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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 6 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Programme of work and operation of the Protocol:
future work programme for 2022-2025**

Draft decision IV/3 on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

Prepared by the Bureau

Summary

At its third session (Budva, Montenegro, 15 September 2017), 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 requested the secretariat, taking into consideration the results of the implementation of the work programme for 2018–2021, to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (Geneva, 22 October 2021), including a detailed breakdown of estimated costs, for consideration and further elaboration by the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties, at the latest three months before the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to its possible adoption at that meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.1, decision III/2, para. 7).

The present document is prepared pursuant to the above-mentioned mandate. The document contains a draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025 for 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), prepared on the basis of decision III/2 on the work programme (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its third session.

The Working Group of the Parties reviewed and approved the draft decision at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 16 and 18 December 2020), and entrusted the Bureau with its finalization (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2020/2, para. 39 (c)). The draft decision is being submitted to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration and adoption.



The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling article 17, paragraph 2, of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, which requires the Meeting of the Parties to keep under continuous review the implementation and development of the Protocol, and with this purpose in mind, inter alia, to establish a programme of work,

Recalling also its decisions I/6, on procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes and on the work programme for 2011–2014, and II/3 and III/2, on the work programmes for, respectively, 2015–2017 and 2018–2021,

Taking into account the strategic plan for 2015–2020 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, adopted through decision II/2, and the scheme of financial arrangements adopted through decision IV/4,

Recognizing that the Protocol plays an important role in supporting Parties in implementing a number of Sustainable Development Goals, mainly Goals 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16,

1. *Adopts* the work programme for 2022–2025, containing the estimated costs of each activity, as set out in the annex to this decision;
2. *Agrees* upon the indicative allocation of resources and the resulting estimated costs set out in the annex, subject to annual review and, as appropriate, revision by the Working Group of the Parties on the basis of annual reports provided by the secretariat pursuant to decision IV/4 on financial arrangements;
3. *Encourages* Parties to endeavour to ensure that the funding of the activities of the work programme remains stable throughout the period 2022–2025;
4. *Also encourages* Parties, insofar as possible, and subject to the internal budgetary procedures of the Parties, to contribute to the Protocol's trust fund for a given calendar year by 1 October of the preceding year, so as to secure staff costs for the smooth functioning of the secretariat, as a priority, and the timely and effective implementation of the activities with core requirements of the work programme for 2022–2025;
5. *Requests* the Bureau and the Working Group to keep under review the activities of the work programme for the period 2022–2025, and to report and make appropriate recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth ordinary session;
6. *Calls upon* the Parties and invites Signatories, other States and relevant intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations to contribute actively to the activities contained in the work programme;
7. *Requests* the secretariat, taking into consideration the results of the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, including a detailed breakdown of estimated costs, for consideration and further elaboration by the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties, at the latest three months before the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to its possible adoption at that meeting.

Annex

Draft work programme for 2022–2025

Activity	Objective and expected outcome	Lead country, body or organization	Method of work	Approximate time frame	Estimated costs in United States dollars per year (average) ^a		
					Item	Core requirements	Additional requirements
A. Compliance mechanism (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Monitor and facilitate compliance with the Protocol	Compliance Committee	Compliance Committee to meet to review submissions, communications, etc., prepare decisions, reports and guidance material, and undertake fact-finding missions; secretariat to publicize the mechanism, develop a database of cases and service the Committee	Ongoing	Committee meetings (travel + DSA)	30 000	
					Expert missions	20 000	
					Subcontracts (i.e., translations, management of electronic databases, website maintenance and improvement)	10 000	
B. Technical assistance (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Assist countries in the effective implementation of the Protocol	Secretariat in close cooperation with partner organizations (i.e., UNEP, UNITAR, OSCE and European ECO-Forum) in the Framework programme on PRTR capacity-building ^b	Advisory support by the secretariat, specific projects in countries needing assistance; training workshops, guidance materials and technical assistance, mostly separately funded; questionnaires, analysis of results	Ongoing	Meetings, (travel + DSA for eligible participants)		30 000

