

# MINAMATA, JAPAN & MERCURY



*[About this famous photograph and essay by Eugene Smith.](#)*

**Listen to the podcast below & read the links. You also may use other resources.**

- 1. Podcast: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/play/p02jcqmm> (9 minutes)
- 2. Chisso in Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chisso>. From this you can link to W. Eugene Smith and Minamata.
- 3. Good Spanish Language Site: <https://deokis.wordpress.com/2010/08/05/minamata-la-bahia-maldita/>  
Note: Link #3 contains photos/videos of the effects mentioned in the podcast - well worth a look.

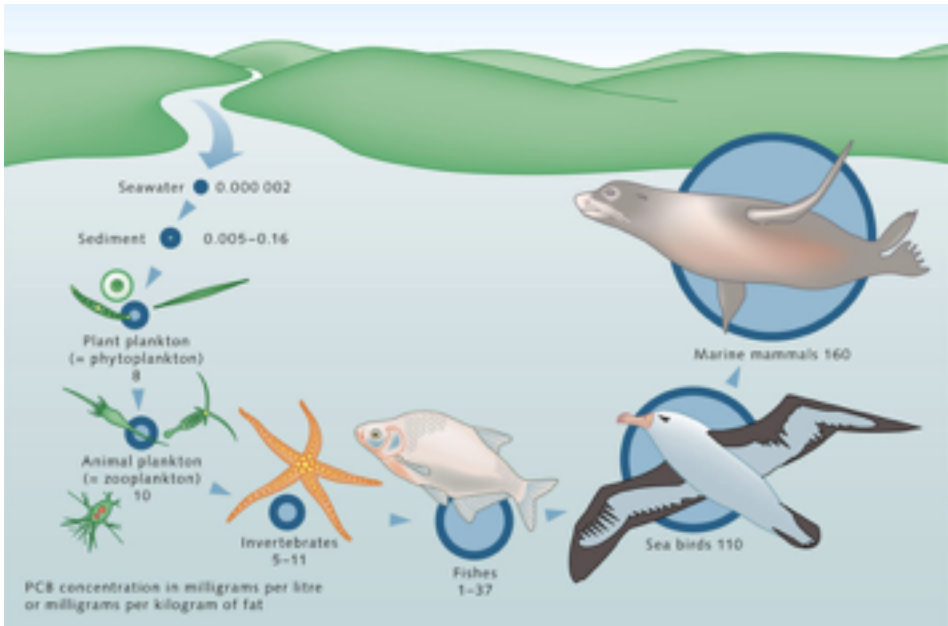
1. For what is mercury used? Could we do without it?

2. Did Chisso know that A) mercury was going into the river and B) mercury was harmful? Explain your reasoning, using evidence to support your position. (Reading the [Wikipedia Chisso link](#) may help in answering this.)

3. The Chisso executive drank a glass of water to prove the water was safe. Isn't this a good demonstration? Explain.

4. Is similar mining and dumping still going on today?\* If so, give one example of what you mean. “Use the web, Luke!”

5. What does the image below have to do with the Minamata occurrence? What is the importance of this image?



\*Hint: Yes it is.

Extra Credit (1 pt): Curious about mercury from power plants in the USA? Read the link below. Provide feedback.  
<http://blogs.edf.org/climate411/2018/10/02/five-things-you-should-know-about-the-trump-administrations-latest-assault-on-the-mercury-and-air-toxics-standards/>

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