



Africa Institute for Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and Other Wastes

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CONSULTANT TO DEVELOP THE NATIONAL ASGM SECTOR OVERVIEW REPORT AND THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING SECTOR FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA.

1. Background to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted in October 2013 and entered into force on August 16, 2017. The objective of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds, and it sets out a range of measures to meet that objective.

One of the major highlights of the Convention includes the international regulation of Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector. According to Article 7 of the Minamata Convention, a Party that has ASGM and processing within its territory shall take steps to reduce, and where feasible, eliminate the use of mercury and mercury compounds in its processes as well as in its emissions and releases to the environment. South Africa signed the Convention in October 2013 and ratified it in April 2019. South Africa has notified the Minamata Convention Secretariat that mercury emissions from the ASGM sector is more than insignificant. ASGM is one of the major sources of socio-economic livelihoods in Africa.

2. The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPDRA).

The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPDRA) prohibits any form of mining without a permit in the country, therefore ASGM mining in South Africa operates outside the legal framework, hence their activities are not regulated and cause both environmental degradation and negative human health impacts.

3. The development of the National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sector in South Africa)

In line with the requirements of Article 7 of the Minamata Convention, South Africa notified the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention that the ASGM sector is more than insignificant in her territory. Following this notification, the country is expected to develop a national action plan outlining how the use of mercury in the ASGM sector will be eliminated.

The project “National Action Plan for the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sector in South Africa) is aimed at assisting the country to develop National Action Plans to reduce the use of mercury and mercury compounds in ASGM, and to reduce the emissions and releases to the environment of mercury from ASGM and processing in accordance with Annex C of the Minamata Convention. By developing the National Action Plan for this sector, South Africa will be complying with Article 7 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

South Africa will benefit from new and updated information about the use of mercury in the ASGM sector in the country and from increased capacity in managing the risks of mercury emitted and released from such activity. The goal of the project is to contribute to the implementation of the Minamata Convention through the reduction of the risks posed by the unsound use, management and release of mercury in the ASGM sector.

4. The objective and activities of the NAP project

This project aims at assisting South Africa to develop a National Action Plan to reduce the use of mercury and mercury compounds, and emissions and releases to the environment of mercury from ASGM mining and processing in accordance to Annex C of the Minamata Convention. The overall components and activities of the project are:

1. Global Technical Support for National Action Plan Development

1.1. Training and guidance provided to relevant stakeholders in South Africa to develop and implement a NAP as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention.

2. National Action Plan Development

2.1. National Action Plan developed as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention.

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 Global Environment Facility.

3.2: Independent terminal review conducted and made publicly available.

5. Objectives of the consultancy

The Africa Institute, in collaboration with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) of South Africa, is seeking to recruit a suitably qualified consultant to compile an ASGM Sector overview report based on information that will be sourced from the various reports that have been developed from the work of this project. On the basis of the ASGM Sector Overview Report, the consultant will then develop National Action Plan for the Elimination of mercury and mercury compounds use in the ASGM Sector in South Africa.

6. Scope of work

This consultant will compile an ASGM Sector overview report based on information that will be sourced from the various reports that have been developed from the work of this project. On the basis of the ASGM Sector Overview Report, the consultant will then develop National Action Plan for the Elimination of mercury and mercury compounds use in the ASGM Sector in South Africa.

Under the supervision of the Africa Institute and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, and under the guidance of the Global Mercury Partnership, the consultant is expected to:

6.1 Collaborate with other experts and NAP team on the different reports written by consultants and representatives of the following thematic areas:

6.1.1 Gender and Vulnerable Groups Technical Working Group

6.1.2 The Legal, Institutional and Policy Framework Working Group.

6.1.3 Technical Aspects of ASGM Value Chain (geographic, geological, mining practices, etc).

6.1.4 Socio-Economic Aspects of ASGM Working Group

6.1.5 Health, Safety and Environmental Aspects Working Group

6.2 Compile an ASGM Sector overview report for South Africa based on information that will be sourced from the various reports indicated in 6.1,

6.3 Develop A National Action Plan for the Elimination of mercury and mercury compounds use in the ASGM Sector in South Africa based on the ASGM Sector overview report for South Africa and stakeholder consultation

6.4 Provide a critical overview, analysis and appraisal on the overall NAP.

6.5 Make recommendations on the gaps that need to be addressed for future work on ASGM related mercury work.

7. Outputs and deliverables

The Consultant, under the guidance of, and reporting directly to the Africa Institute, is expected to do the following:

7.1 Produce a report containing the deliverables mentioned in 6 above

7.2 Conduct a stakeholder engagement workshop to verify and validate the report.

8. Required experience and qualifications.

The following requirements must be fulfilled by applicants to this consultancy:

8.1 Educational qualifications:

- At least a Masters degree in Environmental Management, Natural Sciences, Mining, or a related fields. A PhD will be an added advantage.

8.2 Relevant work experience:

- Proven experience in development of national action plans and strategies
- Understanding of the ASGM Sector in South Africa
- The applicant must be fluent in English
- Preference shall be given to national consultants.
- The consultants that previously worked on this project shall not be considered for this consultancy.

9. Duration of the consultancy.

The duration of the consultancy is approximately three (3) months. The successful candidate will be expected to start work in February 2026.

10. Payment.

Payment shall be made in instalments based on key deliverables identified within the contract and agreed on between the Africa Institute and the Consultant.

11. Documents to be included when submitting the proposal.

11.1 Technical proposal detailing previous work experience, including theses and dissertations produced and compiled, should be outlined.

11.2 The Consultant must indicate and submit certified copies of qualifications and experience of personnel, and non-financial resources to be assigned where applicable.

11.3 Curriculum Vitae (CV) inclusive of contact information for at least three (3) references for relevant past project/work experience.

12. Contact for queries and submissions.

For any queries and submission of applications kindly contact Ms Neo Masha at NMasha@dfpe.gov.za, tel 012.399 9862. The closing date for the submission of proposals is **the 17 February 2026.**