

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 6/5/4

TO: SPREP National Focal Points
Waigani & Basel Convention
Competent Authorities – Cook Islands/
Palau/Kiribati/Tonga/Vanuatu

DATE: 30 July 2019

CIRCULAR: 19/52

SUBJECT: Introduction of Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI), consultant for Mercury inventory development using the UNEP mercury toolkit (Minamata Initial Project – MIA).

Dear Focal Points,

Greetings from SPREP,

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury. The major highlights of the convention include a ban on new mercury mines, the phase out of existing ones, control measures on air emissions, and the international regulation of the informal sector for artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM).

At its sixth session held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3 to 7 November 2014, the Intergovernmental Negotiations Committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury requested the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to apply revised eligibility criteria in providing financial support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for activities under the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In particular, it requested the eligibility for funding be extended for enabling activities to non-signatories to the Convention, provided that any such State is taking meaningful steps towards becoming a Party. Such request was approved by the GEF Council in January 2015.

The five participating countries, namely Cook Islands, Kiribati, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu have made their intentions clear in becoming parties to the Minamata Convention by declaring their participation in this regional project. SPREP has contracted Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI) to undertake a project in the region to assist the five participating countries in the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention through the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools. In particular, the BRI team has been engaged to assist countries **on Mercury inventory development where they will assist in providing** technical assistance under the five components of the project through training and guidance on the outputs, including the training of national stakeholders in the development of a national mercury inventory using the UNEP mercury tool kit.

As agreed to under our MOUs for this project implementation, SPREP as the Executing Agency for this project would be grateful if the necessary ground support be provided to BRI to facilitate their work during the execution of the national elements of the project in your respective countries. For ease of reference on the timelines, I have attached the work plan that BRI developed to undertake the activities in this project. BRI will shortly be in contact with all the participating countries in this project regarding the scheduled dates during which BRI will visit your countries.

For further information please contact Joshua Sam at joshuas@sprep.org.

Yours Sincerely,



Kosi Latu
Director General
Strategic Policy and Technical Programmes