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## Economic Commission for Europe

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

#### Eleventh meeting

Geneva, 22 November 2024

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025,  
including financial matters**

## **Report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2022–2025**

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The present report was prepared pursuant to the decision of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers at its fourth session (Geneva, 21–22 October 2021).<sup>a</sup> It provides an overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol<sup>b</sup> for the reporting period 15 August 2023–15 August 2024 (since the latest report prepared for the tenth meeting of the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 27–28 November 2023)).

<sup>a</sup> ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/6/Add.1, decision IV/3, para. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid., decision IV/3, annex.

## I. Introduction

1. The present document provides an overview of the implementation of the work programme for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Protocol on PRTRs) to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/6/Add.1, decision IV/3, annex) from 15 August 2023 to 15 August 2024 (the reporting period), focusing on operational and organizational aspects. Owing to the cross-cutting nature of the Protocol, the implementation of different work programme areas contributed to furthering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals across the whole 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, Goals 3, 9, 12 and 16.

2. In implementing the work programme, the secretariat continued to make strenuous efforts to avoid duplication of work and inefficient use of resources by pursuing synergies with activities under other United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) multilateral environmental agreements, specialized agencies of the United Nations and other partners. This required spending more time on the preparatory phase of activities to ensure proper consultations with the chairs of the respective subsidiary bodies and partner organizations. In response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic environment, hybrid and virtual services were exceptionally resorted to as a temporary business continuity measure. After considering the relevant elements presented in the report of the Secretary-General entitled *Pattern of Conferences (A/78/96)*, the General Assembly neither established a mandate nor provided required guidance on rules of procedures, conditions of service for interpreters, security, authentication and universal access. In the absence of a mandate and legislative framework, as of 22 January 2024, all meetings serviced by the United Nations Office at Geneva are scheduled as in-person meetings. Services for online or hybrid meetings serviced by the United Nations Office at Geneva can be provided exceptionally for a limited duration upon specific justification by the organizers and will be covered through extrabudgetary contributions. The secretariat must therefore adjust its working methods and the organization of meetings to take into account these new requirements.

## II. Overview of implementation of the work programme

### A. Compliance mechanism

3. During the reporting period, the Protocol Compliance Committee held its fourteenth meeting (Geneva (hybrid), 18–19 April 2024).<sup>1</sup> The focus of the Committee's work was on assisting Parties in their efforts to implement the Protocol, including through identifying and addressing lessons learned from the third reporting cycle.

4. The Committee has not, to date, received any submissions by Parties concerning compliance by other Parties, or any submissions by Parties concerning their own compliance. Neither has it received any referrals by the secretariat. The Committee received one communication from the public regarding compliance with the Protocol (PRTRPCC/C/2020/1 (Ukraine))<sup>2</sup> and one request for advisory support (PRTRPCC/A/2022/1 (Ukraine)).<sup>3</sup> At its fourteenth meeting, the Committee recalled that the final Considerations and Advice (PRTRPCC/A/2022/1), prepared by the Committee, were sent to Ukraine. The Committee considered draft findings for communication PRTRPCC/C/2020/1 (Ukraine) and agreed to finalize the draft through its electronic decision-making procedure after the meeting and to send the finalized text to the Party

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting documents and other information on the work of the Compliance Committee are available at [www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr-cc.html](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr-cc.html).

<sup>2</sup> See <https://unece.org/env/pp/protocol-on-prtrs/cc/communications-from-the-public>.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://unece.org/env/pp/protocol-on-prtrs/protocol-bodies/cc/advice-or-assistance-Ukraine>.

concerned and the communicant for possible comments and to make them available on the Committee's web page.<sup>4</sup>

5. Furthermore, at its fourteenth meeting, the Committee recalled that the final considerations and advice, prepared by the Committee, had been sent to Estonia (PRTRPCC/A/2022/2), Malta (PRTRPCC/A/2022/3), Portugal (PRTRPCC/A/2022/4) and Slovenia (PRTRPCC/A/2022/5),<sup>5</sup> with a deadline for submission of the respective comprehensive reports on implementing measures in the Parties concerned by 31 January 2025. Furthermore, the Committee, noting the update provided by Finland (PRTRPCC/A/2020/0), expressed its appreciation to Finland for its continuing constructive cooperation on the matter and agreed to seek further clarification regarding the Committee's latest questions to the Party concerned.<sup>6</sup>

6. The Committee also considered planning for the fourth reporting cycle and agreed on the distribution of tasks between Compliance Committee members for the preparation of the 2025 synthesis report.

