20 November 2013
PRTR Working Group
Agenda point 4 (a) Synergies with ECE MEAs and other partners

UNEP - PRTR activities

PRTR projects

- GEF project - Phase 1 entitled “POPs Monitoring Reporting and Information Dissemination Using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)” focused on the design of PRTRs in Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Thailand, Cambodia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. This project has been implemented by UNEP and executed by UNITAR and completed in 2012.
- Another GEF project Phase 2 to support implementation of PRTR systems as been developed for Peru, Ecuador, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Belarus. This project is at submittal phase with the GEF and is an extension of the GEF Phase 1 project on PRTRs.
- Planned for future (in GEF-6 cycle): PRTRs in Russia and another multi-country project (countries to be indentified)
- EnvSec project: This project is under development and focuses on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Belarus. PRTR is one of the components of the overall project and is planned to be carried out in one region (oblast).
- The Quick Start Programme funding mechanism administered by the SAICM Secretariat supported PRTR activities in Georgia, Tajikistan and Belarus, and there is currently QSP support for PRTR activities in Panama and Azerbaijan.

Minamata Convention on Mercury

- The treaty was officially adopted in October 2013. To date the US has ratified the treaty and 93 countries have signed. Entry into force after 50 ratifications.
- The OECD PRTR Task Force and the International PRTR Coordinating Group prepared a background paper briefly describing PRTRs and the potential use of PRTR as a reporting mechanism for the Minamata Convention. This was discussed during the negotiations to formulate the treaty – next step will be after the treaty enters into force. At the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, reporting will be decided upon. The text

of the Minamata Convention mentions PRTR as a mechanism for collection and dissemination of information on estimates its annual quantities of mercury and mercury compounds that are emitted, released or disposed of through human activities (Article 18 on Public information, awareness and education).

- There are a number of GEF projects of relevance:
    - Two current projects, in Russia and China, focus on developing inventories of mercury
    - Another project is ready to be submitted, for Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, also for developing inventories. GEF approval of the project is subject to the signing of the Convention by the participating countries. To date, none of the 3 participating countries have signed the Minamata Convention.
    - The PRTR project in Peru, Ecuador, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Belarus which is at the submittal stage with the GEF, would implement national PRTRs: the PRTR systems were designed under a previous GEF project. One planned activity under this project is to compare the release estimation techniques used for the UNEP Mercury Toolkit (these are used for the inventory projects) – with the Release Estimation Techniques used for mercury releases under PRTRs. This would help clarify the extent to which the PRTR Release Estimation Techniques results would be able to be used for reporting to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

CiP work

- the textile sector has undertaken a significant effort to work with their supply chains to disclose pollutant releases from their contracted supply chains to the local populations. The group leading this is the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) Group and includes companies like Levis, H&M, Nike, adidas, Puma, Gap, C&A and others. They have prepared a document which is just released (or will be soon) which outlines the ZDHC commitment to the Right to Know (RtK) principle, and how the PRTR approach seems the best one for the textile sector to use in collecting data from their supply chains and making it available to local communities.
  This effort by ZDHC is in its early stages and may present opportunities to promote PRTR in countries where it is not currently used and as well for the PRTR community to assist a major global product sector in designing pollutant reporting mechanisms.