

# Safe Storage and Disposal of Redundant Mercury

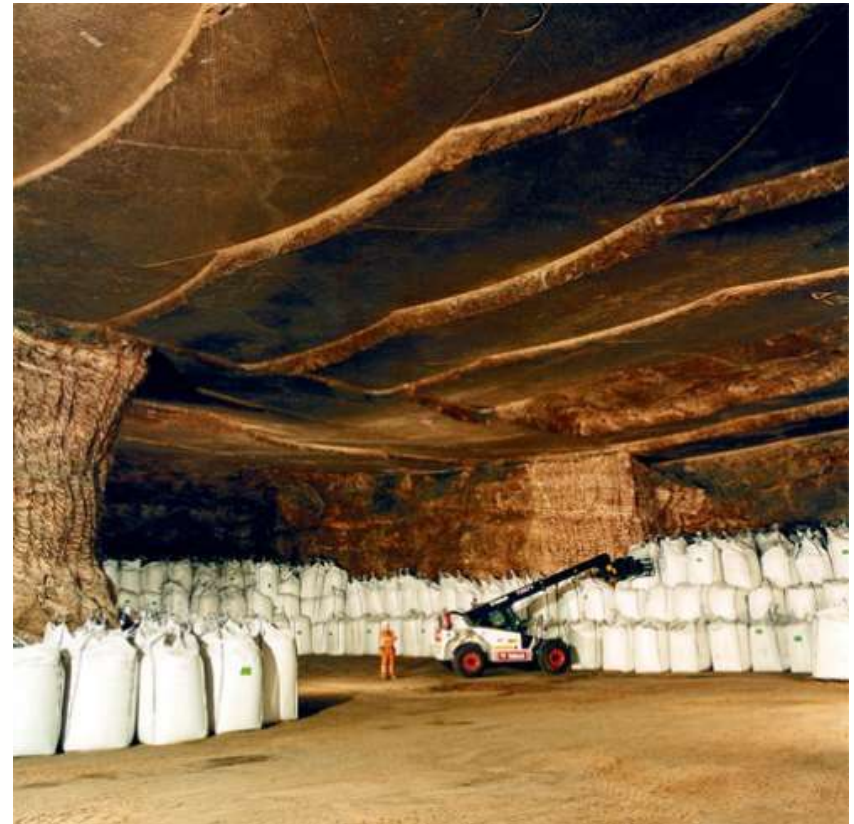
*Oxford, 13-14<sup>th</sup> October 2009*



**defra**  
Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs

## The Regulatory and Policy Framework

*Stephen Cane and Mike Roberts, Defra UK*



*Salt mine at Winsford, Cheshire, England*



## Mercury is an element...

- ...cannot be broken down, degraded, destroyed
- toxic and volatile
- poses unique environmental management challenges
- require different approaches from those used of other toxic chemicals and waste



Source: UNIDO





# Still many uses:



***How NOT to handle mercury!***

## **EU Initiatives on Mercury:**

- 1996: IPPC – phase out of mercury in the chlor-alkali industry;
- 2005: Community Strategy;
- 2007: Restrictions on mercury in measuring devices;
- 2008: Regulation 1102/2008 on the banning of exports of metallic mercury and certain mercury compounds and mixtures and the safe storage of metallic mercury.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Demand (t)</b>	<b>Supply from Recycling (t)</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>90</b>

**Estimated demand for mercury 2011-2015**  
***EC Impact Assessment (2006) for proposed Mercury Export Ban.***

## Future UK demand for mercury:

- about 9.0 t in 2008
- about 6.5 t in 2015;

## Future Supply:

- 7.6 t in 2008;
- 4.4 t in 2015 (baseline scenario);
- 5.8 t in 2015 (best case scenario).

*RPA Report to Defra (2009): An Assessment of the Future Levels of Demand for Mercury in*

## UNEP Mandates on mercury



- 2001 – UNEP GC initiated Hg global assessment
- 2003 – UNEP GC decision 22/4 V
  - Decided that national, regional and global actions, both immediate and long-term should be initiated
  - Urged all countries to adopt goals and take actions with the objective of identifying exposed populations and ecosystems, and reducing anthropogenic mercury releases
- 2005- UNEP GC decision 23/9
  - Called for partnerships as a means to reduce risk of Hg to human health and the environment



## UNEP Mandates:

### 2007-GC Decision 24/3

- Identified 7 priorities including
  - To reduce mercury supply and find environmentally sound storage solutions

### 2009- GC Decision 25/5

- Convene an **intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC)** with the mandate to prepare a **global legally binding instrument on mercury**
- **INC to start in 2010 and complete by 2013**
- **Meanwhile, continue with partnership activities such as on reducing mercury supply and storage to reduce mercury pollution**

## Addressing Mercury Surplus



Legislation and regulatory measures to reduce mercury supply both nationally and regionally as well as establishment of facilities

- EU mercury export ban 2011
- US mercury export ban 2013
- export bans in Sweden and Denmark

Other regions:

UNEP Mercury Storage Projects in Asia Pacific and the Latin America and Caribbean regions

Supported by the Government of Norway

## **The Regulatory framework:**

- **Landfill Directive 1999/3/EC;**
- **Shipment of Waste Regulation 1013/2006;**
- **Directive on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) 96/61/EC;**
- **Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC;**
- **Groundwater Directive 80/68/EEC.**

## ***What does Defra hope for from the workshop?***

**In the EU context, to:**

- **provide information to the EC to assist with its report on safe disposal options for mercury;**
- **to ensure a range of expert opinions on scientific and engineering issues is communicated.**

**In the UNEP context, to help inform:**

- **discussions on the fate of mercury no longer required;**
- **a common position of the EU for the formal negotiations on the LBI.**