

# Mercury Management in Sweden

## Experiences from phase out

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- Historic background and situation in Sweden
- Strategy
- Achievements



Photo: Kentaroo Tryman

# The environmental situation in Sweden

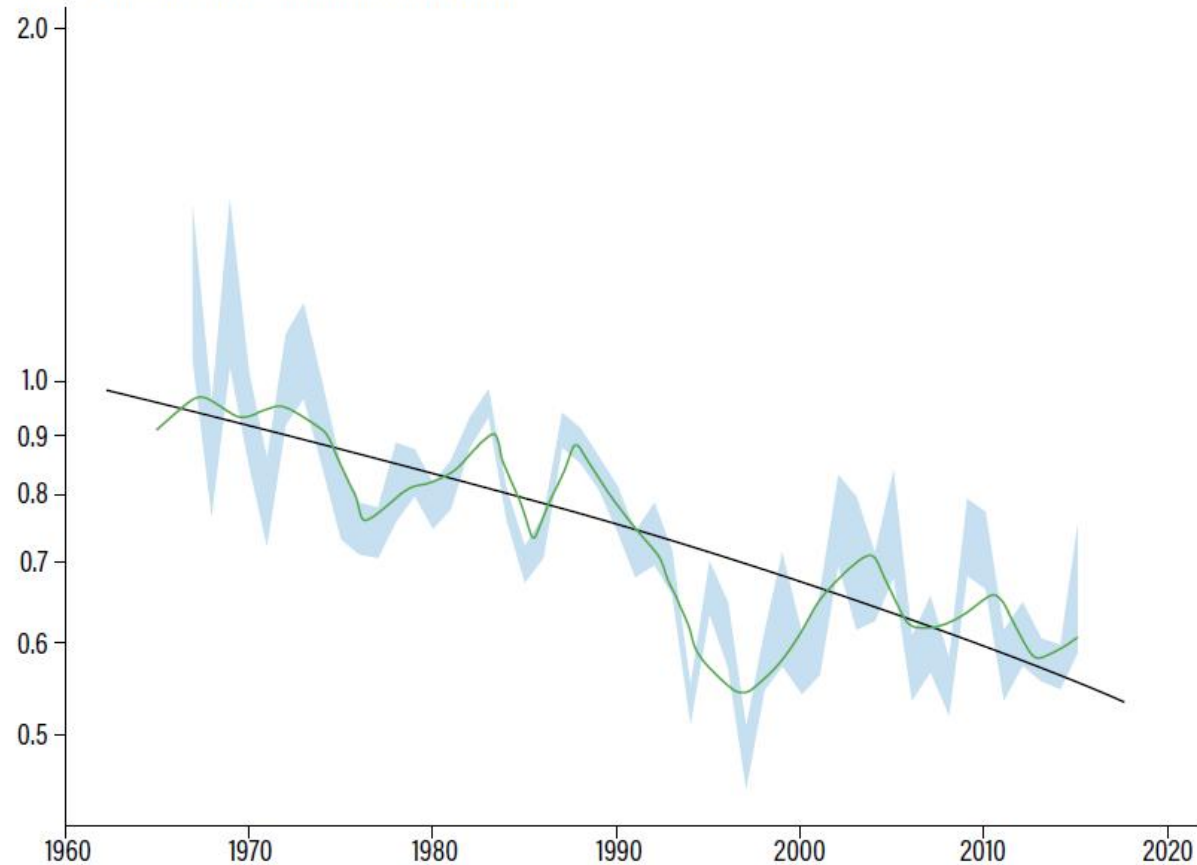


Mercury levels in soil 3-5 times higher than natural levels

Fish in half of the lakes (about 50 000 lakes) exceed (WHO/FAO) limit value of 0.5 mg/kg

Mercury deposition must be reduced by 80 % to achieve tolerable concentrations in the environment

