PRTRs FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE[1]

2nd Global round table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

24-25 November 2015
Madrid, Spain

Organised by

**The secretariat of the UNECE Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers
(Protocol on PRTRs) to the Convention on Access to
Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and
Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)**

and
the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

in cooperation with

the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
and
the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

hosted by
the Government of Spain

Chairs: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden), Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers and Mr. Noriyuki Suzuki (Japan), Chair of the Task Force on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers under OECD.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME
as of 9 June 2015

Background

1. Pursuant to the success of the first joint Global round table, held on 19 November 2013 in Geneva, the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties at its second session (3-4 July 2014, Maastricht, Netherlands)[2] and the OECD Task Force on PRTRs at its 17th meeting (6-7 October 2014, Santiago, Chile) entrusted their respective Bureaux to explore an opportunity to organize a second Global round table. Given the extensive experience of UNITAR and UNEP in pursuing activities on PRTRs in different regions, they have been invited to cooperate on the organisation of the event.

2. The round table is expected to foster exchange of experience between different Governments and stakeholders as well as build experts' capacities and promote synergy on PRTR-related

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[1] This document was not formally edited.
[2] The report of the second session is available from http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2_docs.html#/.

issues. The presentations and discussions during the event will be centred on good practices, common challenges and new opportunities related to development of PRTRs.

3. The Chair of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties and the Chair of the OECD Task Force on PRTRs will co-chair the event. The key outcome of the meeting will be a Chairs' Statement.

4. The Global round table, in general, will have the following format: the invited panellists from different regions (e.g. Latin America, North America, Asia and different subregions of UNECE) will deliver short presentations (up to 7 minutes), which will be followed by discussions. Such format might slightly change as to respond to the needs of specific agenda items. One and a half hour lunch breaks can be used for networking and bilateral discussions.

DAY I   Tuesday, 24 November 2015

14.30-14.40   1. Opening

A high-level official of the Government of Spain will deliver a welcoming statement.

14.40-16.40   2. PRTRs across the world

This session aims to inform delegations about the current status of establishing PRTRs across the world, including major challenges in implementing or developing PRTRs, and about relevant activities carried out by international organizations.

16.40-17.00   Coffee break

17.00-18.00   3. Next Generation PRTRs

PRTRs have potential to be used as a "knowledge platform". This might be achieved through visualization of PRTR data on maps or through linking PRTRs to non-PRTR information, such as information on levels of toxicity of chemical substances and their impacts on human health. The added value of this "next generation PRTRs" is to provide users not only with environmental data, but also with knowledge about meaning of data in relation to human health and peoples' living conditions. In this context, PRTRs have potential to provide "knowledge-on-demand", thereby helping Governments and stakeholders to make more effective and diverse use of PRTR data, including for pollution-related decision making.

Participants will be invited to consider how information provided through PRTRs can be transformed into knowledge and learn good practices on e.g. visualizing air, soil or water quality, comparability of the numerous chemical substances and their use; as well as use of PRTRs for illustrating impacts on human health, and for taxation. Furthermore, the session will provide an opportunity to discuss the understanding of a "knowledge-on-demand" concept and the differences between "making data available" and "making knowledge available" to PRTR users.

Questions for discussion would include the following:
  (a) What information does the public seek from PRTRs?
  (b) How to add further value to and increase usefulness/understanding of the data?
  (c) What can be done to generate a greater public´s interest in the use of PRTRs?
  (d) What types of knowledge can be provided through PRTRs?
  (e) How can this knowledge (see above question) be provided on demand?
  (f) Which are possible priority areas for "knowledge-on-demand" (e.g. health and toxicity, air/water quality)?
  (g) Is there potential difficulty to expand knowledge on PRTRs?

DAY II   **Wednesday, 25 November 2015**

9.30-13.00   **4. Emerging PRTR challenges**

The session will address common challenges in and emerging opportunities for developing and implementing PRTRs. Participants will be invited to share their experience and knowledge about key steps in development, implementation and use of PRTRs.

The session will be composed of two thematic parts. Each part will start with short presentations of topics by panellists, which will be followed by discussion. Thereafter, participants will be invited to continue discussions in small groups or bilaterally (see organisation of work for this session below). Participants are invited to prepare questions on the topics of discussion and be ready to share experience related to their daily work on PRTRs.

9.30-10.45 Part 1: Data handling

The panel discussion will focus on the following three sub-categories of data handling:

- *Data Collection*
This topic focuses on different aspects of data collection, such as inclusion of diffuse sources, awareness raising, reporting infrastructures, measures to deal with non-reporting entities.

- *Verification of data quality*
This topic covers different aspects of infrastructures (e.g. IT and measuring tools) and activities (e.g. expert panel, peer review by third party) for verifying and improving PRTR data quality.

- *Use of combined data from different PRTRs*
This topic covers benefit of using data from different PRTRs, the identification of equivalence (e.g. through the use of tables comparing code classifications (such as for industrial and economic activities: International Standard Industrial Classification and Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community)) and national choices for PRTR rules and regulations (e.g. confidentiality).

10.45-11.15   *Coffee break*

11.15-12.30 <u>Part 2: Use of PRTR-data in relevant international reporting</u>

The panel discussion will focus on good practices related to reporting to different international instruments (e.g. European-PRTR, multilateral environmental agreements such as the Protocol on PRTRs and UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) by using PRTRs.

12.30-13.00 <u>Part 3: Break Time for bilateral or small group discussions</u>

Participants are invited to prepare questions related to issues discussed during the above thematic panels with the view of seeking possible assistance and exploring options for cooperation.

13.00-14.30   Lunch break

14.30-17.20   5. PRTRs for different stakeholders

The session will provide an opportunity to share experience and views of different stakeholders and to discuss how PRTRs could contribute to sustainable development. The session will start with short presentations of the below topics by panellists, which will be followed by discussion by participants:

    a) PRTRs to monitor success in sustainable development: focus on green pharmaceutics and green chemistry.
    b) PRTRs as a communication tool for producer, retail and consumer.

15.50-16.10   Coffee break

    c) Fostering public participation.
    d) PRTRs for science and education.

17.20-17.35   Coffee break

17.35-18.00   6. Closing

The Chairs will present key points derived from the discussions and will close the meeting. The report on the Global round table, including the Chairs' statement, will be finalised after the meeting.

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