

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, APR 2017

1. Project Data

Summary project data			
GEF project ID	5496		
GEF Agency project ID	130001		
GEF Replenishment Phase	GEF-5		
Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects)	UNIDO		
Project name	Preparatory Project to Facilitate the Implementation of the Legally Binding instrument on Mercury (Minamata Convention) in Argentina to protect health and environment.		
Country/Countries	Argentina		
Region	LAC		
Focal area	POPs		
Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives	CHEM-3		
Executing agencies involved	Asociación Argentina de Médicos por el Medio Ambiente, AAMMA (Argentinean Society of Doctors for the Environment)		
NGOs/CBOs involvement	Asociación Argentina de Médicos por el Medio Ambiente, AAMMA (Argentinean Society of Doctors for the Environment)		
Private sector involvement	Chamber of hamber of the Chemical and Petrochemical Industry		
CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP)	7/29/2013		
Effectiveness date / project start	9/13/2013		
Expected date of project completion (at start)	9/13/2015		
Actual date of project completion	9/30/ 2016		
Project Financing			
	At Endorsement (US \$M)	At Completion (US \$M)	
Project Preparation Grant	GEF funding		
	Co-financing		
GEF Project Grant	0.35	0.33 (as per PIR, 2016)	
Co-financing	IA own	0.03	n/a
	Government		
	Other multi- /bi-laterals	0.3	n/a
	Private sector		
	NGOs/CSOs	0.2	n/a
Total GEF funding	0.35	0.33	
Total Co-financing	0.53	n/a	
Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing)	0.88	n/a	
Terminal evaluation/review information			
TE completion date	March, 2017		
Author of TE	UNIDO		
TER completion date	April, 2018		
TER prepared by	Ritu Kanotra		
TER peer review by (if GEF IEO review)	Molly Watts Sohn		

2. Summary of Project Ratings

Criteria	Final PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	IA Evaluation Office Review	GEF IEO Review
Project Outcomes	-	n/a	-	S
Sustainability of Outcomes		n/a	-	Unable to assess
M&E Design		n/a	-	S
M&E Implementation		n/a	-	S
Quality of Implementation		n/a	-	S
Quality of Execution		n/a	-	S
Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report		-	-	MU

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

According to the Project Document, the Global Environmental Objectives of the project is to facilitate the implementation of the forthcoming Minamata Convention on mercury in Argentina. It will do this by setting the groundwork so that the country is prepared to comply with its obligations under the Convention once it has entered into force.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

According to the Project Document, the Development Objectives of the project is to facilitate the implementation of the forthcoming Mercury Treaty (Minamata Convention) by creating a space of dialogue and strengthening cooperation amongst government, NGOs and the private sector.

In order to achieve these goals, the project consisted of three main outcomes as it follows:

Outcome 1: Argentina is equipped with tools for the smooth adoption and implementation of the upcoming Minamata Convention.

The analysis of the current situation in the country terms of assessing the existing legal/policy framework on mercury and hazardous waste management, and the BAT/BEP available in the country. Both results to be reflected in the documents presented by the project. Multi-sectoral stakeholders participate at and contribute to two National Consultation. Proposal for change to the existing regulatory framework (that takes into account the considerations of the upcoming convention) and pilot, small scale, demonstrative project proposal for transitory and final disposal of mercury and mercury containing waste is developed.

Outcome 2: Awareness is raised on the terms of the recently signed Minamata Convention to facilitate the understanding and implementation of the forthcoming convention.

The main activity was centered on the establishment of a Clearing House website. The Clearing House posts information which include options of the available BAT/BEP in the country and the region; analysis

of the national legal & policy frameworks; advances in other mercury related efforts; the international mercury agenda; as well as learning material on the dangers posed by exposure to mercury, including gender specific health risks of mercury, etc. After project completion the BCRC will continue to maintain the site so as to assure its long-term sustainability.

Outcome 3: Monitoring and Evaluation

UNIDO will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project, as well as reporting progress to the donor. The AAMMA, as national executor, will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the project and the coordination with the other partners. AAMMA will submit periodic

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or other activities during implementation?

No.