Mercury in fish (1 kg pike equivalent), mg/kg ww

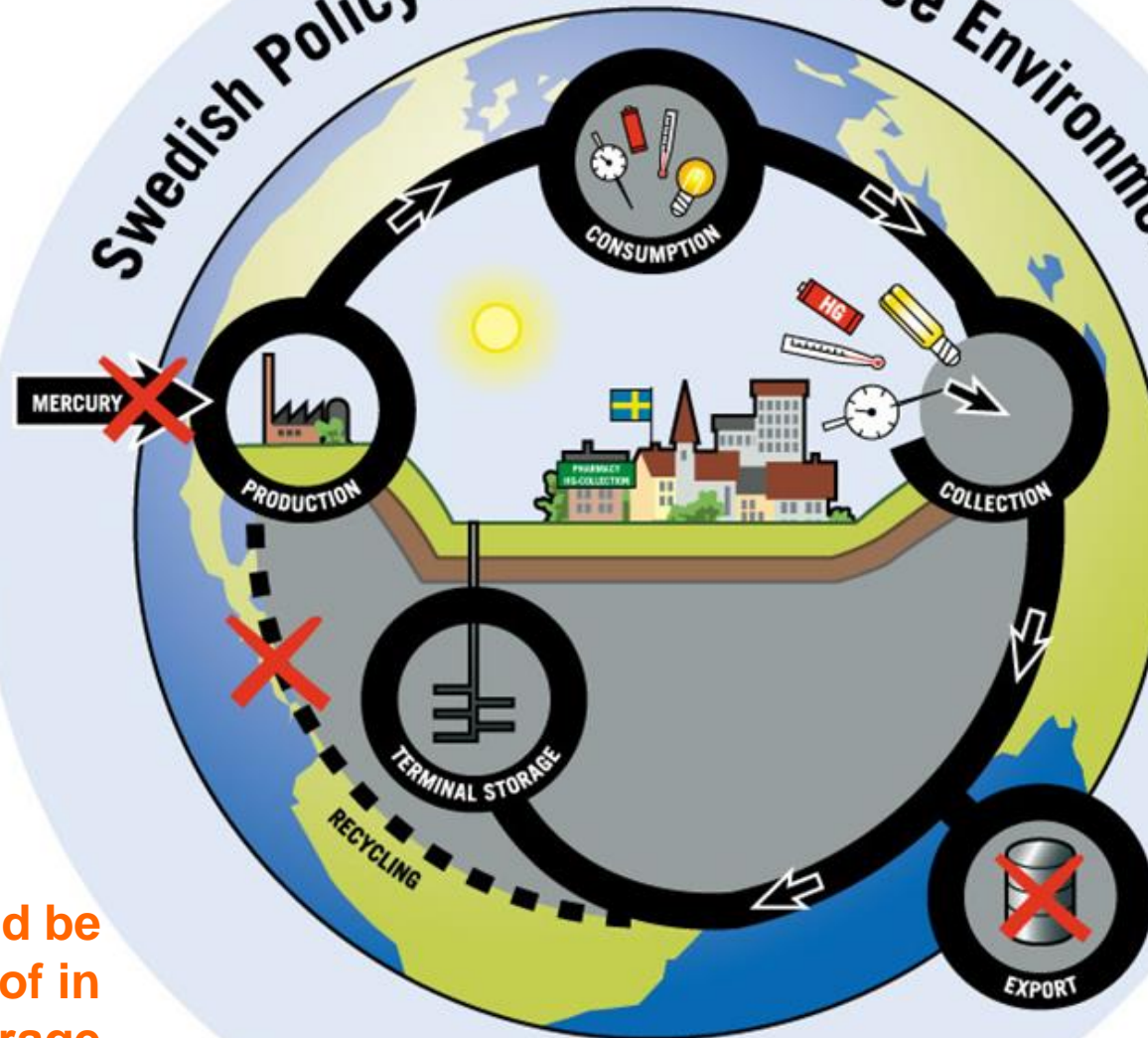


Kletr/Shutterstock.com

▲ Average mercury concentrations in five freshwater fish species across Fennoscandia, showing geographic distribution and trends from 1965 to 2015.

