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AUSTRALIA

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dr Jenny Fisher, and I am an Associate Professor in the School of Earth, Atmospheric and Life Sciences at the University of Wollongong. My research expertise is in atmospheric science, including the atmospheric transport and cycling of mercury. I am also a founding member and co-convenor of the Mercury Australia research network.

I am writing to express my strong support for Australia's ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Mercury is a potent toxic pollutant with harmful impacts on the environment and human health, as outlined in the Australian Government's Final Regulation Impact Statement. It is a pollutant of global concern because it can travel large distances in the atmosphere, with negative impact in regions far downwind of emission sources. Once in the environment, it is persistent for years to decades.

The Final Regulation Impact Statement clearly states the case for Australia's ratification of the Minamata Convention. Quantitatively, the financial benefits outweigh the costs (and this is without quantifying the environmental benefits). Qualitatively, ratification will provide Australia with a seat at the table to influence the treaty. There are additional benefits to the latter besides Australia's environmental leadership. Scientific research (including some with which I have been involved) has shown that Australia's mercury emissions are relatively small on a global scale (though large per capita), and a significant proportion of the mercury deposited to Australian ecosystems likely originates from pollution sources in other countries. It is therefore in Australia's interests to contribute to the international negotiations ensuring other countries take meaningful steps to reduce their mercury emissions.

Ratification of the Minamata Convention will enable Australia to participate in global efforts to protect the environment and human health from the harmful effects of mercury exposure, with positive outcomes for the Australian people and the Australian environment. It will do so with net economic benefits and with no expected regulatory burden on industry or the community. Ratification will allow Australia to join the 125 other ratifying countries (and the majority of OECD member countries) as an engaged and responsible trading partner, displaying environmental leadership.

In light of the above, I strongly support ratification. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Dr Jenny Fisher  
Associate Professor  
Centre for Atmospheric Chemistry  
School of Earth, Atmospheric and Life Sciences  
University of Wollongong

School of Earth, Atmospheric and Life Sciences  
Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health