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Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Fourth session

Geneva, 22 October 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the general segment and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fourth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Friday, 22 October 2021*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the general segment and adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification of the Protocol.
3. Promotion and capacity-building:
 - (a) Coordination mechanisms and synergies;
 - (b) Subregional and national activities.

* The fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers will be held back-to-back with the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (18–20 October 2021). A joint High-level Segment under the auspices of the two Meetings of the Parties will take place on 21 October 2021. A provisional agenda for the joint High-level Segment will be provided as a separate document. More information is available on a web page dedicated to the two sessions (<https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/MoP7-MoPP4-JHLS>).

4. Reporting and compliance mechanisms:
 - (a) Reporting mechanism;
 - (b) Compliance mechanism.
5. Development of the Protocol.
6. Programme of work and operation of the Protocol:
 - (a) Implementation of the work programme for 2018–2021;
 - (b) Future work programme for 2022–2025;
 - (c) Financial arrangements.
7. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau.
8. Date and venue of the fifth ordinary session.
9. Any other business.
10. Review and adoption of decisions.
11. Closure of the meeting.

II. Annotations

The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers will take place on 22 October 2021, in Geneva. The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will hold its seventh session from 18 to 20 October 2021, in Geneva. The joint High-level Segment of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers will take place on 21 October 2021. The approval of a report on credentials with regard to the Protocol's Parties, to be presented orally by the officers in accordance with rule 17 of the rules of procedure (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add.1, decision I/1, annex), and the adoption of draft operating procedures to facilitate remote participation and decision-making at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol due to extraordinary circumstances (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/7) will take place at the joint High-level Segment under agenda item 2.

Due to restrictions associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers will be held in a hybrid format (combining online and in-person participation).

In addition to documents addressing particular issues or themes under specific items, two documents produced by the secretariat will provide relevant background information for many of the items to be considered in the general segment and will therefore not be repeated after each item as background documentation unless specifically under consideration. These are:

- (a) A synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/10);
- (b) A report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/8).

In addition, individual national implementation reports, which are available from the Protocol website,¹ may also provide useful background information for a number of the agenda items.

1. Opening of the general segment and adoption of the agenda

Timing: 10–10.10 a.m.

The Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will open the session. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to adopt the agenda for its fourth session as set out in the present document.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the fourth session (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/5)

2. Status of ratification of the Protocol

Timing: 10.10–10.20 a.m.

The secretariat will inform participants about the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Protocol. Delegations will be invited to report on recent or anticipated developments in that regard. The current status of ratification of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers is available online.²

3. Promotion and capacity-building

(a) Coordination mechanisms and synergies

Timing: 10.20–10.50 a.m.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider potential areas for cooperation with partner organizations, including with other United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) multilateral environmental agreements. In that connection, it will be informed of the relevant activities carried out, in particular, by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Party on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, as well as by other organizations.

Documentation

Report on the third Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/3)

Report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/8)

¹ See <https://prtr.unece.org/national-reports/reports>.

² See www.unece.org/environment-policy/public-participation/prtrs-status-ratification.

(b) Subregional and national activities

Timing: 10.50–11.05 a.m.

Representatives of Parties, signatories and other interested States, in particular those from countries with economies in transition, and other relevant stakeholders will be invited to share their views on outstanding needs and priorities for capacity-building related to pollutant release and transfer registers.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to take note of the ongoing and planned capacity-building activities and to provide guidance on the future direction of such activities.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group of the Parties on its seventh meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/2)

Report of the Working Group of the Parties on its eighth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2020/2)

Report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/8)

4. Reporting and compliance mechanisms

(a) Reporting mechanism

Timing: 11.05–11.45 a.m.

The Chair of the Compliance Committee will present a synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Protocol. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and review the implementation of the Protocol on the basis of the national implementation reports submitted by Parties and the synthesis report.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on reporting requirements.

Documentation

Synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/10)

Draft decision IV/1 on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/12)

(b) Compliance mechanism

Timing: 11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

The Chair of the Compliance Committee will report on the Committee's activities since the third session of the Meeting of the Parties (Budva, Montenegro, 15 September 2017).

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to take note of the Chair's report.

The Meeting of the Parties is also expected to elect the Compliance Committee members, taking note of the status of membership as set out in the note by the secretariat on the subject.

Documentation

Report of the Compliance Committee on its sixth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2017/4)

Report of the Compliance Committee on its seventh meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2019/2)

Report of the Compliance Committee on its eighth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2020/2)

Report of the Compliance Committee on its ninth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2021/2)

Report of the Compliance Committee on its tenth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2021/4, forthcoming)

Membership of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2020/3)

5. Development of the Protocol

Timing: 12.30–1 p.m. and 3–3.30 p.m.

Parties and stakeholders will be invited to share and discuss relevant activities regarding developments concerning pollutant release and transfer register systems. The Meeting of the Parties will consider the report on the outcomes of the survey on the experiences in implementing the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, prepared by the Bureau.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on the development of the Protocol.

Documentation

Report on the outcomes of the survey on the experiences in implementing the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2020/4)

Report on the development of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/6 and Add.1)

Draft decision IV/2 on the development of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/14)

6. Programme of work and operation of the Protocol

(a) Implementation of the work programme for 2018–2021

Timing: 3.30–3.45 p.m.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the implementation of the Protocol's current work programme (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.1, decision III/2, annex) on the basis of reports prepared by the secretariat.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/8)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Protocol's work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/9)

(b) Future work programme for 2022–2025

Timing: 3.45–4.05 p.m.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt the draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025.

Documentation

Draft decision IV/3 on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/13)

(c) Financial arrangements

Timing: 4.05–4.25 p.m.

Delegations will be invited to make pledges to support implementation of the work programme. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on financial arrangements.

Documentation

Draft decision IV/4 on financial arrangements under the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/11)

7. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau

Timing: 4.25–4.40 p.m.

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to elect a chair and two vice-chairs from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting in accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add.1, decision I/1, annex). It is also expected that the Meeting of the Parties will elect the remaining members of the Bureau from among the representatives of the Parties, in accordance with rule 22, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure. In addition, pursuant to paragraph 2 of decision I/1, non-governmental organizations are expected to appoint representatives to attend the meetings of the Bureau, as observers.

8. Date and venue of the fifth ordinary session

Timing: 4.40–4.45 p.m.

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to consider the options with respect to the date and venue of its fifth ordinary session, bearing in mind the requirement under article 17 of the Protocol that ordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties are to be held sequentially with or parallel to ordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, unless otherwise decided by the Parties to the Protocol.

9. Any other business

Timing: 4.45–4.50 p.m.

Delegations wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

10. Review and adoption of decisions

Timing: 5.15–5.50 p.m.³

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review and formally adopt the draft decisions referred to under the preceding agenda items.

11. Closure of the meeting

Timing: 5.50–6 p.m.

Following the adoption of decisions by the Meeting of the Parties, the Chair will officially close the meeting.

³ There will be a coffee break between 4.50 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. to finalize the list of decisions. To ensure equal opportunities for English-, French- and Russian-speaking delegations while saving paper, the draft text of the meeting decisions and outcomes will be projected on a screen around 45 minutes before the close of the meeting, and will be presented by the Chair verbally, thereby allowing for interpretation. The list of decisions will be distributed to participants by email after the meeting.