## **B. Technical assistance**

7. Technical assistance activities may involve assistance through electronic tools and also specific projects in countries needing assistance, including guidance materials and expert assistance. During the reporting period, the secretariat provided advisory support to Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine at their request, so as to assist them in establishing effective PRTR systems and, as relevant, in acceding to the Protocol. In that context, the secretariat promoted the Protocol in a national workshop on the topic, organized by the Ministry of Environment of Armenia (Yerevan (online), 25 July 2024). Also, assistance, including on technical matters, is provided to Parties and other interested State Members of the United Nations through the advisory support offered by the Compliance Committee and thematic sessions at the meetings of the Working Group of the Parties.

8. The secretariat has continued to manage the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy<sup>7</sup> and the PRTR.net global portal.<sup>8</sup> During the reporting period, the content of online tools was continuously updated, and the websites upgraded to meet United Nations cybersecurity requirements. PRTR.net is used to facilitate the collection, dissemination and exchange of PRTR-related information. The Protocol secretariat maintained and updated PRTR.net in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and continues to pursue close cooperation with UNITAR in order to ensure the effective use of PRTR.net and PRTR:Learn<sup>9</sup> by national focal points and stakeholders.

9. The Protocol section of the ECE website was regularly updated in the intersessional period. In addition, section D below includes information regarding the online reporting tool.<sup>10</sup>

## **C. Information exchange on a technical level**

10. The objective of information exchange on a technical level is to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol. The method of work for information exchange is meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol, ad hoc meetings and the use of electronic tools.

<sup>4</sup> See ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2024/2, para. 5; and <https://unece.org/env/pp/protocol-on-prtrs/cc/communications-from-the-public>.

<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://unece.org/env/pp/protocol-on-prtrs/cc/advice-or-assistance>.

<sup>6</sup> See ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2024/2, para. 7.

<sup>7</sup> See <http://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://prtr.unece.org/>.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://prtr.unitar.org/>.

<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://prtr.unece.org/national-reports/reports>.

11. In addition, sections B above and E below describe training sessions, surveys, subregional workshops, electronic tools and other activities that enable information exchange on a technical level. Sections D and F below include information on the reporting mechanism and the meetings of the Working Group of the Parties.

#### **D. Reporting mechanism**

12. The objective of the reporting mechanism is to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol, the review of compliance and the exchange of experience. The method of work consists of: meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; the use of the online national implementation reports database;<sup>11</sup> the preparation and processing of national implementation reports; and the analysis of reports and preparation of a synthesis report.

13. The secretariat has launched the 2025 reporting cycle. Parties should review their reports prepared for the 2021 reporting cycle and submit the updated version to the secretariat through the online reporting tool. The secretariat continued to provide advice to Parties and organizations regarding the reporting process, the online reporting tool and upgraded search features of the reporting tool to enhance its user-friendliness.<sup>12</sup>

#### **E. Awareness-raising and promotion of the Protocol and its interlinkages with other treaties and processes**

14. The objective of awareness-raising and promotion of the Protocol and its interlinkages with other treaties and processes is to: (a) expand knowledge of the Protocol throughout the ECE region and beyond; (b) increase the number of Parties thereto; and (c) further the application of the Protocol in the context of other multilateral environmental agreements and related processes (e.g., the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management under the International Conference on Chemicals Management). The activity is pursued through: participation in key regional and international events and processes; the provision of support to workshops organized by other bodies; the preparation of leaflets, publications, news bulletins and other materials on the Protocol; updating of the Protocol website; and writing and reviewing articles on the Protocol.

15. During the reporting period, the secretariat provided various inputs to the processes under the United Nations Sustainable Development Group Cooperation Framework<sup>13</sup> covering activities from 2022 to 2027 in 16 countries in the ECE region.

16. The secretariat continuously liaised with OSCE to strengthen the activities of the Aarhus Centres and provided input to several meetings held in online/hybrid format, including to the Annual Meeting of Aarhus Centres (Dushanbe (hybrid), 17–18 October 2023).

