

Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

Working Group of the Parties
Third meeting
Geneva, 20-21 November 2013
Agenda item 10

DECISIONS AND MAJOR OUTCOMES¹
as adopted by the Working Group at its third meeting

Item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Working Group adopted its agenda as set out in document ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/1.

Item 2: Status of ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the report by the secretariat on the status of ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs and welcomed the accession of Israel to the Protocol;
- ii) encouraged Signatories and other interested States to proceed with accession to the Protocol as soon as possible.

Item 3: Designation of National Focal Points

The Working Group took note of the report prepared by the secretariat on the status of designation of National Focal Points (PRTR/WG.1/2013/Inf.1), in accordance with the decision of the first session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs (Report of the first session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2, para.32), and called upon those Governments, which have not designated a focal point to date, to proceed with designation as soon as possible.

Item 4: Promotion and capacity-building

a) Synergies with ECE MEAs and other partners

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the reports by OECD, UNEP and UNITAR on their PRTR-related activities and thanked all partner organisations for support provided to further implementation of PRTR systems thereby strengthening countries' capacities to accede to the Protocol on PRTRs;

¹ This document was not formally edited. The decisions and outcomes contained in the document will be incorporated in the report of the meeting.

- ii) called upon governments to strengthen cooperation between experts dealing with the PRTR Protocol and those dealing with the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP), Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), UNEP Conventions on Chemicals and other relevant agreements, as well as those involved in projects carried out by international organisations as to ensure coordination at national level;
- iii) called upon partner organisations to cooperate closely where possible to create synergies that further the implementation of the projects and programmes related to PRTRs;
- iv) took note of the report by the Chair on the informal process between chairs of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and expressed its support to the process.

b) Subregional workshops

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the Report on the subregional workshop “Get Your Right to a Healthy Community” (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/3) and expressed its appreciation to OSCE for effective cooperation on co-organisation of the workshop and to Bosnia and Herzegovina for hospitality and cooperation;
- ii) encouraged Governments and stakeholders to consider its outcomes for future work on establishing PRTR systems.

c) Provision of technical assistance

The Working Group:

- i) welcomed the document on the Promotion of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/4) and agreed to submit it to the the second session of the Meeting of the Parties for endorsement, as a document describing an overall framework for possible areas for bi- and multilateral cooperation. The Working Group also agreed to oversee the progress in implementing this framework in the future.
- ii) agreed that interested delegations may provide general comments on the proposal (e.g. order of priority for activities; including operators and facilities as target groups) to the secretariat before 15 December 2013. The provided comments will be taken into consideration by Belarus and Armenia, as appropriate, for preparing the revised version of the proposal.
- iii) agreed that thereafter, the secretariat, will distribute the proposal on behalf of Armenia and Belarus, to National focal/contact points to the Protocol in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia for comments. The provided comments will be taken into consideration by Belarus and Armenia for preparing the revised version of the proposal for the upcoming Meeting of the Parties.

d) Communication strategy, electronic tools and publications

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the report on the Outcomes of the survey on the Communication Strategy (PRTR/WG.1/2013/Inf.2);
- ii) further committed to implementing the Communication Strategy (ECE/MP.PP/2011/2/Add.2);
- iii) requested the secretariat, OECD and UNITAR to continue working closely as to ensure the effective use of PRTR.net and PRTR-Learn.

e) Global promotion of the Protocol

The Working Group:

- i) Expressed its appreciation to OECD and UNITAR for effective cooperation on organising the Global round table on PRTRs (19 November 2013);
- ii) took note of the outcomes of the event and requested the secretariat to prepare a formal report on the Round table in co-operation with OECD and UNITAR, for its submission to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- iii) mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to continue global promotion of the Protocol;
- iv) mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to explore an opportunity for organizing a second global event in the future.

f) Other relevant activities

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the reports by Germany on the workshop "Electronic PRTR Systems-Using Open Source for providing Open Data" (29-30 October 2013, Berlin); by Spain on the 2nd International Conference "PRTR-España: 2001/2011, Ten Years of Public Information – Challenges for the Future" (Madrid, 3-4 July 2013); by European ECO-Forum on the initiative on promoting PRTRs in the textile industry in China lead by the country's NGOs; by REC CEE on PRTR-related activities it carried out in South-Eastern Europe;
- ii) expressed its appreciation to countries and partner organisations for their efforts in promoting implementation of the Protocol.