4. GEF IEO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

4.1 Relevance	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE didn't assign a rating but based on the evidence in the reports, the relevance of the project is assessed to be 'satisfactory'. Over the years, discussions around mercury pollution, given its significant impact on human health and the environment, have gained significance globally. In this regard, the Government of Argentina took several initiatives in the field of mercury, but it was recognized that more was needed to ensure that awareness was raised amongst all relevant stakeholders to prepare the country for compliance with the Minamata convention on mercury, once it comes into force. The project built upon the preliminary work already conducted by two organizations – The Argentina Society of Doctors for the Environment (AAMMA) and Basel Convention Regional Centre for South America (BCRC), are also the main executing agencies for the project, which was designed to facilitate the implementation of the forthcoming Minamata Convention. The experience of the project was to provide lessons for the international community on what actions are needed at the national and local level to comply with the convention.

The project aligns with the overall goal of the GEF-5 Chemicals Focal area to support countries in preparation for the entry into force of the internationally legal binding Mercury Treaty (Minamata Convention), and in particular with Objective 3 to 'pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction'.

4.2 Effectiveness	Rating: Satisfactory
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Based on the evidence in the TE and PIRs, the effectiveness of the project was assessed to be 'satisfactory'. The project contributed to the Global Environment objectives of raising awareness on the hazards presented by mercury and the Minamata Convention through several of its activities, including the collection and dissemination of information through the Clearing House website. The project conducted important groundwork in terms of assessing current conditions regarding mercury emission sources, emission estimates, existing disposal and treatment options, among others. The experience gained by Argentina, through this project, in terms of assessing the existing legal framework and analyzing the technical options available in the country and region, is likely to serve as an example to other countries that will go through the same process. At the same time, as per the PIR (2016), with such a vast territory Argentina has several challenges in addressing the demands to manage, collect, transport, treat and store their mercury and mercury containing waste.

During the project, Argentina entered in a strong general national election process and the rooms for discussion at the national and provincial levels were occupied mainly by the political discussion. The new administration authorities assumed the government on December 2015. In this context it was important to sustain and continue information, working on awareness raising and capacity building of the main stakeholders on issues related to the Minamata Convention. The room for dialogue was created by the Project to facilitate the interaction among main actors and prepare them to participate in the NIP of the Minamata Convention in Argentina.

Outcome 1: Argentina is equipped with tools for the smooth adoption and implementation of the upcoming Minamata Convention – **Satisfactory**

The project conducted an in-depth analysis of the existing legal and institutional framework in Argentina in consultation with key stakeholders. According to the PIR (2016), 'this assessment will serve as a basis for recommendation on improvements to the legal framework'. As envisaged, the project also conducted an in-depth analysis of the existing BAT/BEP available in the country, and the region. Main sources of mercury and mercury waste were identified and options for collecting, treating and/or storing such waste were also investigated. These assessments formed the basis for identification of several gaps and challenges for the country to be equipped with technical solutions to deal with the mercury and mercury containing waste. PIR (2016) notes that Existing options and potential business opportunities were to be presented and discussed at the second National Consultation to be held in Buenos Aires in August 2016. One of the expected outcomes of the project was the preparation of a follow-up project based on the findings of the in-depth analysis of existing BAT/BEP and regulatory framework, and in consultation with the key stakeholders, that was also achieved. The draft pilot project

was shared with the GEF for initial feedback and was to be presented during the second national consultation for feedback from various stakeholders.

Outcome 2: Awareness is raised on the terms of the recently signed Minamata Convention to facilitate the understanding and implementation of the forthcoming convention – **Satisfactory**

As per the expected outputs under this component, PIR (2016) notes that material on the Minamata Convention and issues related to mercury were posted on the project web site / Clearing House, www.mercurioenargentina.com.ar, that served as a source of information on mercury to the region with materials provided in Spanish and English; it also provided information on the project and its activities. The clearing house was updated regularly with project material; for example, the two key reports prepared by the project regarding the in-depth assessment of the legal framework and the existing technology options are available on the website. As per the TE (Pg 13), Basel Convention Regional Centre (BCRC) for South America will maintain the website as they already did in the past with other websites of previous projects related to mercury in products.

