

# **PRTRs: Effective tool for a better environment, health and circular economy**

## **Forth Global Round Table on PRTRs**

20-21 November 2024  
Geneva

Organised by

**The secretariat of the UNECE 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)**

and

**the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

in cooperation with

**the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)**

and

**the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**

Chairs: Mr. Tone Kvasič (Slovenia), Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers and Ms. Caitlin Briere (United States of America), Chair of the OECD Working Party on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers.

### **PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup>**

as of 12 September 2024

#### **Background**

1. Pursuant to the success of the previous joint Global round table events, held in November 2013 and 2018 in Geneva, and November 2015 in Madrid, the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties at its fourth session<sup>2</sup> (Geneva, 22 October 2021) and the OECD Working Party on PRTRs at its seventh meeting (Paris, 30-31 January 2024) entrusted their respective Bureaux to explore an opportunity to organize a fourth global event. Given the extensive experience of UNITAR and UNEP in activities on PRTRs in different regions, they have been invited to cooperate on the organisation of the event.

2. The round table is expected to foster exchange of experiences between Governments and different stakeholders on PRTR-related issues. The presentations and discussions during the event will be centred on good practices, common challenges and new opportunities related to the further development of PRTRs.

3. The Chair of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties and the Chair of the OECD Working Party on PRTRs will co-chair the event. The output document will be the Chairs' summary on the main outcomes of the meeting, prepared with the assistance of the ECE and OECD secretariats after the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was not formally edited.

<sup>2</sup> See [https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/events/Protocol\\_PRTRs\\_MoPP4](https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/events/Protocol_PRTRs_MoPP4) for the report of the fourth session.

4. The Global round table will have the following format: the invited panellists from different regions (i.e. Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America) will make short opening statements/presentations (up to 7 minutes), after which an open debate will be started. Such format will be adapted to the needs of specific agenda items.

5. Two-hour lunch breaks can be used for bilateral networking.

**DAY I<sup>3</sup>                      Wednesday, 20 November 2024**

**10.00-10.20              1. Opening**

High-level officials will deliver a welcoming statement.

Co-Chairs will make introductory statements on the programme and key developments regarding ECE and OECD activities.

**10.20-13.00              2. PRTRs across the world**

This session aims to provide information about current status of PRTRs in the world, including major challenges facing in implementing or developing PRTRs, and activities to address these by international organizations.

The Chair of the International PRTR Coordinating Group (ICG) will brief the meeting about the status of PRTRs in the world based on the PRTR-global-map developed under ICG.

Speakers from the UNEP, UNITAR and other organizations will inform about the key current and planned PRTR-related developments and international processes and agreements, including the discussion on potential indicators for Global Framework on Chemicals.

**13.00-15.00              Lunch break**

**15.00-18.00              3. PRTRs for addressing global targets and challenges**

The session will address common challenges and emerging opportunities in the development and implementation of PRTRs.

Speakers will share experience related to PRTR-systems that are cross cutting and serve as a single-entry access point to e.g. government services or for fulfilment of a variety of reporting obligations and enhancing international comparability of PRTR data. The discussion could also address how to overcome common difficulties in establishing a PRTR system that is used by a variety of government entities and for different purposes, including circular economy and sustainability.

**DAY II                      Thursday, 21 November 2024**

**10.00-13.00              4. PRTRs: Use cases and emerging systems**

The session will provide an opportunity to share experience and views on how PRTRs contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. The session will be comprised of three items:

- a) *Introduction on the current work on the topic under OECD and the Protocol on PRTRs by the representatives of the two Bureaux.*
- b) *Hurdles and opportunities in establishing a PRTR.*
- c) *Consumption and production – decision making for sustainability: PRTRs as tools for sustainability, circular economy and management of chemicals and waste.*

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<sup>3</sup> Coffee breaks are around 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. if time permits.



**13.00-15.00**      **Lunch break**

**15.00-17.20**      **5. PRTRs for different stakeholders**

A PRTR system can serve as a major driving force for pollution reduction throughout many sectors. For instance, PRTRs provide policymakers with key indicators for measuring progress in reducing pollutants, advancing sustainability and the success of a green economy. Different stakeholders, such as the public, central and local governments, academia, research institutions, and businesses can utilize the PRTR as a common tool to e.g. inform their strategic goals.

The session will provide an opportunity to share experience and opinions of different stakeholders and to discuss how PRTRs contribute to the sustainable development. The discussion will be focused on the following topics:

*a) Defining PRTR scope based on national needs.*

*This topic includes sharing of experiences when countries adapt PRTR scope to national needs; e.g. adding reporting on resource consumption, plastic type, or pollutants such as Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances; etc.*

*b) Pollution data – science, education and risk assessment / Variety of uses and users of PRTR systems and data.*

*This topic includes discussion and exchange on different user groups for PRTR data and existing or potential use for PRTR data, including through combination with other sources of information and data and using PRTR data for adaptation measures against climate change.*

*c) Pollution prevention - what industry is doing.*

*d) How to provide context to PRTR data.*

*e) Communicating data and data visualization.*

*This topic includes discussions on strategies that aim at promoting PRTRs and improving the use of PRTR-systems by different stakeholders. It may also include strategies to avoid wrong use of data and use of PRTR platforms as a tool for education and knowledge sharing.*

**17.20-17.35**      **Break**

**17.35-18.00**      **6. Closing statements by the Chairs**

The Chairs will summarise key points derived from the discussions and will close the meeting.

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