



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Marcos A. Orellana
UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights
Special Procedures Branch
UNOG-OHCGR
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Sent via email: ohchr-srtoxicshr@un.org

Dear Mr Orellana,

Thank you for your letter on Thursday 6 January 2022, seeking input from the Australian Government on mercury, artisanal and small-scale gold mining, and human rights.

Australia ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury on 7 December 2021, becoming the 136th Party to the Convention. The Australian Government is proud to join the global community in the fight against mercury pollution. To reduce emissions and releases of mercury and meet our Convention obligations, the import, manufacture, use, disposal and export of mercury are controlled in Australia.

While there is insignificant ASGM in Australia, we recognise that ASGM continues to be practised by millions of vulnerable communities across the globe, including Indigenous peoples. In addition to measures to eliminate mercury from ASGM sectors, it is critical that these communities are supported to participate in key global discussions on this topic. To this end, the Australian Government recently contributed AUD25,000 for the participation of representatives of Indigenous groups at the second segment of the fourth Conference of the Parties in Bali, Indonesia.

We look forward to continuing to support respect for the human rights of vulnerable communities and their protection from the impacts of mercury through implementation of the Minamata Convention.

Thank you for seeking our input.

Yours sincerely

Ms Nicola Powell
National Focal Point of Australia to the Minamata Convention on Mercury
Acting Assistant Secretary, Chemicals Management Branch
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

1 March 2022