Activity	Objective and expected outcome	Lead country, body or organization	Method of work	Approximate time frame	Estimated costs in United States dollars per year (average) ^a		
					Item	Core requirements	Additional requirements
					Subcontracts (i.e., preparation of guidance material, research, analytical studies)		10 000
					Expert missions		10 000
C. Information exchange on a technical level (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol, including any relevant developments	Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol	Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; ad hoc expert meetings and missions; use of electronic tools including the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy, the PRTR capacity-building database, PRTR.net and the PRTR:Learn website	Ongoing	Ad hoc expert meetings (travel + DSA for eligible participants)		30 000
					Subcontracts (i.e., maintenance and improvement of PRTR-related databases and other electronic tools)	20 000	
					Expert missions		10 000
D. Reporting mechanism (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol; facilitate reporting, review of compliance and experience	Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol Secretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessary Compliance Committee	Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; use of the e-reporting tool; preparation and processing of national implementation reports; analysis of reports and	Ongoing	Subcontracts (i.e., preparation of background material; maintenance of online applications for reporting)	20 000	

Activity	Objective and expected outcome	Lead country, body or organization	Method of work	Approximate time frame	Estimated costs in United States dollars per year (average) ^a		
					Item	Core requirements	Additional requirements
			preparation of a synthesis report				
E. Awareness-raising and promotion of the Protocol and its interlinkages with other treaties and processes (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Further knowledge of the Protocol throughout the ECE region and beyond, increase the number of Parties to the Protocol; further application of the Protocol in the context of other MEAs and related processes (i.e., OECD, post-SAICM/ICCM process, UNEMG, IOMC)	Secretariat in cooperation with all other partners	Participate in key regional and international events and processes; provide support to workshops organized by others; prepare leaflets, publications, news bulletins and other materials; update website; write and review articles on the Protocol	Ongoing	Participation in relevant events where funding is not provided for by the organizers (travel + DSA)	10 000	10 000
					Subcontracts (i.e., organization of outreach campaigns)		10 000
F. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, organization of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	Coordination and oversight of the activities under the Protocol, i.e., through the implementation of this programme of work	Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol and the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties	Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; meetings of the Bureau as necessary; consultations among Bureau members using electronic means; session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol	Ongoing	Expert and secretariat travel and DSA, subcontracts (i.e., translations, promotional material, preparatory background material, reports and studies, media coverage of events)	100 000	

Activity	Objective and expected outcome	Lead country, body or organization	Method of work	Approximate time frame	Item	Estimated costs in United States dollars per year (average) ^a	
						Core requirements	Additional requirements
11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)							
G. Technical assessment of provisions of the Protocol (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Drafting of recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties on technical issues, based on the assessment and implementation reports	Secretariat; Compliance Committee, Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; Lead countries or organizations for specific issue(s) related to the implementation and development of the Protocol, Secretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessary	Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol and electronic consultation; drafting of assessment report(s) on experience gained in the development of national PRTRs according to article 6 (2) of the Protocol, as appropriate, and implementation reports	Ongoing	Subcontracts (draft recommendations on technical issues)	10 000	
H. Horizontal support areas (mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16)	Overall support that covers multiple substantive areas of the work programme	Secretariat	Staff training, operational expenditures, equipment	Ongoing	Staff training, technical and operational support	4 000	
Subtotal (activities)						224 000	110 000
Staff requirements:							
One P-3 ^c full-time						180 000	
One G-5 ^d						38 600	
Subtotal (staff requirements)						218 600	
Programme support costs (13 per cent)						57 538	14 300
Grand total						500 138	124 300

Abbreviations: DSA, daily subsistence allowance; ECE, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; ICCM, International Conference on Chemicals Management; IOMC, Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals; MEA, multilateral environmental agreement; OECD, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; OSCE, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; PRTR, pollutant release and transfer register; SAICM, Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management; SDG, Sustainable Development Goal; UNEMG, United Nations Environment Management Group; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UNITAR, United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

^a The estimated costs shown here are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions made under the Protocol's scheme of financial arrangements, either through its trust fund or in kind. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. Figures are rounded up. They may change in accordance with the United Nations administrative regulations.

^b See www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/public-participation/protocol-on-prtrs/areas-of-work/envppprtrcb/framework-programme-on-prtr-capacity-building.html.

^c One P-3 Environmental Affairs Officer servicing all activities under the Protocol on PRTRs. If no provision is made under the United Nations regular budget for this post, it will require extrabudgetary funding.

^d This staff member is required in order to provide the necessary administrative support to activities under the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol, including administrative arrangements for the meetings of the governing and subsidiary bodies of the two treaties. The change from G-4 to G-5 reflects the current seniority in grade. The costs will be distributed between the contributions to the Aarhus Convention (70 per cent) and the Protocol (30 per cent).