17. The secretariat also continuously liaised with the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States and its country offices on promoting the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs in environmental justice-related activities.

18. The secretariat promoted relevant provisions of the Convention and the Protocol in the documents for the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, supported the preparations of the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Region (Geneva, 13–14 March 2024),<sup>14</sup> in particular a round table and a side event<sup>15</sup> both dedicated to Sustainable Development Goal 16, and the sixth session

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<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://prtr.unece.org/national-reports/reports>.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/public-participation/2025-reporting-cycle-0#accordion>.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/cooperation-framework>.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://regionalforum.unece.org/events/regional-forum-2024>.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/environmental-rule-of-law-and-the-role-of-access-to-justice-in-delivering-on-sdgs-16-and-13-rfsd-2024/>.

of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (Nairobi, 26 February–1 March 2024).

19. The secretariat also contributes to processes originating from the activities of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP. At the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (Nairobi (hybrid), 28 February–2 March 2022) resolution 5/14<sup>16</sup> was adopted to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, with the aim of completing the negotiations by the end of 2024. A Note on possible linkages between pollutant release and transfer registers and plastic pollution (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2022/6) was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Protocol's Bureau. The secretariat contributed to and participated in a webinar for observers, jointly with UNITAR (29 August 2023). The event was part of a webinar series held to inform the discussions of the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop an International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, Including in the Marine Environment (Nairobi, 11–19 November 2023).

20. In addition to United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP resolution 5/14, resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP at its fifth session contain text supportive of an integrated approach to implementing the different chemical multilateral environmental agreements and of the need to support tools for evidence-based decision-making. Notably, resolutions 5/7 on sound management of chemicals and waste<sup>17</sup> and 5/8 on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution<sup>18</sup> address such aspects. The secretariat participated in a webinar entitled “The capacity-building function of the science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention: Lessons learned from existing science-policy interfaces and sharing of views”, organized by UNEP (11 April 2024).

21. Furthermore, the secretariat promoted the Protocol in three meetings of the United Nations Environment Management Group Issue Management Group on Pollution (online, 3 May 2024, 30 May 2024 and 19 June 2024 respectively).<sup>19</sup> At the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP (Nairobi, 4–6 December 2017), Member States adopted a Ministerial Declaration (UNEP/EA.3/HLS.1) calling for heightened efforts to address pollution and requesting UNEP to prepare an implementation plan for this purpose. The implementation plan “Towards a pollution-free planet” (UNEP/EA.4/Res.21), developed in consultation with Member States, was adopted by the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP as the key vehicle for implementing the Declaration.<sup>20</sup> The plan proposes solutions for how to fill capacity gaps in addressing pollution and contributes to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. At their twenty-seventh meeting (online, 7 October 2021), the Senior Officials of the United Nations Environment Management Group agreed to establish the Consultative Process on this issue,<sup>21</sup> aiming to prepare a United Nations system-wide approach towards a pollution-free planet.

22. The secretariat also contributes to activities related to the Global Framework on Chemicals,<sup>22</sup> adopted by the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (Bonn, Germany, 25–29 September 2023), and participated in the first meeting of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Group on Measurability and Indicators (online, 16 April and 13 May 2024).<sup>23</sup>

23. The secretariat promoted the work under the Convention and its Protocol and its interlinkages with other treaties and processes, among other things, at the following events:

<sup>16</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.14.

<sup>17</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.7.

<sup>18</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.8.

<sup>19</sup> See <https://unemg.org/pollution-free-planet/>.

<sup>20</sup> A/74/25, para. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Proceedings of the twenty-seventh meeting of the Senior Officials of the Environment Management Group: Summary report, para. 8, available at [https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Summary-Report-SOM27\\_Final.pdf](https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Summary-Report-SOM27_Final.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> See [www.chemicalsframework.org/](http://www.chemicalsframework.org/).

<sup>23</sup> See [www.chemicalsframework.org/page/open-ended-ad-hoc-group-measurability-and-indicators](http://www.chemicalsframework.org/page/open-ended-ad-hoc-group-measurability-and-indicators).

