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

Third session
Budva, Montenegro, 15 September 2017
Item 10 of the provisional agenda
Review and adoption of decisions

DECISIONS AND MAJOR OUTCOMES

as adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its third session

Joined High-level Segment,
14 September 2017

Item 2: Report on credentials with regard to the Protocol’s Parties

The Meeting of the Parties approved the report on credentials and noted that 29 Parties had submitted credentials and thus a quorum had been reached.

General Segment,
15 September 2017

Item 1: Opening of the general segment and adoption of the agenda

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the information provided by the Chair;

ii. adopted the provisional agenda of the session.

Item 2: Status of ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the status of the ratification of the Protocol and welcomed ratifications by Ukraine and Malta, and the progress acheived by Montenegro in its national ratification process;

ii. encouraged Signatories and other interested States to proceed with the accession to the Protocol as soon as possible;

1 This document was not formally edited. The decisions and outcomes contained in the document will be incorporated in the report of the meeting.
2 At the time of preparing this document, one more Party submitted its credentials.
Item 3: Promotion and capacity-building

a) Coordination mechanisms and synergies

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the outcomes of the joint Global round table on PRTRs;

ii. mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to organise a third global event in the next intersessional period;

iii. requested the secretariat to produce the report of the future global round tables as official documents so that they would be available in the three official languages of UNECE, without recourse to additional extrabudgetary resources and submit them to the Working Group of the Parties or to the Meeting of the Parties, as appropriate;

iv. Took note of the report by the Chair of the International Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR) Coordinating Group (ICG) on its activities since the previous session of the Meeting of the Parties;

v. took note of the statements by EU, Switzerland, UNITAR, and OECD;

vi. thanked partner organisations for support provided to furthering implementation of PRTRs systems thereby strengthening countries’ capacities to accede to the Protocol on PRTRs;

vii. called upon partner organisations and MEAs to cooperate closely where possible to create synergies that further the implementation of the projects and programmes related to PRTRs;

viii. mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to continue global promotion of the Protocol;

ix. requested the secretariat to continue servicing the International Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR) Coordinating Group (ICG);

x. reiterated its call upon governments to strengthen cooperation between experts dealing with the PRTR Protocol and those dealing with LRTAP Convention, Water Convention and other relevant agreements, initiatives or programmes, as well as involved in projects carried out by international organisations as to ensure coordination at national level;

xi. reiterated its call upon Parties and stakeholders to consider implementation of the Protocol and SEIS in synergy;

xii. took note of the report by the Chair on the informal coordination of representatives of the governing bodies of the ECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the Committee on the Environmental Policy;
xiii. reiterated its request to the secretariat to ensure the availability of all formal documents for meetings under the Protocol in all ECE languages, without recourse to additional extrabudgetary resources.

b) Technical resources and subregional and national activities

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the outcomes of the second subregional workshop “Get Your Right to a Healthy Community”;  

ii. expressed its appreciation to the secretariat of the Air Convention, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus and the Belarusian Research Centre “Ecology” for their effective cooperation in the organization of the workshop;  

iii. took note of the statements by Belarus, Croatia, EU, UNITAR, EEB and REC CEE;  

iv. noted with regret that little progress had been achieved in establishing pollutant release and transfer register systems and in furthering ratification of the Protocol in the countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and calls upon decision-makers and policymakers of the countries of the subregion to make the necessary commitments to improve the situation;  

v. called upon countries and partner organizations to support capacity building activities as to advance establishing pollutant release and transfer register systems and in furthering ratification of the Protocol;  

vi. welcomed the upgrade of PRTR.net implemented by the secretariat and requested the secretariat, OECD and UNITAR to continue working closely as to ensure the effective use of PRTR.net and PRTR-Learn.

Item 4: Reporting and compliance mechanisms

a) Reporting mechanism

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of information provided in national implementation reports (NIRs) submitted by Parties, and of the synthesis report (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/10) on the status of implementation of the Protocol by Parties presented by the Chair of the Compliance Committee;  

ii. recognized the need for timely submission of NIRs in order to ensure a good quality of the synthesis report and its timely submission for translation;
iii. noted with regret that five Parties did not submit their reports by the set deadline;

iv. urged Parties that did not submit their national implementation reports, namely Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia and Ukraine to do so by latest 15 November 2017;

v. adopted decision on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/12) amending its paragraph 6 to read as follows “Notes with regret that Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia and Ukraine, all of which were Parties to the Protocol at the time of the deadline for submission of the implementation reports, failed to submit reports;

vi. took note of the statements by Malta, Switzerland, EU, EEB.

b) Compliance mechanism

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the report of the Chair of the Compliance Committee on the Committee’s activities since the second session of the Meeting of the Parties;

ii. thanked the Compliance Committee for the work done;

iii. expressed its appreciation to Mr. Alistair McGlone, the outgoing Chair of the Compliance Committee, for his commitment and skilled chairmanship and Ms. Barbara Rathmer, outgoing member of the Compliance Committee, for her professional support to the Committee’s work;

iv. endorsed the following documents prepared by the Compliance Committee:

(a) Guidance for reporting on implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers;

(b) Systemic issues concerning the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and recommendations on how to address them;

v. took note of statements by EU regarding the membership of the Compliance Committee;

vi. re-elected the Compliance Committee members: Mr. Gor Movsisyan (nominated by Belgium), Mr. Fritz Kroiss (nominated by Austria); Ms. Nataša Kačić-Bartulović (nominated by Croatia);

vii. elected the Compliance Committee members: Mr. Nicolas Encausse (nominated by France), Ms. Azemine Shakiri (nominated by The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Mr. Juan Luis Martín Ortega (nominated by Spain).

