

# ICMGP 2024

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## REDUCING MERCURY USE IN UGANDA'S ASGM SECTOR: INTERVENTIONS THROUGH NAPS & PLANETGOLD

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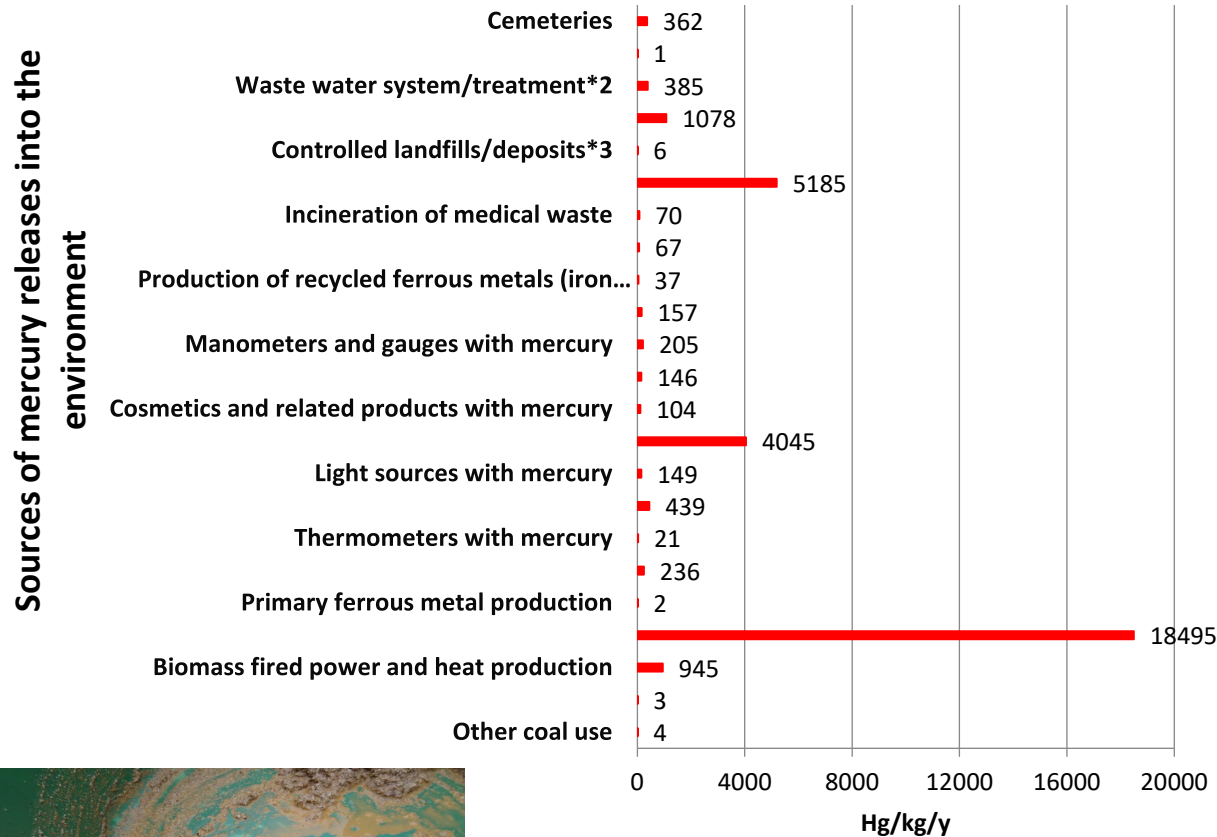


# INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 Concerns surrounding ASGM practices in Uganda
- 2.0 NAP process & objectives
- 3.0 Government & planet GOLD current interventions
- 4.0 Areas of research need
- 5.0 Way forward



# 1.0 Concerns surrounding ASGM practices in Uganda



- Emitting tones of mercury into air, land and water (global is 1600 tons mercury use per year; national is 1.5 tons of mercury per year)
- In Uganda, 90% of gold produced with mercury
- Occupational hazards and child labor (5% children; children (<18 yrs are 0 - 5% )
- Environmental destruction and habitat loss
- Health & environmental risks from mercury – local and global
- **NAP mercury reduction target:** Reducing mercury access, use and release in the sector by 70% by 2024 and by 2030, completely eliminate mercury (100% elimination) in the ASGM sector