According to the PIR (2016), the project also raised awareness on mercury issues and the project activities through its participation in national and international events.

Outcome 3: Monitoring and Evaluation – **Satisfactory**

As per the plan under this outcome, the project constituted a Project Steering Committee (PSC), that according to the TE, included members from the government, non-government and private sectors and coordinated by members from Basel Convention Regional Centre for South America (BCRC) and AAMMA, that met regularly to discuss issues related to project and its progress. The involvement of industries dealing with mercury or mercury in waste, was important to assess the market demand for services such as collection, transport storage, etc., and help provide business solutions needed to address the issue. PIR (2016) confirmed the participation of private sector through the involvement of Chamber of Chemical and Petrochemical Industry. The TE notes the participation from the secretary of Mining that improved after the elections and further recommends partnership with other sectors, such as hazardous waste management and energy sectors, needs to be further consolidated in order to improve the implementation of the Convention.

4.3 Efficiency	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE didn't assign a rating but based on the evidence in the various available reports, this TER assesses the efficiency of the project to be 'satisfactory'. The project was built upon the existing expertise and network of the executing agency, AAMMA and main partners, such as BCRC. The project experienced delays due to elections and changes in the Government of Argentina in 2015. The results of the election process led to a strong change in the policies and governmental structures, at national and provincial levels. This resulted in delays in some of the activities, which led to a one year extension of the project completion date. The project had to delay some activities to reestablish/reinforce contacts at various

levels with the new government representatives. For instance, the Second National Consultation Meeting was delayed for eight months to assure the participation of representative sectors of the provincial governments and assure renewed commitment of the national governmental sectors. According to the TE, despite these delays, the project was successful in sustaining the activities related to strengthening of the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Argentina by maintaining multi-stakeholder collaboration and dialogue (TE pg 13). None of the reports either comment or indicate the amount of co-financing materialized.

4.4 Sustainability	Rating: Unable to assess
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The TE didn't assign a rating to the sustainability of the project. While the project was able to get good support from the government, the reports didn't include information on whether the pilot demonstration project identified through the project had donor support. Highlighting business opportunities that could arise from management and disposal of mercury, was one of the aspects important for sustainability of the project objectives, which is not dealt with in any of the available reports, and hence this TER is unable to assign a rating to the sustainability. However, different dimensions of sustainability are detailed as below:

Financial: Unable to assess

The TE doesn't comment whether the stakeholders agreed to follow-up on the pilot project prepared during the project and identified a donor to support it in future. Lack of sustained support from the private sector, was one of the risks identified in the project document. PIR (2016) reports participation of Chamber of the Chemical and Petrochemical industries and other potential private sector partners in the first National Consultation. But the TE doesn't confirm if the project could garner enough support and interest of the private sector, in business opportunities that can possibly arise from management and disposal of mercury in Argentina.

Sociocultural: Likely

The project had adequate political support despite changes in the government due to elections. As per information in the TE, the project created room for dialogue on Mercury in Argentina, both at national and provincial level, and sustained the interaction among main actors involved, as well as advanced the issues to prepare the new authorities to understand the importance and timing under the framework of the Minamata Convention. The fact that Argentina ratified the Minamata Convention in September 2017, points towards political will and support on the issue.

Institutional: Moderately Likely

The project benefited from the expertise, long term presence and network of the institutes— AAMMA and the BCRC – that were the main executing agencies and steered all the PSC meetings. However, as the TE notes 'government should identify an office or national institution for the follow-up and coordination of the implementation of the Minamata Convention'. Also, participation from the health department was poor and their engagement is crucial to sustain the activities related to mercury related

waste management in Argentina. As TE notes, 'piles of hazardous mercury and mercury containing waste is waiting in the hospital for a solution to the final disposal'. Moreover, as noted by the TE, due to the federal nature of government of Argentina, 'additional efforts will be required to identify the responsible authorities at local level as well as the opportunities for the implementation of the best available technologies and best environmental practices (BAT/BEP)'.

Environmental: **Likely**

None of the reports identify any environmental risk to the sustainability of the project.

