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## 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 Environment Matters

### Working Group of the Parties

#### Fifth meeting

Geneva, 23 and 24 November 2016

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

#### Compliance and reporting mechanisms

## Draft systemic issues concerning the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and recommendations on how to address them

Prepared by the Compliance Committee

### *Summary*

The present document examines systemic challenges faced by countries in implementing 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. It identifies implementation challenges, provides recommendations on how to address them and lists selected good practices linked to different aspects of the Protocol's implementation. The document provides helpful voluntary guidance for Parties and stakeholders to support their efforts to improve pollutant release and transfer registers.

The document was prepared by the Compliance Committee under the Protocol, with the assistance of the secretariat and in close cooperation with the Bureau, and with the involvement of other Parties and stakeholders, pursuant to the request of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol at its second session in 2014 (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/4, para. 35, and ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/4/Add.1, sect. G).

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At its tenth meeting (Geneva, 7 July 2016), the Protocol Bureau considered and approved the draft document as amended at that meeting. It requested the secretariat to finalize it in consultation with the Chair of the Compliance Committee, as needed, and to submit it to the Working Group of the Parties at its fifth meeting for consideration.

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the document and mandate the Bureau to finalize it for submission to the Meeting of the Parties at its third session in 2017 for consideration.

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## I. Introduction

### A. Functions of the Compliance Committee

1. Article 22 of the 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) requires the Meeting of the Parties to establish arrangements for reviewing compliance with the Protocol. At its first session (Geneva, 20–22 April 2010), the Meeting of the Parties adopted decision I/2 (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add.1), which established the Compliance Committee and the procedures for the review of compliance.

2. Like other Committees established under multilateral environmental agreements, the Protocol's Compliance Committee plays a facilitative role. Article 22 expressly provides that the procedures within which the Committee operates are to promote compliance with the Protocol. The Committee has particular facilitative functions with respect to reporting (decision I/2, annex, para. 13 (c)) and assistance to individual Parties (*ibid.*, para. 40 (a)). But that facilitative role can be developed still further, as the Committee may examine any compliance issues not expressly referred to in its functions (*ibid.*, para. 14 (b)) and may also carry out any other functions that may be assigned to it by the Meeting of the Parties (*ibid.*, para. 13 (e)).

### B. Mandate of the Compliance Committee

3. At the third meeting of the Compliance Committee (Maastricht, Netherlands, 3–4 July 2014), the Chair presented a note on the possible role of the Committee in facilitating implementation of the Protocol (PRTR/C.1/2014/Inf.1).<sup>1</sup> It was suggested that the Committee could undertake a technical assessment of the Protocol's provisions, identify the systemic challenges to full implementation of the Protocol and develop recommendations on how to address them.

4. The Committee expressed its general support for the document, and agreed that it had a potential role to play in facilitating the Protocol's implementation. The Meeting of the Parties at its second session (Maastricht, Netherlands, 3–4 July 2014) subsequently welcomed the note (ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/4, para. 35).<sup>2</sup>

### C. Purpose of this document

5. Against that background, this document has been developed by the Committee to help Parties to implement and comply with the Protocol as well as to make better use of the potential of their pollutant release and transfer register (PRTR) systems. The document draws on individual contributions provided by Committee members, and is based on an analysis of the information contained in the national implementation reports<sup>3</sup> in the 2014 reporting cycle under the Protocol, as well as on comments made by Parties.

6. Chapter II describes general systemic issues that have been identified and suggests ways to tackle them. Chapter III describes issues that arise with respect to particular

<sup>1</sup> Available from [http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2\\_docs.html](http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2_docs.html) (category II document).

<sup>2</sup> Available from [http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2\\_docs.html](http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2_docs.html).

<sup>3</sup> All the national implementation reports from the 2014 reporting cycle are available from [http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr\\_reports\\_implementation\\_2014.html](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr_reports_implementation_2014.html).

provisions in the Protocol, also with some suggestions about how to address those issues. Chapter IV introduces a list of selected good practices, structured according to different work areas related to the Protocol's implementation.

7. The Committee recalls that the Protocol sets out the minimum requirements for activities and pollutants to be covered by Parties' PRTRs. At the same time, benefits gained through the successful implementation of PRTRs, such as for health, the environment, the cost-effectiveness of reporting, etc., will be more easily achieved if the design of the PRTR goes beyond the minimum requirements by, e.g., widening the scope of the pollutants and/or activities covered beyond those prescribed in the Protocol; introducing a "single window" approach for making use of the PRTR across sectors; and taking into account specific national needs.

