



**PRTR Protocol to the Aarhus Convention
3rd Meeting of the Working Group of the Parties
(Geneva, 20-21 November 2013)
- Position by the EU and its Member States -**

Item 7(b)(v). Financial arrangements

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Bureau and the secretariat for the efforts put into preparing the updated proposal for financial arrangements under the Protocol.

We recognise the challenges faced by the secretariat in planning and implementing the work programme activities and the role of stable, predictable and equitable financing in enabling the work programme to be implemented.

The EU and its Member States would like to express their concern about the significant shortfall in funding. However, in light of the global financial and economic crisis which is still severely affecting many EU countries and their citizens, the European Union and its Member States continue to support the current interim scheme of contributions as agreed in Decision I/3, acknowledging the need for further future discussions on alternative schemes of funding for the Protocol's work programme as recognised under the Aarhus Convention in order to find a long-term, stable and predictable financial arrangement.

The European Union intends to keep its contribution at the level of 2.5 per cent of the total needed for core activities, in line with established practice. This is of course subject to annual endorsement by the budgetary authorities of the European Union, taking into account the applicable scheme of contributions and without prejudice to the arrangements for States Parties.

The EU and its Member States recognise that the financial burden has to be borne by all in an equitable and proportionate manner and that it should be fairly distributed. In addition, the importance of continuing the possibility of making contributions in kind alongside cash contributions should be maintained. Since the financial calendar may be different from country to country, a commitment in relation to the year ahead may not always be possible, but contributions should be made as soon as possible at the beginning of the year where possible.

We recognise that late contributions make it more difficult to reliably plan and implement the Protocol's work programme and activities, and we therefore welcome the request that contributions be made either in the preceding year, where national budgets allow or, where pre-payment is not an option, that it be recommended that payments be made in the first six months of the year.

We call on Parties and Signatories that have not yet done so to make their contributions promptly or inform the secretariat about how much they intend to contribute, noting the arrangements in the draft decision on financial arrangements.

In addition, we believe it is necessary to explore new possibilities for assuring adequate funding for the Protocol, provided that the independence of the Protocol and activities related to the Protocol remain guaranteed. These include:

- a) funding of specific projects, workshops and other country/region_based actions by industries and interested organisations;
 - b) cooperation with environmental NGOs and their non-financial support (for example, in the form of human resources that are usually covered from the Protocol's trust fund) in the promotion and implementation of the Protocol, and;
 - c) increasing synergies with activities under other MEAs and organisations as an option to improve the financial stability of the Protocol.
-