

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

Bureau

Thirteenth meeting

Goteborg, Sweden, 23–24 May 2018

Report of the thirteenth meeting of the Bureau¹

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden, Chair), Ms. Ulrike Schüler (Germany, Vice-Chair), Mr. Alex Radway (European Union), Mr. Nebojsa Redzic (Serbia), Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland) and Ms. Lesya Karnaukh (Ukraine).

Observer: Ms. Mara Silina (European ECO-Forum).

Apologies: Ms. Marie-Rose van den Hende (Belgium, Vice-Chair).

II. Opening and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair opened the meeting. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda.

III. Status of ratification of the Protocol

2. The Bureau took note of the report by the secretariat, which confirmed that since the last meeting of the Bureau (Budva, Montenegro, 13 September 2017), Montenegro had ratified the Protocol on 11 October 2017.

IV. Designation of national focal points

3. The Bureau took note of the report by the secretariat and information provided by the Bureau members. Missing nominations of focal points, including from countries, which are members of the European Union, were noted with concern by the Bureau.

V. Implementation of the work programme, including financial matters

4. The Bureau took note of the reports by the secretariat on the implementation of the Protocol's work programme for 2015–2017 and 2018–2021 and on financial matters. In this context, the Bureau expressed its concern regarding Malta's and Slovenia's failure to submit their national implementation reports for the 2017 reporting cycle. As for the financial matters, the Bureau noted that Parties should strive not to earmark large contributions as to facilitate the management of funds for implementation of the work programme.

¹ This document was not formally edited.

VI. Development of the Protocol

5. Pursuant to the mandates provided by the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties at its third session held on 15 September 2017 in Budva, Montenegro (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6; para 43), the Bureau discussed the progress in implementing the current Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 and potential effective actions that could support its implementation. The Bureau also considered the need for a possible evaluation of the success of the Protocol.

6. The Bureau concluded that neither a stand-alone task on the evaluation of the Protocol nor the development of a possible future Strategic Plan would provide an effective means to overcome major challenges that were identified by Parties through their national implementation reports and the survey responses organised by the secretariat. Instead, the Bureau decided to propose for the consideration of the Working Group of the Parties the voluntary and mandatory measures that could be applied simultaneously to address the key challenges.

7. Among voluntarily measures, the Bureau agreed to give priority to an online exchange of experiences among Parties and stakeholders. In order to ensure a mandatory approach to implementing the Protocol, the Bureau considered that amendment of the Protocol would be the most effective measure at this stage having the strongest legal impact. This will allow relevant recent developments to be addressed in a structured way and ensure equal standards for implementation across Parties. It will also facilitate e.g. allocation of appropriate resources for implementation at national level. To this end, the Bureau agreed to prepare the respective documents for consideration by the Working Group of the Parties at its sixth meeting.

VII. Third Global Round Table on PRTRs

8. The Chair informed the Bureau about the outcomes of the consultations within the Bureau of the OECD Working Group on PRTRs on the agenda of the Global Round Table on PRTRs and summarized the respective consultations among the Protocol's Bureau members. The Bureau considered the suggested topics for discussion and the title for the event. The Bureau then requested the secretariat to revise the document in the light of the discussion and agreed that the two Chairs and the secretariats will finalise the programme for the event.

VIII. Sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties

9. The Bureau considered the agenda for the sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties and requested the secretariat to finalise it in the light of the discussions in consultation with the Chair, and submit it to the Working Group of the Parties.