Global Mercury Assessment 2018. UN Environment

# Swedish Policy for a Mercury Free Environment



Phase out use  
in products and  
processes

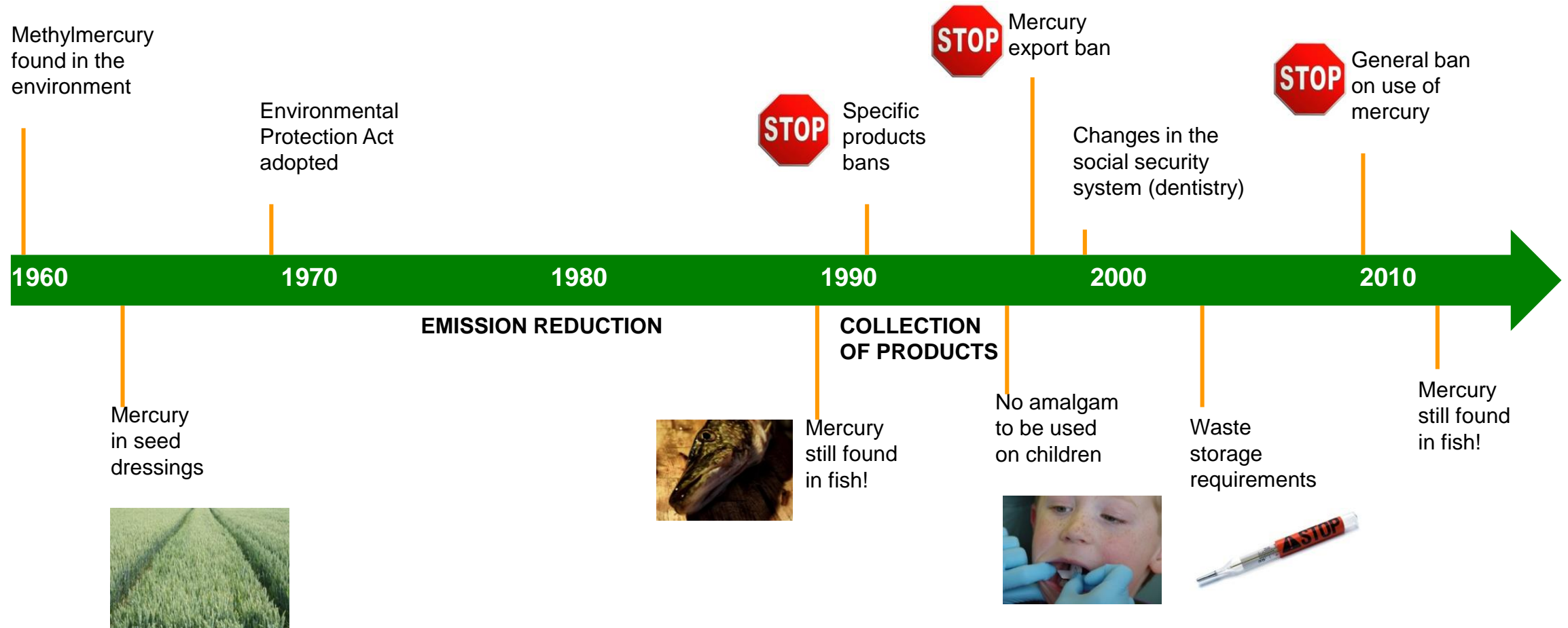
Mercury should  
not be recycled

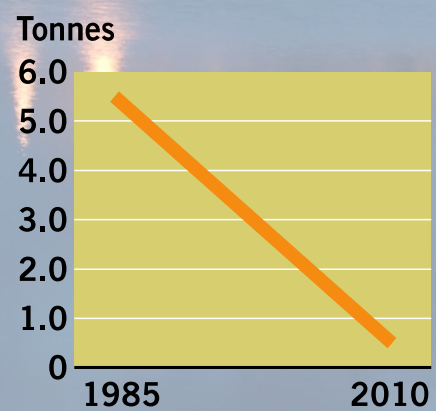
Mercury should be  
safely disposed of in  
final storage

