a>	Concorde Brussels, Belgium
Meredith Block	<a href="mailto:block@blacksmithinstitute.org">block@blacksmithinstitute.org</a>	Blacksmith Institute New York, US
Susan Keane	<a href="mailto:skeane@nrdc.org">skeane@nrdc.org</a>	NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) Washington DC, US
Linda Greer	<a href="mailto:lgreer@nrdc.org">lgreer@nrdc.org</a>	NRDC Washington DC, US
David Lennett	<a href="mailto:dlennett@adelphia.net">dlennett@adelphia.net</a>	NRDC Portland, US
Eric Uram	<a href="mailto:eric.uram@headwater.us">eric.uram@headwater.us</a>	Headwater Consulting Madison, US

## 6. Agenda

### Oct 3, 2006

- 12:00 pm – Introduction of the participants (sandwich and refreshments)
- 12:30 – 13:15: Introduction to the Global Mercury Project objectives and actions (M. Veiga)
- 13:15 – 14:00 : GMP Policy and Governance Strategy (S. Spiegel)
- 14:00 – 14:30 – Coffee Break
- 14:30 – 15:15: Perspectives of NGOs on Global Mercury Strategy and ASM Challenges (D. Lennett)
- 15:15 – 16:00 – Discussion of Common Elements of GMP and NGO Strategies
- 16:00 - 17:30 – Technical, knowledge and other challenges to achieving those goals (K. Telmer, M. Veiga)
- 17:30 -18:00 - Preparation for tomorrow, identification of topics for further discussion, adjustment of agenda as needed

### Oct 4, 2006

- 9:00 – 10:30 - Discussion of ASM challenges identified and options for addressing them
- 10:30 – 12:00 - Discussion of potential areas for NGO and GMP collaboration to achieve common goals
- 12:00 – 13:00 – Sandwich and Refreshments
- 13:00 – 14:00 – Suggestions to GMP regarding Policy and Governance Strategy (all NGOs)
- 14:00 – 15:00 – Main points to strength the GMP and actions to eliminate mercury use in short-medium-long term (all NGOs))
- 15:00 – 16:00 - Discussions about ways to interact with NGOs and GMP
- 16:00 – 17:00 – Next Steps
- 17:00 – Meeting adjourned

## 7. Financial and administrative arrangements for the Meeting

Financial and administrative arrangements for the participants invited and accepted by the project CTA, will be made in accordance with UNIDO's rules and regulations.

UNIDO will provide the following:

- a) For all GMP personnel international transportation to Washington DC or funds for such travel
- b) An ad-hoc daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rate for all regional participants to cover board, lodging and incidentals in US\$ for the period of participation in the campaign.
- c) Funds for refreshments (food and water) for the meeting

UNIDO will not assume responsibility for the following expenditures:

- a) Cost incurred by the participants with respect to travel insurance, accidental insurance, medical bills and hospitalization fees in connection with their attendance of the campaign.
- b) Compensation in the event of death, disability or illness of the participants in connection with their participation.

- c) Loss or damage of personal property of the participants.
- d) Purchase of personal belongings and compensations in the event of damage caused by them by climatic or other conditions;
- e) Travel and any other costs incurred by dependents who might accompany the participants.

#### **8. Visa/Passport**

Before leaving the home country, participants should complete all formalities regarding entry and transit visas, which they may require for the journey.

#### **9. Travel arrangements**

Participants should arrange for air tickets with authorization from UNIDO or UNIDO will provide air tickets directly to them.

#### **10. Accommodation**

Accommodation on site will be arranged by the participants.

#### **11. Enquiries and correspondence**

All enquiries and correspondence should be addressed to:

Mr. Marcello Veiga  
Chief Technical Advisor – UNDP/GEF/UNIDO Global Mercury Project  
veiga@mining.ubc.ca

Enquiries on financial and administrative arrangements should be referred to:

Mrs. Svitlana Adler – GMP Administrator  
UNIDO Headquarters  
Wagramerstrasse 5  
Vienna, Austria 1400  
Email: s.adler@undio.org