Item 5: Programme of work and operation of the Protocol
a) Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the report on the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/8) and of the Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Protocol’s work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/9);

ii. warmly thanked Parties for their financial and in-kind contributions and expresses great appreciation to in kind-contributions provided by partner organisations;

iii. took note of information on pledges provided by Switzerland;

iv. took note of the statements by EU, REC CEE and the European ECO Forum on implementation of the work programme;

v. expressed its appreciation for the work done by the secretariat and recognized the difficulties posed by limited and unpredictable funding.

b) Progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the report of the Chair of Compliance Committee on the Committee’s activities related to the overview of progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/10, annex I), including the evaluation of the success of the Protocol and the development of relevant indicators (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2017/2, annex);

ii. took note of the overview of progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/10, annex I) prepared by the Committee;

iii. took note of the Committee’s note on the evaluation of the success of the Protocol and the development of indicators (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2017/2, annex) and of the outcomes of the consulations held in the Bureau on this subject;

iv. requested the secretariat to organize a survey among Parties in order to collect the information related to the progress of implementing the strategic plan that is not provided through the NIRs;

v. mandated the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties to address the issue that Parties set priorities in different ways, with some countries invest in making their PRTR system progress and increase their usefulness, as identified by the Committee, in more detail.;

vi. mandated the Bureau and the Working Group, taking into account the outcome of the survey, to further look into the focal areas of the strategic plan with the aim to identify where further action is needed to successfully implement the targets of the strategic plan by 2021;

vii. requests the Bureau and the Working Group to prepare a possible future strategic plan for the period of 2021-2029 taking into account the overview of progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015-2020 and the outcome of the survey and related work;

viii. requested the Bureau to consider the added value and resource implications of a possible evaluation of the success of the Protocol and the development of relevant indicators referred to in the report
of the Compliance Committee on its fifth meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/C.1/2017/2, annex) and, if appropriate, present a detailed proposal, for consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting;

ix. took note of statements by Switzerland, European Union, REC.

c) Future work programme

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of statement by European Union;

ii. adopted draft decision III/2 on the work programme for 2018–2021 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/13);

iii. reiterated its requests that documents for meetings of governing and subsidiary Protocol’s bodies should be processed, translated and published by the United Nations services and be made available in the three official languages of the ECE without recourse to additional extra-budgetary resources;

iv. requested the secretariat that any required publications in accordance with activities under the Protocol’s work programme, e.g. activities E and G, should be processed and translated by UN services into the three official languages of the UNECE and publications related to SDGs should be processed and translated by UN services into all six official UN languages without recourse to additional extra-budgetary resources and be made available in electronic and hard copy forms.

d) Financial arrangements

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of statements by the European Union, Norway and Switzerland;

ii. adopted draft decision III/3 on financial arrangements under the Protocol as amended at the meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/CRP.2).

Item 6: Election of officers and other members of the Bureau

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. expressed its appreciation to the outgoing members of the Bureau for their work in the Bureau;

ii. Took note of the statement by the European Union.

iii. elected by consensus:
Ms. Tina Skarman (Sweden) as Chair
Ms. Marie-Rose Van den Hende (Belgium) and
Ms. Ulrike Schüler (Germany) as Vice-Chairs
from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting, in accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure.

the following members of the Bureau in accordance with rule 22, paragraph 1(b):

- Mr. Alex Radway (European Union)
- Mr. Nebosja Redzic (Serbia)
- Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland)
- Ms. Lesya Karnaukh (Ukraine)

iv. took note of the appointment by the European ECO Forum of Ms. Mara Silina (NGO) to attend the meetings of the Bureau as an observer invited by the Bureau, in accordance with paragraph 3 of decision I/1.

**Item 7: Date and venue of the fourth ordinary session**

The Meeting of the Parties:

i. took note of the provided information;
ii. decided to hold its next ordinary session in 2021;
iii. mandated the Working Group of the Parties to consider at its next meeting a possible date and venue for the fourth ordinary session

iv. [Depending on the discussion] mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to follow up on the provided information.

**Item 9: Review and adoption of decisions**

The Meeting of the Parties adopted the major outcomes and decisions presented by the Chair at the session, as contained in this document (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/CRP.2), and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to finalize the report and incorporate these adopted outcomes and decisions.

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