Mercury already in  
society should be  
collected and treated

No export

# Mercury policy in Sweden – a historical overview





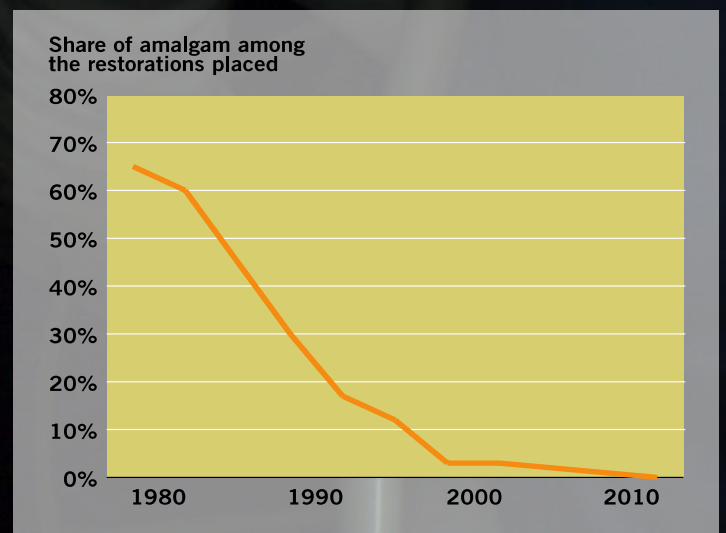
Mercury emissions from Swedish point sources decreased from about 5.5 tonnes in 1985 to 0.5 tonnes in 2012.

Swedish hospitals are essentially free from products that contain mercury. One example is blood pressure measuring devices, where mercury has been completely phased out since the early 2000s without any adverse medical or practical consequences.





The phase-out of dental amalgam was nearly complete before the general ban took place in 2009.



