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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

Working Group of the Parties

Tenth meeting

Geneva, 27–28 November 2023

Item 6 (a) (ii) of the provisional agenda

**Fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol:
substantive preparations: work programme for 2026–2029**

Note on the work programme for 2026–2029 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

Prepared by the Bureau

Summary

At its fourth session (Geneva, 21–22 October 2021), 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 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.^a

The present document was prepared by the Bureau pursuant to decision IV/3. It aims to facilitate the Working Group's discussion on the preparation of a draft decision on the work programme for 2026–2029 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. The document includes information on the approach to drafting the future work programme and an indicative timeline for its preparation. It also highlights issues that could be taken into consideration when preparing the future work programme.

The Working Group is invited to consider the note on the work programme for 2026–2029 at its tenth meeting and to mandate the Bureau to prepare the draft decision on the work programme for 2026–2029 in the light of the discussions at the tenth meeting, for submission and approval to the eleventh meeting of the Working Group of the Parties in



2024, with a view to its possible adoption at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (scheduled for 2025).

^a ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/6/Add.1, decision IV/3, para. 7.

I. Introduction

1. The present note has been prepared by the Bureau on the basis of decision IV/3 on the work programme for 2022–2025 (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/6/Add.1). It aims to facilitate the Working Group's discussion on the preparation of a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. The note includes information on the approach to drafting the future work programme and an indicative timeline for its preparation. It also highlights issues that could be taken into consideration when preparing the future work programme.

II. Approach to the drafting of the new work programme

2. With regard to the preparation of the new work programme, it is proposed that the main structure and key elements of the current work programme be maintained, and its contents updated, as appropriate. In particular, the following issues could be addressed:

(a) Experience gained in implementing the Protocol, in particular with regard to modernization of pollutant release and transfer registers, the work under the Protocol's Compliance Committee and capacity-building activities;

(b) The increasing importance of pollutant release and transfer registers in the light of informed decision-making processes and sound management of chemicals, waste and resources;

(c) Developments in the field of information and communications technology;

(d) Links with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(e) The related work under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Party on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and outcomes of the Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers;

(f) Cooperation with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, and with organizations and bodies dealing with human rights matter and with management of chemicals.

III. Indicative timeline

3. The below indicative timeline for preparing the work programme corresponds to the approach to the preparation of the current work programme and takes into consideration the need to: (a) provide Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the general public and other interested stakeholders with an appropriate time frame for consultations within their respective constituencies, organizations and networks; and (b) ensure that an advance draft of the document is ready for approval by the Working Group of the Parties at its eleventh meeting in 2024, prior to the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. This approach was welcomed by both Governments and stakeholders, including NGOs, which had the possibility to provide inputs and negotiate text well in advance of its formal adoption.

4. The indicative timeline is as follows:

(a) A proposal regarding the preparation of the work programme will be submitted to the Working Group of the Parties for consideration (tenth meeting, Geneva, 27–28 November 2023);

(b) The draft of the work programme will be prepared, taking into account the comments received at the meeting of the Working Group of the Parties, and made available online to Parties, NGOs, the general public and other interested stakeholders for comments (early 2024);

(c) Taking into account the comments received, the revised draft of the work programme will be prepared by the Bureau, made available online for comments and submitted to the Working Group of the Parties for further discussion and approval (eleventh

meeting, 2024) with a view to submitting it for adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session (scheduled for 2025).