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

None of the reports (TE and PIRs) provide any information on the amount of co-financing realized during the project.

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The project was delayed by one year due to elections which led to a strong change in the policies and government structure, at national and provincial level. As the Project Steering Committee (PSC) involved members from the government, it took a while for the project to bring all the new members on board due to which the second national consultation was also delayed by eight months. As per the TE, 'The delay was to assure the participation of representatives from the provincial government and renewal of the commitment of the government sectors' TE (Pg 16). The delay didn't seem to affect the achievement of the project objectives.

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

The project seemed to have a good support from the country, evident from the participation of the representative of the government departments (except from the health department) in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and representatives from the provincial level at the two national level consultations, despite elections and change in the government. The Government of Argentina ratified the Minamata Convention in September 2017, which also indicates good political support. However, none of the reports discuss about the willingness of the government to adopt the changes in the regulation proposed through the project.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

6.1 M&E Design at entry	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TER doesn't provide a rating but based on the information in the PD, this TER assigns it a rating of 'satisfactory'. The Project Document included a comprehensive M&E plan, outlining activities (performance indicators, means of verification, annual reviews and reports, and a midterm and final evaluation), associated budget and timeframes. The responsibilities of different actors involved in monitoring, was clearly defined, with UNIDO allocating USD 30,000 as co-financing contribution towards monitoring and evaluation.

6.2 M&E Implementation	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE didn't provide a rating but based on the information in the TE, this TER assigns it a rating of 'satisfactory'. As per the TE, the project progress was discussed regularly during Project Steering Committee meetings and formed the basis for adaptive management. Annual monitoring reports in the form of Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) conducted through the project are available and the final evaluation of the project was also conducted on time.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

7.1 Quality of Project Implementation	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE didn't assign a rating to the quality of project implementation. According to the TE, the UNIDO officers were always available and supported the project in technical matters and 'facilitated the administrative procedures' (TE Pg 19) that led to smooth functioning of the project, due to which this TER assesses the quality of project implementation to be 'satisfactory'.

7.2 Quality of Project Execution	Rating: Satisfactory
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The TE didn't assign a rating but based on the evidence available in the reports, this TER assesses the quality of project execution to be 'satisfactory'. The project benefited from the expertise, long term presence and network of the institutes– AAMMA and the BCRC – that were the main executing agencies and steered all the PSC meetings. It could reach out to the broader audience through the network of BCRC and clearing house website (created and to be maintained by BCRC in future) for raising awareness on hazards presented by mercury waste and about the Minamata Convention. The team leader from AAMMA, national, legal and technical and communication consultants working for the project, played a key role in facilitating discussions amongst various stakeholders, raising awareness on technical issues and achieving the project objectives. The project was delayed due to major elections that led to change in the government policies and its structure, but the executing agencies were successful in informing and retaining the interest of the new government and eliciting their participation in the PSC, crucial for achievement of the project objectives.

8. Assessment of Project Impacts

Note - In instances where information on any impact related topic is not provided in the terminal evaluations, the reviewer should indicate in the relevant sections below that this is indeed the case and identify the information gaps. When providing information on topics related to impact, please cite the page number of the terminal evaluation from where the information is sourced.

8.1 Environmental Change. Describe the changes in environmental stress and environmental status that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

None.

8.2 Socioeconomic change. Describe any changes in human well-being (income, education, health, community relationships, etc.) that occurred by the end of the project. Include both quantitative and qualitative changes documented, sources of information for these changes, and how project activities contributed to or hindered these changes. Also include how contextual factors have contributed to or hindered these changes.

8.3 Capacity and governance changes. Describe notable changes in capacities and governance that can lead to large-scale action (both mass and legislative) bringing about positive environmental change. "Capacities" include awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and environmental monitoring systems, among others. "Governance" refers to decision-making processes, structures and systems, including access to and use of information, and thus would include laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc. Indicate how project activities contributed to/ hindered these changes, as well as how contextual factors have influenced these changes.

a) Capacities

The project played an important role in Argentina by informing, awareness raising, opening the discussion and mobilizing the participation of the different stakeholders to strength the implementation process of the Minamata Convention. The room for dialogue created by this project (Mercury in Argentina) facilitated the interaction among main actors involved and prepared the new authorities to understand the importance and timing under the framework of the Minamata Convention, and finally to accelerate the ratification and the discussion of the NIP. Various reports generated through the project served as a baseline for the design of National Implementation Plan. Government of Argentina finally ratified the Minamata Convention in September 2017.

b) Governance

8.4 Unintended impacts. Describe any impacts not targeted by the project, whether positive or negative, affecting either ecological or social aspects. Indicate the factors that contributed to these unintended impacts occurring.