High awareness of  
risks

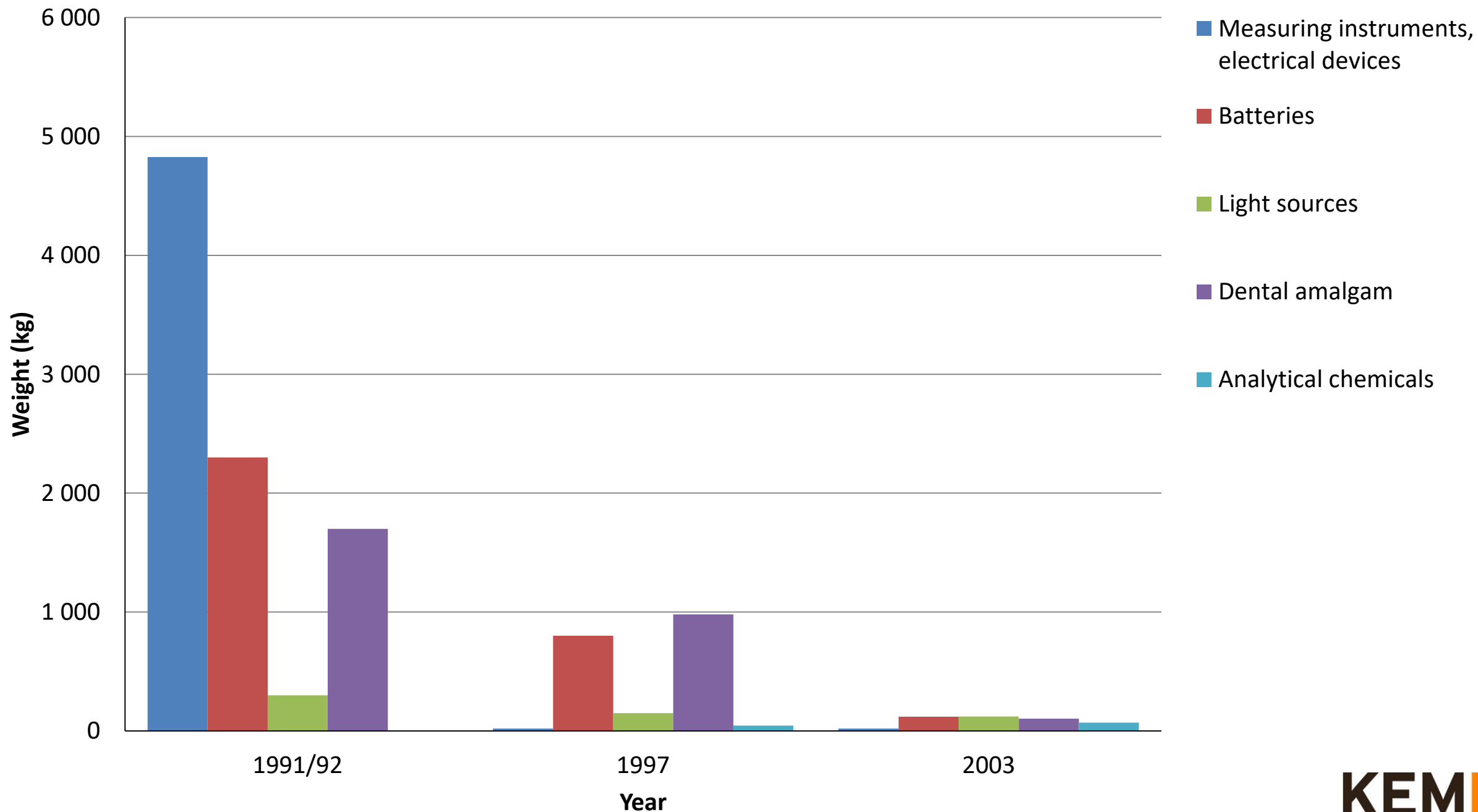
Early phase-out  
agreement in children



Success factors – phase  
out of dental amalgam

Alternative  
materials

Change in dental  
insurance system





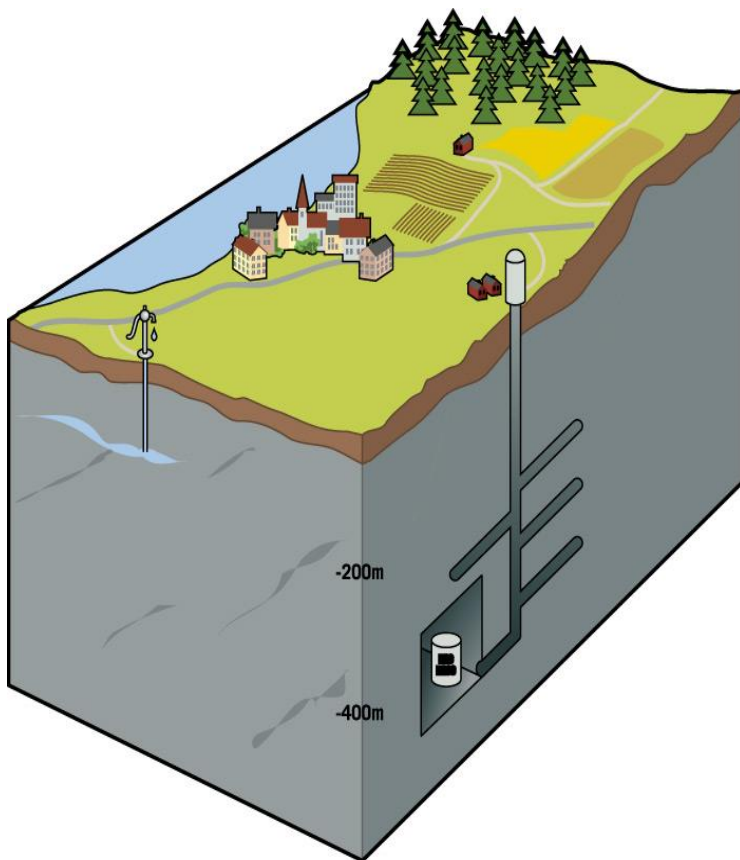
Collection systems for batteries have been in place since the mid 1970s and for electronic waste since 2001.

# Collect mercury already in use



- 1994 -1999 Collection of mercury and identification of mercury containing products
- Inventory in hospitals, laboratories, factories and schools

# Final disposal of mercury waste



- In 2003, the Swedish Parliament decided that waste containing mercury was to be permanently stored deep underground
- Since March 2011, there has also been an export ban and storage obligation in force within the EU

General ban on use of  
mercury in Sweden from  
1 June 2009



# Some exemptions from the general Swedish ban

- Certain areas where EU-legislation allows the use of mercury, such as lamps and motor vehicles
- Military equipment
- Naturally occurring mercury

## Time limited exemptions:

- COD-analysis
- Chloralkali production (until December 17, 2018)
- Amalgam (very strict conditions, until June 30, 2018)

# Some success factors behind the achievements of the Swedish mercury strategy

- Strong political will and leadership
- Long-term, targeted information campaigns
- General ban with time-limited exemptions
- Financial incentives

Thank You for your  
attention!

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