



Basel Convention Regional  
Centre for Training and  
Technology Transfer in the  
Caribbean

# Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean

(Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada and  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

## Dominica Results Validation Workshop Report

APRIL 2019  
BCRC-CARIBBEAN

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**MINAMATA INITIAL ASSESSMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN  
(ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, DOMINICA, GRENADA, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES)**

**RESULTS VALIDATION WORKSHOP REPORT  
DOMINICA**

**March 13<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Prevost Cinemall, Executive Conference Room  
Roseau, Dominica**

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## **1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY**

The Minamata Convention is a global treaty created to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of the highly toxic chemical element, mercury. The Convention aims to reduce and eventually eliminate the anthropogenic releases and emissions of mercury into the land, sea and atmosphere. The Minamata Convention entered into force on 16 August 2017, and to date, there are one hundred and seven (107) Parties to the Convention, including Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Suriname.

### **1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF MINAMATA INITIAL ASSESSMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN (ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, DOMINICA, GRENADA, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES)**

Under Article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Financial Resources and Mechanism, mechanisms are in place for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund to provide funding to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition in their implementation of the Convention. As such, the GEF provided funding for the Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) project (MIA Project). Of the four (4) project countries, Antigua and Barbuda is currently the only Party to the Convention; however, the Governments of Dominica, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines indicated that they were taking meaningful steps to ratify the Convention, and all countries requested consideration for funding of enabling activities.

The MIA Project aims to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention to contribute to the protection of human health and the environment from the risks posed by unintentional and intentional emissions and releases as well as unsound use and management of mercury. The Project is being implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and executed by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer in the Caribbean (BCRC-Caribbean). The Project has a two (2) year timeline and commenced on 26 September, 2017.

The overall project components and their related activities are:

#### 1. Global technical support and capacity building for MIAs development

1.1 Technical assistance provided to participating countries to develop the MIAs while building sustainable foundations for their future implementation of the Minamata Convention.

#### 2. Development and validation of the Minamata Initial Assessments

2.1 Identified and strengthened Project Steering Committee and National Coordination Mechanisms dealing with mercury management that will guide the project implementation;

2.2 National institutional and regulatory frameworks and national capacities on mercury management assessed;

2.3 National inventories of mercury sources and releases developed using the UN Environment Mercury Toolkit Level II and strategies for the identification of mercury contaminated sites developed;

2.4 Challenges, needs and opportunities to implement the Minamata Convention assessed and recommendations to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention developed;

2.5 MIA validated by national stakeholders.

### 3. Monitoring and Evaluation

3.1 Status of project implementation and probity of use of funds accessed on a regular basis and communicated to the GEF;

3.2 Independent terminal evaluation developed and made publicly available.

## **2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP**

The Results Validation Workshop for the Dominica Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) was held by the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean (BCRC-Caribbean) in collaboration with the Dominica Bureau of Standards on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 9:00am in the Prevost Cinemall, Executive Conference Room. The aim of the workshop was to present the national results and findings of the MIA Project for validation by the key stakeholders involved throughout the project.

Presentations on the overview of the MIA Project, the results of assessments conducted under the project and the way forward for Dominica were presented by representatives of the BCRC-Caribbean, Biodiversity Research Institute, Environmental Advisors Inc. and the Dominica National Project Coordinator. The assessments conducted under the project included the national inventory of mercury releases, fish sampling to test the concentrations of mercury in locally consumed species, testing of skin lightening creams sold throughout the region to determine mercury added products, an assessment to determine the sensitivity of watersheds to mercury contamination, and a national legislative and institutional capacity assessment in relation to the possible implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The workshop also included a discussion on the way forward regarding the upcoming communications and public awareness component of the MIA Project. The agenda is provided in Annex 1.

There were seven (7) participants present at the workshop which included representatives from the Environmental Health Department, Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation, Fisheries Division, Dominica Bureau of Standards and the Roseau City Council. A list of the participants is provided in Annex 2 and workshop presentations are provided in Annex 3.