Item 5: Compliance Committee and reporting mechanism

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the document on Membership of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/5) and of the decision to assign the Compliance Committee with the

task to prepare a synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Protocol on basis of national implementation reports;

- ii) took note of the online reporting tool under the Protocol.

Item 6: Implementation of the Protocol's current work programme, including financial matters

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the human and financial resource situation in the secretariat and shared information on expected contributions;
- ii) expressed its concern with regard to the shortage of contributions and low number of pledges;
- iii) agreed to further discuss how to ensure predictable funding as far as possible.

Item 7: Second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

(a) Hosting and preparatory timeline

The Working Group took note of the report by the Netherlands, the host country, on practical preparations for the second session and of the Note on the preparatory timeline (PRTR/WG.1/2013/Inf.3).

(b) Substantive preparations

(i) Agenda of the second session

The Working Group approved the draft provisional agenda of the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/7), and mandated the Bureau to finalize the agenda, including for the high-level segment, and submit it for adoption to the Meeting of the Parties.

(ii) Strategic plan for 2015–2020

The Working Group approved the draft decision on the strategic plan for 2015-2020 for the Protocol, as amended at the meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/8/CRP.1; paras 10 (a), 11 and 12), and agreed to submit it for adoption to the Meeting of the Parties at its second session.

(iii) Reporting requirements

The Working Group approved the draft decision on the reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/9) and mandated the Bureau to finalize paras 1, 4, 6 and 7, in the light of the availability of national implementation reports before the formal deadline, and submit it for adoption to the Meeting of the Parties at its second session.

(iv) Programme of work for 2015–2017

The Working Group approved the draft decision on the work programme for 2015–2017 for the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/10) and agreed to submit it for adoption to the Meeting of the Parties at its second session.

(v) Financial arrangements under the Protocol

The Working Group:

i) recognised that the actual status of financial support demonstrates that the current scheme of contributions cannot secure predictable and stable financial arrangements under the Protocol. It therefore recognised that further discussion will be required by the Meeting of the Parties at its next session and, if needed, during the next intersessional period in order to find an effective solution for solving this problem.

ii) considered the draft decision on financial arrangements under the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/11) and mandated the Bureau to revise it as follows: (a) include an option reflecting the current interim scheme of contributions and recognising, at the same time, the need to mandate the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties to explore in the next intersessional period options for more predictable and stable funding; and (b) remove options A and B. The revised draft decision will be distributed to Parties and stakeholders for comments prior to its finalisation by the Bureau for submission and adoption at the second session of the Meeting of the Parties.

(vi) Declaration

The Working Group:

- i) Discussed the draft declaration (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2013/12) prepared by the Bureaux of the Meetings of the Parties to the Protocol and to the Convention;
- ii) Agreed that the main messages that are of key relevance for the Protocol, contained in paras 7, 11, 12 and 13 as well as several elements in paras 6 and 8 should be well-preserved in the subsequent versions of the document;
- iii) Agreed that interested delegations may submit their written comments on the current draft before 29 November 2013 as to enable the Convention's Bureau to consider them at its upcoming meeting on 2-3 December 2013 for preparing the next revised draft in cooperation with the Protocol's Bureau. The next draft is expected to be available for the second round of comments in January 2014.
- iv) mandated the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to finalize the draft Declaration in cooperation with the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption at the joint high-level segment.

Item 8: Calendar of meetings¹

The Working Group took note of the relevant meetings planned for 2014.

Item 10: Adoption of decisions and outcomes of the meeting

The Working Group adopted the major outcomes and decisions presented by the Chair at the meeting (as contained in this document) and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to finalize the report and incorporate these adopted outcomes and decisions.

¹ There were no points raised under agenda item 9 on other business.