



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 12 April 2005

7986/05

**ENV 155
SAN 33**

NOTE

from : General Secretariat
to : Delegations

Subject : Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European
Parliament "Community Strategy concerning mercury"
– Draft Council Conclusions

With a view to the meeting of the Environment Working Party on 14 April 2005, delegations will find in the Annex draft Council Conclusions drawn up by the Presidency.

**Communication from the Commission
to the Council and the European Parliament
"Community Strategy concerning mercury"**

Draft Council Conclusions

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. TAKES NOTE of the Council Conclusions of 7 June 2001 and 17 October 2002 inviting the Commission to present solutions for the problem of mercury from the chlor-alkali industry and of the Council Conclusions of 9 and 10 December 2002 inviting the Commission to present a coherent strategy with measures to protect human health and the environment from the release of mercury based on a life cycle approach;
2. RECALLS the conclusion ¹ that there is sufficient evidence of significant global adverse impacts to human health and/or the environment arising from the release of mercury to the environment;
3. TAKES NOTE of the UNEP Governing Council Decision 22/4 (2003) and the UNEP Governing Council Decision 23/9 (2005) calling to initiate national, regional and global actions as soon as possible to protect human health and the environment through measures which will reduce or eliminate releases of mercury and its compounds to the environment;
4. UNDERLINES the importance to reduce releases of mercury and to reduce the supply and demand of mercury;

¹ UNEP Governing Council Decision 22/4 (2003).

5. ENDORSES the Commission Communication towards a Strategy on Mercury and STRESSES the importance of the described integral approach as requested earlier by the Council, containing extended objectives for reducing mercury emissions and reducing the entry into circulation of mercury in society, as well as objectives for handling mercury surpluses, protection against mercury exposure and improving understanding of the mercury problem;
6. UNDERLINES, in this context, the importance of the proposal to phase out the export of mercury from the Community;
7. INVITES the Commission to build upon the actions as formulated in the Communication from the Commission "Community Strategy concerning mercury" and STRESSES the importance of the following issues:
 - the phasing out the export of mercury from the Community by 2008 through appropriate legal actions,
 - the restricting of marketing for non electrical or non electronic measuring and control equipment by appropriate additional regulation,
 - the storage of mercury from the chlor-alkali industry,
 - the reduction of mercury supply on a global scale, taking into account different options such as to kindle an initiative e.g. similar to that of the Montreal Protocol as mentioned in action 20 of the Communication from the Commission "Community Strategy concerning mercury", to reach a global phase-out of primary production of mercury and the ending of surpluses re-entering the market,
 - The support of countries with economies in transition and developing countries with a high dependency on solid fuels, like coal, to promote the clean and efficient use of fuels;
8. ACKNOWLEDGES that there is an important role for Member States, industries and other relevant actors in the further development and implementation of the Strategy;

9. UNDERLINES that for this further development and implementation of the Strategy it will be essential:
- to pursue actions on a Community scale as well as on a global scale,
 - to share with actors in and outside the Community the common vision of the strategy, its principles, goals and related objectives and to actively participate in its further development and to share the responsibility for its implementation,
 - to ensure transparency and openness that has characterized the process up until now,
 - to recognize and use public awareness, communication and education as important elements in the further implementation of the Strategy,
 - to achieve ownership and long term political commitment for the goals and objectives of the Strategy;
10. INVITES the Commission to present as soon as possible appropriate proposals to fundamentally reduce the supply, demand and emissions of mercury, in particular through an export ban and storage of mercury.
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