## **3.0 WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS**

### **3.1 WORKSHOP OPENING AND OVERVIEW OF THE MIA PROJECT**

The workshop commenced at 9:30am with an opening address from Ms. Jewel Batchasingh, Director (Ag.), BCRC-Caribbean, who gave a few brief remarks on the process of the MIA Project in Dominica and the role of the BCRC-Caribbean as the executing agency for nine (9) MIA Projects in the wider Caribbean region. Each of the participants then introduced themselves and the organization they were representing.

Ms. Leselle Vincent, BCRC-Caribbean, continued by presenting additional details on the MIA Project and the remaining timeline.



*Photo 1: Ms. Leselle Vincent, BCRC-Caribbean, providing an overview of the MIA Project*

### **3.2 RESULTS OF THE DOMINICA NATIONAL MERCURY RELEASE INVENTORY**

National Project Coordinators (NPC) for Dominica, Ms. Sapphire Vital from March 2018 to September 2018 and Mrs. Natasha Lecointe from October 2018 to February 2019, were contracted by the BCRC-Caribbean to undertake the on-the-ground activities for the inventory data collection and national report drafting. Mrs. Lecointe presented the preliminary results of the mercury release inventory at the workshop.

The UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases (Level 2) was used to calculate the releases. Mrs. Lecointe mentioned that assumptions in the Toolkit were made based on data for 2016 received from the Customs and Excise Division and other national stakeholders as well as default factors and estimations in the Toolkit where local data was not available.

Mrs. Lecointe detailed that the major national source of mercury releases from the inventory was from other intentional products or process use of mercury, specifically the use and disposal of manometers and gauges with mercury and laboratory equipment with mercury. The second

largest source of mercury releases in Dominica was found to be the use and disposal of consumer products in which mercury is intentionally used. These include mercury containing batteries, lighting products, skin lightening creams and thermometers.

Informal dumping of mercury added products was initially noted as a potentially significant source of mercury releases to the environment in Dominica. However, it was noted that the majority of end of life mercury added products was disposed of in the landfill. This was noted as a change that would be incorporated into the spreadsheet after the meeting.



*Photo 2: Mrs. Natasha Lecointe, National Project Coordinator for the MIA Project*

### **3.3 ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AS IT RELATES TO MERCURY MANAGEMENT**

Environmental Advisors Inc. was hired as a consultant to conduct the institutional and regulatory framework assessment under the MIA Project. As such, Ms. Judy Daniel, lead consultant on the project, presented the findings for Dominica's national situation as it relates to mercury.

Ms. Daniel highlighted the instruments that indirectly relate to mercury management and which could be adapted to incorporate mercury. Although Dominica is not Party to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Ms. Daniel mentioned the importance of the Government understanding the preparatory steps that would be necessary if accession to the Convention were to occur in the future.

Three (3) options were provided as recommendations for the Government of Dominica to consider. The first is to amend the existing laws to incorporate the requirements of the Minamata Convention, as appropriate. The second is to establish a new law on mercury management itself, and the third is to establish a new law that integrates the management of all chemicals.

Following Ms. Daniel's presentation, it was suggested that existing provisions on batteries be refined to specify batteries containing mercury. Further, it was noted that some skin lightening

creams imported into Dominica are not properly labelled and that testing is needed to establish which items contained mercury. Legislation to prevent persons from importing identified skin lightening creams with mercury is needed as well as practices to raise awareness by Customs officials. The Bureau of Standards can implement take-back procedures as per the Standards Act which provides for the destruction of banned items through specified mechanisms. Participants also indicated that collaboration is needed between the Bureau of Standards, Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation and other stakeholders.



*Photo 3: Ms. Judy Daniel, Environmental Advisors Inc., Legal Consultant for the MIA Project*

### **3.4 MINAMATA INITIAL ASSESSMENT RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI), located in Portland, Maine, USA, was hired under the MIA Project as the international technical consultant. Aside from providing the backstopping for the development of the inventory and report on mercury releases, BRI also supported additional sampling activities including fish sampling to test the concentrations of mercury in locally consumed species, testing of skin lightening creams sold throughout the region to determine mercury added products and an assessment to determine the sensitivity of watersheds to mercury contamination.

