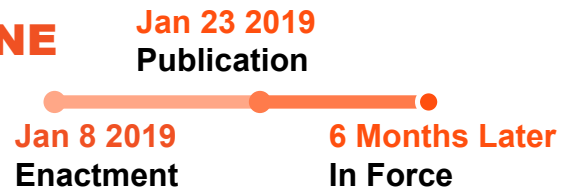


Clean Lighting in Action: Uruguay

In 2019, the Ministry of Environment of Uruguay (MVOTMA) approved [Decree 15/2019](#), a pivotal piece of legislation to secure the proper management of lamps and other waste containing mercury. The articles place the onus of responsibility for mercury waste management onto importers and distributors of fluorescent lamps – effectively dissuading these stakeholders from importing the lamps.

The Decree also commits to aligning Minamata Convention on Mercury – meaning the manufacture, export, or import of any products, such as fluorescents, banned under the Convention are prohibited in Uruguay.

TIMELINE



The main impact of the decree is that the importation of mercury lamps has decreased significantly, and we saw that [the marketshare] of LED lamps increasing, so [the decree was addressing] everything at the same time. **Judith Torres, Uruguay Focal Point to the Minamata Convention**



Photo by IISD/ENB | Mike Muzurakis



IMPACTS & BENEFITS

Between [2013](#) and 2020 - the year following the decree's adoption - Uruguay saw an over 99% decrease in fluorescent lamp imports.

Experts estimate that this rapid transition away from fluorescents avoided nearly 33 kg of mercury by 2020.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, end-of-life management of electronic waste (including fluorescent lamps) is estimated at 2.7%. **Cutting off mercury-added lamps at production ensures that waste management workers and surrounding communities are protected from the undue burden of improperly disposed of fluorescents.**