(a) The seventh meeting of the OECD Working Party on PRTRs (Paris, 30–31 January 2024) and its two mid-year teleconferences (online, 21 September 2023 and 25 June 2024). The secretariat also promoted the Protocol in the sixth and seventh meetings of the subgroup on data use (online, 29 November 2023 and 3 June 2024, respectively);

(b) The sixtieth and sixty-first meetings of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (Geneva, 21 November 2024, and Vienna (online), 19 March 2024, respectively) and a meeting of the subgroup on indicators (online, 24 June 2024);

(c) The twenty-ninth session of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business Plenary (Geneva, 9–10 November 2023).

24. It also contributed to and participated in the following PRTR-related meetings:

(a) A PRTR session as part of the development of the National Chemicals Safety Programme in Kuwait, organized by UNITAR together with UNEP (online, 13 February 2024);

(b) A training week on chemicals and waste issues in Serbia, organized by UNITAR (Geneva, 12 September 2023);

(c) The Second Berlin Forum on Chemicals and Sustainability (online, 4–5 September 2023);

(d) The fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, organized by UNEP (Bonn, Germany (online), 25–29 September 2023);

(e) The European Union - Ukraine PHOENIX Dialogue, industrial emissions, organized by the European Union (online, 15 November 2023);

(f) Enhancing PRTR reporting for reducing emissions and enabling non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to use PRTR data to inform their actions, jointly organized by the National Environmental Agency of Albania, the Resource Environmental Centre Albania and Participatio Limited, in the framework of the project “Enhancement of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in the Western Balkan countries and the Republic of Moldova” (Tirana (online), 24 January 2024);

(g) Enhancing PRTR reporting for reducing emissions and enabling NGOs to use PRTR data to inform their actions, jointly organized by the National Environmental Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Resource Environmental Centre Albania and Participatio Limited, in the framework of the project “Enhancement of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in the Western Balkan countries and the Republic of Moldova” (Sarajevo (online), 5 February 2024);

(h) The OECD Global Forum on Environment dedicated to Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (Paris (online), 12 February 2024);

(i) The subregional experience-sharing workshop on enhancing PRTR reporting for reducing emissions and for more informed decision-making on sustainability achievements and future challenges, jointly organized by the Resource Environmental Centre Albania and Participatio Limited, in the framework of the project “Enhancement of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in the Western Balkan countries and the Republic of Moldova” (Tirana, 12–13 March 2024);

(j) “Chemicals in the Plastics Treaty: Perspectives on Protecting Human Health”, co-organized with International Pollutants Elimination Network, within the framework of the Geneva Beat Plastic Pollution Dialogues (Geneva (online), 28 March 2024).

25. The secretariat also continued to promote the Protocol in relation to the work of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, including by responding to

the Special Rapporteur's 2024 Call for inputs on pollution information portals and the right to know: Strengthening access to information on releases of hazardous substances.<sup>24</sup>

26. The secretariat organized and serviced the sixteenth meeting of the International PRTR Coordinating Group (Paris, 29 January 2024).

27. A fourth Global round table on pollutant release and transfer registers is planned to be held in Geneva on 20 and 21 November 2024, under the auspices of ECE and OECD and in cooperation with UNITAR and UNEP. It will be co-chaired by the Chair of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties and the Chair of the OECD Working Party on PRTRs. The round table will be expected to foster exchange between Governments and different stakeholders on PRTR-related issues.

28. The secretariat acts as the ECE focal point for: the Multilateral Environment Agreement Information and Knowledge Management Initiative Steering Committee; the World Summit on the Information Society; the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals; the Issue Management Groups on Human Rights and the Environment<sup>25</sup> and on Pollution<sup>26</sup> within the United Nations Environment Management Group<sup>27</sup> and universal periodic reviews.<sup>28</sup> It also promotes the Convention and its Protocol in the relevant activities of those bodies.

29. The secretariat continued to promote the use of the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol in the context of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

30. The secretariat provides advice on an ongoing basis to various academic bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders upon request.

31. The secretariat promoted the Convention and its Protocol through various reports and articles prepared under the auspices of ECE and partner organizations. This included contributing to the environmental performance reviews,<sup>29</sup> the universal periodic reviews, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals "Inventory and analysis report: Existing indicators on chemicals and waste management".<sup>30</sup>

32. Furthermore, the secretariat promoted activities on electronic information tools used for the Convention and the Protocol in the 2023 Report of the Secretary-General "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (A/79/62–E/2024/3).