8. This document seeks to provide Parties and stakeholders with helpful voluntary guidance to support their efforts to improve their PRTRs, including through applying the recommendations and good practices herein, as well as undertaking an analysis of specific national needs and defining national priorities to achieve greater benefits with successful PRTR systems.

9. The recommendations and issues contained in this document are neither binding nor exhaustive. The document may be reviewed and refined on the basis of input from all Parties and stakeholders, if needed, subject to a decision by the Parties. Periodical review would make it possible to improve the guidance continuously, and its value would increase. In addition to serving as a freestanding resource for Parties and stakeholders, the document may also contribute to the Committee's efforts to provide advisory support to Parties and other States wishing to accede to the Protocol and to strengthen expert capacities.

## **II. Systemic issues relating to the implementation of the Protocol**

### **A. Ensuring the quality and completeness of reported information**

10. The general value of pollutant release and transfer registers depends on the usability and comparability of the data provided. Although experience with the operation of PRTRs is increasing, it is still a challenge to ensure that complete and quality-controlled data can be made available to the public. In order to ensure the completeness of PRTRs, it is desirable that claims of confidentiality for PRTR data are in general not authorized or authorized only in a very restrictive way. To keep information held on the register confidential, article 12 of the Protocol must be fully respected.

#### *Recommendations*

11. Parties should strive for systematic quality assessment of the data contained in their PRTR; the methodology for this should be continuously improved. In this context the full implementation of article 10 is essential.

12. In order to avoid giving the false impression of completeness of a PRTR, Parties should ensure that the lack of public access to specific PRTR data be clearly marked in the register, by applying paragraph 3 of article 12.

### **B. National pollutant release and transfer registers**

13. National implementation reports from a number of Parties suggested that there may be issues to address concerning the fulfilment of the obligation to establish national PRTRs,

as opposed to only reporting on regional obligations, such as those arising under the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR).

*Recommendation*

14. Parties should consider the extent to which the E-PRTR implements their obligations arising under the Protocol and to report accordingly.

### **C. Reporting on diffuse sources**

15. The inclusion of diffuse sources is one of the core elements of a PRTR. Diffuse sources means the many smaller or scattered sources from which pollutants may be released to land, air or water, whose combined impact on those media may be significant and for which it is impractical to collect reports from each individual source (art. 2, para. 9).

16. Compared to the integration of larger point sources, such as facilities, competent authorities must take a different approach with regard to data on diffuse sources of pollution. Reporting on diffuse sources may turn out to be challenging and resource intensive. It is beneficial to look for synergies between different conventions, legal acts and directives that can be used to develop and improve the PRTR data.

17. Parties need to identify possible sources and make decisions with regard to their national priorities. This can include clarifying which diffuse sources can be covered and how their emissions can be quantified in a reasonable way. Estimating the possible impact of a diffuse source of pollution on human health and the environment may help to identify national priorities.

*Recommendation*

18. To ensure the completeness of reporting with respect to PRTRs where diffuse sources have not been integrated into a PRTR system, Parties should start taking steps in the inclusion process and be able to give a timeline for its implementation, while striving to achieve consistency and reliability. They should not hesitate to seek initial advice from Compliance Committee experts and can draw on a number of resources related to the issue, such as the 2008 *Guidance on Implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers* (ECE/MP.PP/7, p. 63 ff.),<sup>4</sup> and resources from those Protocol Parties that are more advanced in the field and make related documents available on their PRTR web pages. A listing of such resources should be compiled, for example, on the PRTR.net web portal,<sup>5</sup> and Parties should provide the secretariat with relevant information and weblinks to this end.

### **D. Reporting on releases to land**

19. The absence of information about good practices or challenges related to the reporting on releases to land in national implementation reports might indicate that Parties can still improve their understanding of the matter. The causes for this may include regulatory and legislative complexity, the need for investment in technical infrastructure and limited scientific research in the field.

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<sup>4</sup> Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr.guidancedev.html>.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.prtr.net/en/>.

*Recommendations*

20. Challenges related to the reporting on releases to land must be discussed at the national and international levels and the underlying challenges identified and addressed in order to enable Parties to fulfil the Protocol's provisions and make knowledge on releases of pollutants to land available to the public.

21. Parties should consider integrating information on storage sites in PRTRs, where appropriate. It should be considered a priority to help make information on this issue accessible for the public through PRTRs.