Mrs. Molly Taylor, BRI, began by presenting the findings of the regional cosmetic sampling activity. The manufacture, import and export some cosmetics and skin lightening creams with concentrations of mercury over 1 part per million (ppm) must be banned by Parties to the Minamata Convention. Eight (8) skin-lightening creams purchased in Dominica were tested, but none showed elevated concentrations of mercury above 1 ppm. However, one (1) cream had elevated levels of arsenic and lead. Additionally, (2) of the forty (40) creams collected in the project countries had high mercury concentrations.

Dr. David Evers, BRI, then continued the presentation by touching on Dominica's national mercury situation as it relates to the rest of the world. He noted that Dominica has one of the lowest levels

of mercury releases globally. Dr. Evers went on to describe the process used to identify potential national biological mercury hotspots of concern and the results of an analysis conducted to determine the sensitivity of watersheds to mercury contamination. He also presented a brief overview of the results of the fish sampling activity conducted under the MIA Project and related them to results obtained for similar species in the region and globally. Further sampling is needed to validate the findings. Suggested species for testing included the Barracuda, Snapper, Spiny Lobster, Mahi Mahi and Yellowfin Tuna. An additional suggestion was made to focus the location of testing to areas close to potentially contaminated sites.



*Photo 4: Dr. David Evers, Biodiversity Research Institute, Technical Consultants on the MIA Project*

### **3.5 NEXT STEPS IN THE MINAMATA INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND CLOSING REMARKS**

The final presentation was made by Ms. Laura Teixeira, BCRC-Caribbean. Ms. Teixeira recapped the topics highlighted throughout the day and emphasized the next steps with regards to the completion of the Minamata Initial Assessment project in the Caribbean. Ms. Teixeira pinpointed that following the Results Validation Workshop, the mercury inventory and report would be finalized by the BCRC-Caribbean project staff during the month of April. The final drafts would then be shared to the corresponding National Working Group (NWG) for any final comments.

In the remaining timeline for the project, a communications strategy would be developed and implemented for each country. Ms. Teixeira described the previous communication concepts developed under the previous MIA Project in Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago and explained that some of the material would be available (Photo 5). Ms. Teixeira provided some brief examples of communications material that could be developed, and participants were asked to provide additional suggestions on effective methods to raise public awareness. Responses included the use of online news pages and social media, the placement of fish cards and posters in hospitals and pregnancy wards to increase awareness of the risk to pregnant women and fetuses, and the use popular radio personalities such as Felix Henderson to share the message to their listeners.



*Photo 5: Ms. Laura Teixeira and Ms. Jewel Batchasingh, BCRC-Caribbean, presenting communications materials developed under the previous MIA Project*

Ms. Teixeira went on to provide some recommendations to assist Dominica with preparations to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury should the country decide to do so.

A concern raised at the workshop was that compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) which contain mercury had previously been promoted as an energy efficient alternative to incandescent bulbs, and there was some uncertainty regarding sharing these alternating recommendations. In response, it was noted that LEDs can be promoted as both energy efficient and mercury-free light sources.

Ms. Batchasingh then provided some brief closing remarks on behalf of the BCRC-Caribbean, thanking the participants and presenters for their attention throughout what was deemed a very successful session.