## 2.0 NAP process & objectives

- i. To reduce the emissions, releases and risks of exposure to mercury by the ASGM sector by 70%
- ii. To facilitate the formalisation of the ASGM sector by 2024
- iii. To strengthen stakeholder engagement in the implementation of the NAP
- iv. To build and strengthen institutional capacity for management of the mercury value chain and use in ASGM by 2024
- v. To review and implement a Public Health Strategy on exposure, diagnosis and treatment of mercury related complications in ASGM by 2024
- v. To prevent exposure of vulnerable populations, particularly children, women of child-bearing age and nursing mothers to mercury used in the ASGM sector by 2024
- vii. To develop market-based mechanisms for the promotion of reduced mercury use by 70% by 2024
- viii. To provide alternative and substitute gold extraction technologies in ASGM in order to eliminate mercury use in the sector by 2030
- ix. To develop, sensitise and enforce occupational, safety and health standards in the ASGM sector by 2030
- x. To develop and enforce an ASGM environment management strategy by 2030
- xi. To continuously raise awareness and sensitisation on mercury use and its dangers in the ASGM sector.

## 3.0 Government & planetGOLD current interventions



- planetGOLD is strengthening Nos. 2, 3, 4 & 5 under figure 2
- Raising public awareness about dangers of mercury use
- Convening state and non state actor meetings geared towards reducing the use of mercury in ASGM
- Supporting government in development regulations covering ASGM

## Government & planetGOLD current interventions cont.



### a) The Mining and Minerals Act, 2022

- Provides for occupational safety and health commitments; defines ASMs based on mining depth & level of investment
- ASMs required to carry out ESIA, restoration and site decommissioning
- Mining licenses issued to artisanal and small scale miners including individuals, registered associations, cooperatives, partnerships, companies



## Government & planetGOLD current interventions cont.



### The Mining and Minerals Act, 2022 cont.

- ASMs required to deposit a restoration bond; all miners are prohibited from using mercury; all artisans prohibited from using cyanide
- Small scale miners allowed to use cyanide after authorization; prohibits pollution; requires a decommissioning plan
- The National Environment Act, 2019 covers the management of products containing mercury, lead, cyanide, arsenic and polonium.



## **Government & planet GOLD current interventions cont.**

### **b) The National Environment (Air Quality Standards) Regulations, 2024**

- Supported by PlanetGOLD, GEF, UNEP
- Provides for ambient air quality standards; occupational air quality emission limits; fugitive emission reduction measures; hazardous ambient air pollutants cover mercury (Time-weighted Average – annual -  $1 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )

### **c) The National Environment (Management of Hazardous Chemicals and Products Containing Hazardous Chemicals) Regulations, 2024**

- Provides for chemical contaminated sites: remediation of sites contaminated by hazardous chemicals, including persistent organic pollutants, mercury or mercury compounds, lead, cyanide, arsenic and polonium
- Prohibits use mercury and mercury compounds or release emissions of mercury from gold and other mining and processing activities

## 4.0 Areas of research need

QN1 : What would be the unit cost of restoration in USD for 1 acre of land outside a fragile ecosystem but hosting mining shafts of 10m, a processing area for an artisanal whose operations equal USD 104,919

QN2 : What would be the assumptions on the gold ore stock, recommended inputs for artisanal mining investment amounting to USD 104,919...we need to come up with mining models/metrics...this may inform basis for financial security

QN3 : What would be the the assumptions on the gold ore stock, recommended inputs for a small scale miner using chemical leaching or mercury free technologies with an investment amounting to USD 5,245,946

## **Areas of research need cont.**

Qn 4: What procedures should a miner use to clean up a site contaminated with mercury prior to obtaining a formal license to operate. Regulators may clean contaminated sites whose source of contamination may not be traced

Qn 5: Artisanal miners are not required to use cyanide. What artisanal technologies can be as efficient as cyanide

QN 6: What has continued to compel licensed small scale miners to use both cyanide and mercury

## 5.0 Way forward

- Increasing the impact of current efforts in the ASGM sector may require strengthening science-policy interface
- Ensuring access to & dissemination of mercury research findings in a form interpretable by policy makers

