



Invitation to the Conference
“Dental Sector as a Source of Mercury Contamination”,
Friday, May 25, 2007
Goethe Institute, Brussels

18 April 2007

Dear Colleague,

The European Environmental Bureau, in cooperation with the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and the Zero Mercury Working Group, is very pleased to invite you to its **Conference “Dental Sector as a Source of Mercury Contamination”, Friday 25th May 2007, Brussels.**

Mercury is highly toxic, causing damage to the nervous system and is particularly harmful to the development of unborn children. It accumulates in the bodies of humans and wildlife, and can become more concentrated as it moves up the food chain, especially in certain types of fish. Mercury travels long distances through the atmosphere, and has contaminated the global food supplies at levels posing a significant risk to human health.

The EU Strategy adopted in January 2005 identified dental amalgam as an area for concern and requested an opinion from the EU Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks to consider whether additional regulatory measures are appropriate.

The European Commission consequently prepared questions - on the environmental impact (DG Environment) and on the health impacts of the mercury dental amalgam and their alternatives (DG Enterprise). Both sets of questions were then sent to DG SANCO (Health and consumer protection) which referred them to two of the Scientific Committees under its mandate to provide opinions: the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENHR). . These two committees will work in parallel over the next months and publish their assessment in December 2007.

In March 2006, the European Parliament called on the Commission to bring forward a proposal to restrict the use of mercury in dental amalgam by the end of 2007.

Given these developments in scientific assessments and policy demands on the widespread use of mercury used in dental amalgam, the EEB, together with HEAL and the Zero Mercury Working Group, are organising this conference as a contribution to engaging more stakeholders in this important debate.

The programme of the conference includes a

- **Presentation from European Commission on the action on Dental amalgam**
- **Presentations on relevant issues from EU Member State’s Governments**
- **Panel discussion on the need of dental amalgam**

Invited speakers include: the *European Commission, the Danish Environment Protection Agency, the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI), the Council of European Dentists (CED), the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology, Occupational health experts, Researchers, Patients’ groups and NGO representatives.*

As you may know, the European Environmental Bureau is a federation of over 145 environmental citizens' organisations based in all EU Member States, potential new member states and a few neighbouring countries, with the aim of protecting and improving Europe's environment and of enabling Europe's citizens to play their part in achieving that goal.

The Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL) is an international non-governmental organisation that aims to improve health through public policy that promotes a cleaner and safer environment by draws on the findings of the environmental health science revolution, which is revealing the impact of environmental degradation on an ever widening range of diseases and conditions. HEAL launched a campaign, "Stay Health, Stop Mercury" in 2006 to mobilise the health community for a global ban on mercury.

The Zero Mercury Working group, www.zeromercury.org, is an international coalition of more than 48 public interest environmental and health non-governmental organizations from around the world formed in 2005 by the European Environmental Bureau and the Mercury Policy Project/Ban Mercury Working Group. The aim of the group is to reach 'Zero' emissions, demand and supply of mercury, from all sources we can control, towards eliminating mercury in the environment at EU level and globally."

The participants of the conference are expected to be representatives of different DGs of the European Commission and the Scientific committees, EU Ministries of the Environment and Health, local authorities, scientists, industry, NGOs as well as Members of the European Parliament.

The draft agenda, registration form for NGOs and other details can be found at: http://www.zeromercury.org/EU_developments/070525_EEB_Dental_Amalgam_conference.html

On the Saturday 26 May 2007, the NGOs (and affiliates) are invited to a Strategy meeting on Mercury. The objective is to inform NGO colleagues about the actual developments at EU(mainly) and global (UN) level and to discuss and agree upon a strategy to be followed.

If you are interested to attend the conference and NGO strategy meeting, please fill in and return the registration form as soon as possible and in any case, ***before 9th May 2007.***

Funding is available, for EU NGOS mainly, for travel expenses and accommodation. In case funding has been requested, you will receive a confirmation by the 11th May 2007.

We look forward to welcoming you at the conference.

Yours sincerely,

Elena Lymberidi
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European Environmental Bureau