## 4.0 PARTICIPANT EVALUATION OF WORKSHOP

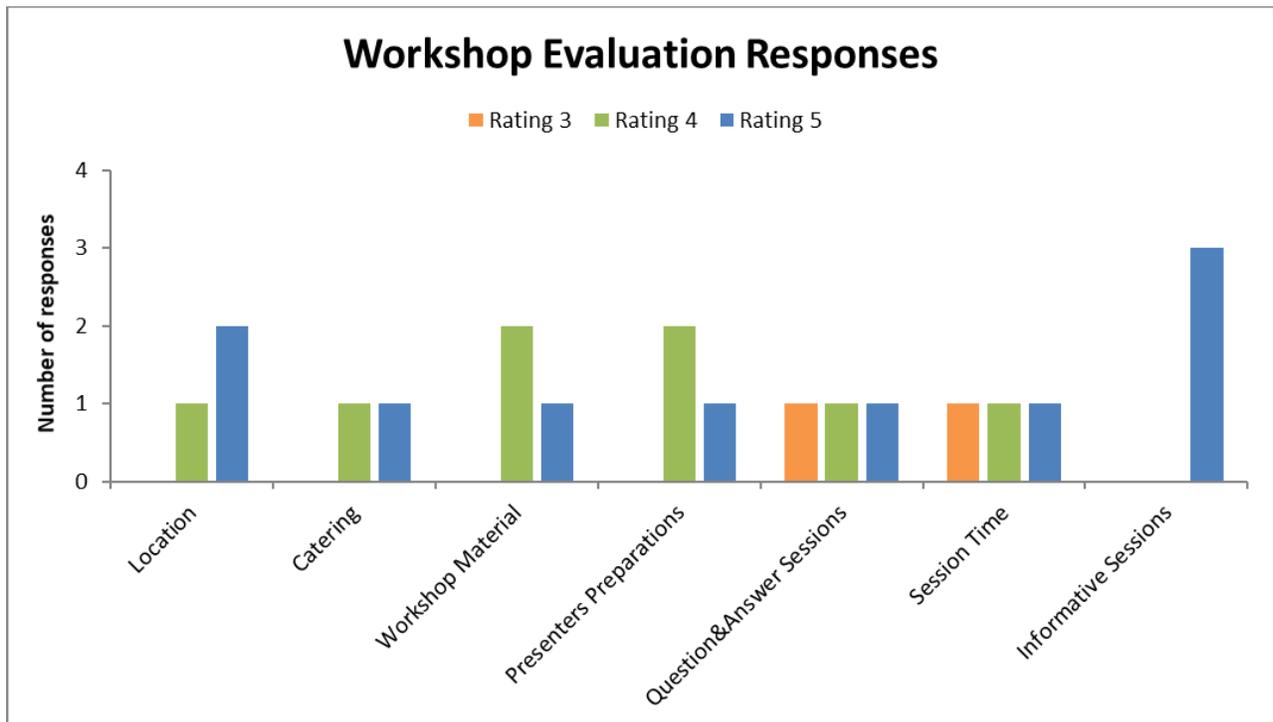
Following the workshop, an evaluation form was sent to each of the participants. Three (3) evaluation forms were returned, and the results are stated below.

### ***Participant Comments and Recommendations***

Overall, the participants rated positively towards the logistical, organizational and informative scope of the workshop. However, the low participant turn-out was noted as an aspect of the workshop that should be changed in the future. It was recommended that follow-up should be done to ensure that invited participants were in attendance.

For future workshops/events, one participant noted that the BCRC-Caribbean should organise a workshop with the Fisheries Division, in particular with the Fisheries Officers and data collector, to raise awareness of the effects of consuming mercury contaminated fish and how to safeguard consumers. Also, communication materials such as videos and educational flyers should be developed for the public and schools.

Figure 1 below displays the results for the rating section of the workshop assessment form, where participants were asked to rate the different logistical aspects of the workshop on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 indicating strongly disagree to 5 indicating strongly agree).



**Figure 1: The aggregate results of the Dominica Minamata Initial Assessment Results Validation Workshop Assessment Forms completed by three (3) participants**

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The half-day Results Validation Workshop for the Minamata Initial Assessment in Dominica was deemed successful in meeting its key objectives. Participants gained an understanding of the details of the project execution in their country, as well as the additional sampling research activities that occurred. A detailed explanation was given on the use of the UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases, the data that was received from the various stakeholders for input into the Toolkit, and the results that were generated. The participants also gained an understanding of the steps to be considered for the effective ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Dominica.

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide any further information to close existing data gaps, as well as validate the data that was used. The members of the National Working Group who attended ensured that they would provide a final review of the national MIA report and inventory in order to finalise the documents.