None.

8.5 Adoption of GEF initiatives at scale. Identify any initiatives (e.g. technologies, approaches, financing instruments, implementing bodies, legal frameworks, information systems) that have been mainstreamed, replicated and/or scaled up by government and other stakeholders by project end. Include the extent to which this broader adoption has taken place, e.g. if plans and resources have been established but no actual adoption has taken place, or if market change and large-scale environmental benefits have begun to occur. Indicate how project activities and other contextual factors contributed to these taking place. If broader adoption has not taken place as expected, indicate which factors (both project-related and contextual) have hindered this from happening.

The project was designed to spread interest amongst various stakeholders from government sector, NGOs and private sector on Minamata Convention. Various reports generated through the project served as a baseline for the design of National Implementation Plan. Government of Argentina finally ratified the Minamata Convention in September 2017.

9. Lessons and recommendations

9.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects.

The TE didn't include a section on the lessons learnt but identified some success factors detailed below:

1. The creation of a space of dialogue among the different stakeholders involved representing governmental and nongovernmental sectors was a good strategy. The multi-sectorial dialogue enriched the sharing process and mutual knowledge facilitating the necessary interaction for a successfully implementation of changes and collaboration for the new scenario.

2. The inclusion of important sectors such as mining, has to be capitalized and sustained in time due the importance of this activity in the national, regional and provincial economies.
3. Actions taken in collaboration, including or emerging from nongovernmental sectors with active participation of governmental sectors, are important to increase the collaboration of the different sectors as well as to explore capacities and possible problems to be overcome for the successful implementation of the Minamata Convention

9.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

1. **Continuity of the actions** - Government should consider establishing and identifying an office or national institution for the follow-up and coordination of the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

2. **Improvement of multi-sectorial participation of main actors** - The Government should further work on increasing the participation, identifying and enlarging the number of actors from important sectors who are able to contribute with their capacity and voluntary work to accelerate and strengthen the process. Sectors as mining, energy, hazardous waste management (including urban hazardous waste) are relevant to consolidate and widen the space of dialogue on alternatives to improve the mercury and mercury-containing waste management and implementation of actions to protect health and the environment.

3. **Public Health sector involvement** - Government should support the measures, strategies and activities to involve the Public Health sector as well as to strengthen its capacity to improve their participation. Their understanding of the problem will allow them to interact and lead participation in a process with a final clear target: to protect human health.

10. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

Criteria	GEF IEO comments	Rating
To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	Most of the information for this TER was drawn from the PIR as the TE lacked detailed information and assessment of some of the relevant outcomes and impact. For instance, it doesn't discuss whether the clearing house website was still maintained and considered as a useful source of information, the status or uptake of the pilot demonstration project proposal prepared through the project and whether the project was successful in generating enough interest and awareness amongst the private sector for their future involvement.	MU
To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated?	TE didn't provide ratings and most of the time evidence was found to be incomplete. For instance, private sector participation was an important aspect, that was not dealt with in any detail in the report.	MU
To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy?	The TE didn't include a section on sustainability. The experience of this project had to form the basis for replication of similar projects in other countries in the region. But the TE didn't include much discussion on the future of the activities undertaken through the project and its catalytic role.	MU
To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	There was no specific section on lessons learnt but identified some success factors.	MS
Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	No information on co-financing	U
Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems:	The evidence for M&E was drawn from different sections of the report. It didn't have a separate section on M&E and also didn't include much discussion on the specifics of M&E.	MU
Overall TE Rating		MU

11. Note any additional sources of information used in the preparation of the terminal evaluation report (excluding PIRs, TEs, and PADs).