## F. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities

33. Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities under the Protocol are carried out at meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, meetings of the Bureau, as necessary, and through consultations among Bureau members, including through electronic means.

34. The secretariat serviced the tenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol (Geneva, 27–28 November 2023), the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth meetings of the Bureau (Geneva (hybrid), 28 November 2023 and 20 June 2024, respectively),<sup>31</sup> and coordinated a number of online consultations among the Bureau members. The secretariat is currently carrying out preparations for the eleventh meeting of the Working Group of the

<sup>24</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2024/call-inputs-pollution-information-portals-and-right-know-strengthening-access](http://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2024/call-inputs-pollution-information-portals-and-right-know-strengthening-access).

<sup>25</sup> See <https://unemg.org/human-rights-and-environment/>.

<sup>26</sup> See <https://unemg.org/pollution-free-planet/>.

<sup>27</sup> See <https://unemg.org/>.

<sup>28</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/cycles-upr](http://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/cycles-upr).

<sup>29</sup> See <https://unece.org/environment-policy/environmental-performance-reviews>.

<sup>30</sup> See [www.saicm.org/Portals/12/documents/meetings/IP4/2022/SAICM\\_IP4\\_INF\\_39.pdf](http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/documents/meetings/IP4/2022/SAICM_IP4_INF_39.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> More information is available from the Bureau web page: <https://unece.org/environment-policy/public-participation/prtrs-protocol-bureau>.

Parties (Geneva, 22 November 2024). The meeting will be organized back-to-back with the fourth Global round table on PRTRs and the seventh meeting of the OECD Working Party on PRTRs (20–21 November 2024 and 18–19 November 2024, respectively).

35. The status of the Protocol with regard to accession, ratification and approval remained unchanged. As of 15 August 2024, the Protocol had 38 Parties.

## **G. Technical assessment of provisions of the Protocol**

36. The technical assessment of the provisions of the Protocol involves the drafting of recommendations on technical issues for the Meeting of the Parties, based on the assessment reports. The method of work for this activity includes meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol, electronic consultation and drafting of assessment reports on experience gained in the development of national PRTRs according to article 6 (2) of the Protocol.

37. At its first meeting (Geneva, 28–29 November 2011), the Working Group of the Parties agreed that no amendments to the provisions of the Protocol were needed at that time, and that experience needed to be gathered before such a review could take place.<sup>32</sup> The 2014, 2017 and 2021 synthesis reports on the implementation of the Protocol (respectively, ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/5, ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/10 and ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/10) presented to the Meeting of the Parties at its second (Maastricht, Netherlands, 2–4 July 2014), third (Budva, Montenegro, 14–15 September 2017) and fourth (Geneva, 21–22 October 2021) sessions, respectively, and the individual national implementation reports<sup>33</sup> on which the synthesis reports were based, provide insight into some of the issues related to the technical assessment of the provisions of the Protocol. In addition, an assessment concerning the implementation of the Protocol's provisions and its strategic plan is provided in the following documents: Systemic issues concerning the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and recommendations on how to address them (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.2); Progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2018/5); Report on the development of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/6 and Add.1); and 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). Furthermore, in paragraph 4 of decision IV/2 on development of the Protocol on PRTRs (ECE/MP.PRTR/2021/6/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its fourth session, the Working Group of the Parties, assisted by the Bureau, was tasked with, among other things, facilitating an exchange of information between Parties, taking into account inputs from interested stakeholders, and possible proposals by Parties on amendments to the Protocol were foreseen. Pursuant to decision IV/2, the Bureau prepared a Draft proposal on a possible decision on promoting innovative approaches for modernizing pollutant release and transfer registers, their global promotion and synergy (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2023/7) for the tenth meeting of the Working Group. The Bureau submitted a revised version of the document to the eleventh meeting of the Working Group for consideration and approval and subsequent submission to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2024/6).

## **H. Horizontal support areas**

38. During the reporting period, the objective of horizontal support activities was to provide overall support that covered multiple substantive areas of the work programme, inter alia, through secretarial support and staff training.

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<sup>32</sup> ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2011/2, para. 23.

<sup>33</sup> Available at <https://unece.org/reporting-mechanism-protocol-prtrs>.