

Statement by OECD at the Second Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the PRTR Protocol

3 July 2014

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Netherlands to host the meeting in this beautiful city of Maastricht and the Secretariat to organise the meeting.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Parties to the Protocol on the progress made since the Protocol became international law, and I look forward to continued co-operation with OECD.

As you may know, OECD is a forum in which governments work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems and promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. OECD helps ensure that the environmental implications of economic and social development are taken into account. OECD's 34 member countries include parties to the Protocol and also countries in North and South America and the Asia-Pacific region.

OECD activities on PRTRs

In responses to Agenda 21 in 1992, OECD has been supporting the development and implementation of PRTR systems around the world by developing guidance manuals and technical documents as well as web-based databases in order to encourage governments and other stakeholders to share PRTR data and technical information. Since the last Meeting of Parties to the Protocol in 2010, five documents have been published and are available on our webpage¹:

- *Removal/Emission Predictions of Wastewater Treatment for Exposure Assessment and Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers*, ENV/JM/MONO(2014)16;
- *Global Pollutant Release and Transfer Register: Proposal for a Harmonised List Of Reporting Sectors*, ENV/JM/MONO(2013)5;
- *Application, Use and Presentation of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR) Data*, ENV/JM/MONO(2013)1;
- *Global Pollutant Release and Transfer Register, Proposal for a Harmonised List of Pollutants*, ENV/JM/MONO(2012)9; and
- *Resource Compendium of PRTR Release Estimation Techniques, Part 4: Summary of Techniques for Releases from Products, Version 1.0*, ENV/JM/MONO(2011)7/PART1, PART 2.

Furthermore, OECD has initiated new projects to: 1) explore the role of PRTR data in global sustainability, 2) update and enhance the existing Resource Compendium of PRTR Release Estimation Techniques; 3) develop guidance on the key elements of a PRTR; and 4) develop, in co-operation with UNITAR and other IOMC organisations, an interactive web-based toolbox to help in the design of a new PRTR.

These new initiatives are aimed at helping countries design and/or implement a PRTR based on the experience of countries who have already established PRTRs.

In addition, three web based tools are available: 1) a global portal of PRTRs, *PRTR.net*, operated with UNECE, UNEP and UNITAR; 2) the Centre for PRTR Data; and 3) the Resource Centre for Release Estimation Techniques. Each database provides actual PRTR data or access to each country's information.

These databases, and all of the documents produced by OECD to date, are freely available on OECD's public website. We encourage all participants to review these documents as well as provide feedback to us on their usefulness in implementing the Protocol.

Synergies and cooperation with UNECE

Last year, UNECE and the OECD held a global round table in cooperation with UNITAR, which, I believe, was a milestone event for all those involved with PRTRs around the world. Participants discussed a wide range of issues concerning PRTRs. This meeting illustrated how international organisations, working together, can make best use of existing experiences and guidance, as well as identify new opportunities for improving the development of PRTRs world-wide.

The UNECE Secretariat always participates in meetings of the OECD Task Force on PRTRs and provides input to OECD activities. And, the OECD Secretariat participates in meetings regarding the Protocol. We believe that these arrangements have been mutually beneficial and have identified areas for further work, and greatly added value to our activities.

This year, the OECD Task Force on PRTRs will be held in October in Chile, back-to-back with the International PRTR Coordinating Group meeting and seeking a possibility to have a back-to-back meeting with UNECLAC.

A PRTR is a unique policy instrument which has enormous potential for moving countries toward a greener environment. In addition to supporting government efforts at environmental protection, publicly available PRTRs can stimulate interested or potentially affected parties to ask questions and to seek improvements to human health and environmental well-being. Non-governmental organisations can both use and disseminate PRTR data to reflect their individual purposes and goals, as well as those of their constituencies. Researchers and academics can use PRTR data for modelling or other studies, and the financial sector for the evaluation of investment proposals or for considering insurance or sustainability issues. With the ever growing interest in the development of PRTRs around the world, closer co-operation between governments and international organisations will be critical.

We look forward to further collaboration with UNECE and other international organisations in support of the continuing progress toward implementation of the protocol.

Thank you for your attention.

¹ www.oecd.org/env/prtr