Recommendations made by participants for the best strategies for national outreach and raising awareness will be used by the BCRC-Caribbean to draft a Terms of Reference for the development of the communications strategy component of the project.

The eager participation of these key stakeholders and government representatives at the workshop have ensured that the remaining components and activities of the project roll-out will be a success and Dominica will be in a better place to protect its people and the environment from the harmful effect of mercury releases.

**Annex 1:**  
**AGENDA**

# Dominica

## National Results Validation Workshop

### MINAMATA INITIAL ASSESSMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2019**  
**Prevost Cinemall, Executive Conference Room, Roseau, Dominica**

9:00 am	<b>REGISTRATION</b>
9:30 am	<b>Opening Remarks:</b> Dr. Steve John, Director, Dominica Bureau of Standards Ms. Jewel Batchasingh, Director (Ag.), BCRC-Caribbean
9:45 am	<b>INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS</b>
9:55 am	<b>Overview of the Minamata Initial Assessment in the Caribbean Project</b> Ms. Leselle Vincent, BCRC-Caribbean
10:05 am	<b>Overview of the Results of the National Minamata Initial Assessment</b> Ms. Natasha Lecointe, National Project Coordinator
10:30 am	<b>BREAK</b>
10:40 am	<b>Assessment of National Regulatory Framework as it Relates to Mercury Management</b> Ms. Judy Daniel, Environmental Advisors Inc.
11:05 am	<b>Cosmetics and Communicating Minamata Initial Assessment Findings</b> Ms. Molly Taylor, Biodiversity Research Institute
11:25 am	<b>Minamata Initial Assessment Research Findings and Global Linkages</b> Dr. David Evers, Biodiversity Research Institute
11:45 am	<b>Next Steps in the Minamata Initial Assessment and Recommendations for Implementation of the Minamata Convention</b> Ms. Laura Teixeira, BCRC-Caribbean
12:05 pm	<b>Questions and Discussion</b>
12:30 pm	<b>CLOSING REMARKS AND LUNCH</b>



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**Annex 2:**  
**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Dominica Results Validation Workshop Participant List</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Mrs. Isabella John	Senior Environmental Health Officer (Ag.)	Environmental Health Department	imcjohn@yahoo.com
Mr. Florian Mitchel	General Manager	Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation	mitchelf.dswmc@cworldom.dm
Ms. Diana Degallerie		Fisheries Division	diana.degallerie@gmail.com
Ms. Zethra Baron	Fisheries Officer	Fisheries Division	zethrab1@gmail.com
Dr. Steve John	Director	Dominica Bureau of Standards	sjohn@dominicastandards.org
Mrs. Irene John	Mayor of Roseau	Roseau City Council	rcc@cworldom.dm
Mrs. Bernadette Romain-Scotland	Administrative/ Accounting Officer	Dominica Solid Waste	brscotland@hotmail.com
Ms. Jewel Batchasingh	Director (Ag.)	BCRC-Caribbean	jewel.batchasingh@bcrc-caribbean.org
Ms. Laura Teixeira	Research Assistant	BCRC-Caribbean	laura.teixeira@bcrc-caribbean.org
Ms. Leselle Vincent	Research Assistant	BCRC-Caribbean	lesellek.vincent@bcrc-caribbean.org
Ms. Judy Daniel	Legal Consultant	EAI	judidani14@aol.com
Dr. David Evers	Technical Consultant	BRI	david.evers@briloon.org
Mrs. Molly Taylor	Communications Consultant		molly.taylor@briloon.org
Ms. Natasha Lecointe	NPC		lecointenatasha@gmail.com
<b>Registered but did not attend</b>			
Mr. Lester Bertrand	Data Collector	Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, Fisheries Division	lestb90@gmail.com
Ms. Nawana Shillingford	Committee member	Dominica Youth Environment Organization	neishillingford@hotmail.com

**Annex 3:**  
**WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS**

Annex 3 is available at the following link:

[Dominica Results Validation Workshop Presentations](#)

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APRIL 2019

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