



**PLANNING OF GESAMP ACTIVITIES:
EXPANDED SCIENTIFIC REVIEW OF METALS (FORMERLY MERCURY) IN THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT**

Report of the Chairperson of Working Group 37

Introduction

1 At GESAMP 38 held in Monaco in 2011 GESAMP noted that both Task Teams established in 2010 under WG 37 had delivered their reports to UNEP on schedule. The first Task Team was directed to fill the identified scientific data and information gaps on anthropogenic sources, releases and possible measures to control the releases of **mercury**. This work assists UNEP with the preparation, by 2013, of a binding international agreement to protect the environment from releases of mercury and its compounds. The second Task Team was directed to close listed scientific information gaps on **lead and cadmium** for integration into UNEP's publication "Reviews of scientific information on lead and cadmium".

2 No further requests on these topics would be forthcoming from UNEP, but the WG 37 Chair would continue to assist with the preparation of documentation for the draft agreement on mercury, if supported by UNEP.

3 All findings related to mercury have been included in a joint UNEP/GESAMP pre-publication report (which may be cited) awaiting GESAMP peer review. The pre-publication report which is available on the UNEP website at: (<http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Mercury/Informationmaterials/ReportsandPublications/tabid/3593/Default.aspx>). Consideration will also be given to this report being made available on the GESAMP website. A final and larger report would be published in the GESAMP Reports and Studies series, following both internal and external peer review.

4 The Working Group should now be stepped down. However the Chair of the Working Group aims to continue to work with UNEP as part of the mercury fate and transport partnership.

Finalization of work

5 In preparation of the report much of the original material generated by WG 37 was omitted from the final published version and this will form the basis of the final GESAMP Reports and Studies series publication. It is proposed not to repeat what is now in the public domain (there are comprehensive sections on sources, releases, toxicity, transport and monitoring).

6 For the GESAMP publication it would be important to focus on one of the issues that have been identified by the scientific steering committee of the 11th International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant (ICMGP) as challenging. The most appropriate of these for GESAMP relates to speciation and analytical methods, both of which are of particular interest in the marine environment. It was considered at the last meeting of ICMGP that lack of standardised methods (or the affordability of the equipment) would be one of the biggest barriers to ratification and capacity building for developed nations in analytical capability is required.

7 Therefore the following report structure is proposed:

(Title: **Mercury species in the marine environment: analytical challenges ?**)

- Introduction: Mercury in the marine environment
- UNEP global treaty (background/ current status/timeline)
- Mercury speciation and related toxicity in the marine environment
- Monitoring and modelling
- Standard methods of analysis:
 1. Water
 2. Sediment
 3. Biota
- Emerging methods of analysis
- Quality Control and Accreditation:
 1. Accredited laboratories
 2. Certified Reference Standards and analytical standards
- Environmental Quality Standards
- Conclusions and Future Considerations

Action requested of GESAMP

8 GESAMP is invited to:

- .1 review this report and comment as they deem necessary;
- .2 consider the structure and content of the proposed final GESAMP Reports and Studies series publication; and
- .3 the timing of the peer review and publication of the Report.