**E. Public participation and awareness**

22. A lack of public interest in PRTRs can be observed in many countries. The general public seems often unaware of the existence of PRTR systems. This puts at stake the intentions of the Parties and Signatories to the Protocol on PRTRs. Public participation and awareness is crucial for PRTRs to become effective tools to change the behaviour of polluters and influence decision makers, and thereby reduce the release of pollutants to air, land and water.

23. The Compliance Committee understands that first steps in the implementation of PRTRs are mostly of a technical and administrative nature. Results from the 2014 reporting cycle show that when a PRTR system fulfils the technical requirements, Parties' efforts need to shift focus towards the provisions formulated in article 15 related to creating public awareness, by promoting PRTRs and providing assistance and guidance in understanding and using the information they contain.

24. It should be noted that in some countries access to information technology infrastructure is still scarce, which reduces the impact of the electronic tools made available to help the public to access data and participate in the use and development of PRTRs. General efforts to improve public access to information technology infrastructure are thus welcome as they will help increase access to PRTR systems.

*Recommendations*

25. In addition to the promotion of the Protocol and capacity-building activities, and with the aim to enable to implement article 15, it seems appropriate for Parties to the Protocol to:

- (a) Measure stakeholder awareness;
- (b) Analyse how PRTR systems are used;
- (c) Analyse how existing PRTR systems can be more useful for different groups of stakeholders;
- (d) Identify ways to foster public involvement, including the tools and best practices for doing so.

26. In this context, it is recommended that efforts be made at the national as well as international levels to:

- (a) Identify potential stakeholder groups and especially those that could benefit more from using PRTR data;
- (b) Collect and share information about what kind of PRTR-related information the public and other stakeholders already consult;
- (c) Understand what kind of further information they would like to consult.

### III. Specific issues regarding particular provisions

#### A. General provisions, core elements and design and structure of a pollutant release and transfer register system — articles 3, 4 and 5

##### 1. Search categories for the database

27. Some Parties only partially cover the search categories listed in the Protocol under article 5, paragraph 1, and a few Parties have no national database with appropriate search functions as required by the Protocol.

28. Reasons for the inability of some Parties to fully implement these provisions may include a lack of resources and/or technical capacities, the chosen approach for establishing the national PRTR system or the specifics of national reporting systems (e.g., combination of data generated under different reporting obligations).

##### *Recommendations*

29. In relation to the search categories for the database, it is recommended that:

- (a) Technical and/or financial support be provided to Parties that need assistance in the development of their national databases with appropriate search functions;
- (b) The specific problematic areas presenting challenges to the elaboration of search categories in national reporting systems should be identified and addressed;
- (c) Parties should share good practices in this area, including with other interested States.

##### 2. Protection of whistle-blowers

30. There were significant discrepancies in the responses provided by Parties in the 2014 reporting cycle related to the protection of whistle-blowers, as well as a lack of information provided about such cases, which makes it impossible to draw conclusions about systemic challenges in this context. However, some Parties reported that no measures had been taken with respect to this issue. Many Parties referred to the general constitutional or other legislation for citizens exercising their rights. Some Parties reported that the protection of whistle-blowers was implemented via anticorruption legislation or rights of the public to appeal violations of their rights or interests; however, this leads to the question whether such protection is relevant only in cases of a violation of rights or interests, or whether anybody can report the violation of national law without a need to prove an interest. For the assessment of potential systemic challenges, more details are also needed with regard to protection of employees of a facility who report a violation of national laws by that facility.

##### *Recommendations*

31. Regarding the protection of whistle-blowers it is recommended that:

- (a) Additional information be provided on the specific legislation, practical measures and related cases;
- (b) A system that allows for the identification and collection of information on such cases, whether positive or negative, should be established.

### 3. Influence of the public on PRTR design and structure

32. A lack of opportunity for the public to participate in the development and modification of a PRTR could be an issue of concern. A number of European Union countries reported that the E-PRTR Regulation<sup>6</sup> applies directly in their national legal system and is part of the national PRTR regulatory system. It needs to be assessed whether, where there is no national PRTR, the public at the national level is allowed and has the opportunity to participate and how it is ensured that the public can influence the process of development and modification of a PRTR, e.g., by providing comments in the case of significant changes, or whether the public can suggest modifications, such as to the list of substances, accessibility, etc.

#### *Recommendations*

33. Recommendations regarding the influence of the public on PRTR design and structure include:

(a) The issue of limitations on public participation may need to be examined for countries that directly implement the European Union E-PRTR Regulation and base their PRTR system on E-PRTR only;

(b) In reporting on public participation in PRTR development, additional information should be provided on:

(i) Relevant legislative provisions;

(ii) Practical measures;

(iii) Best practices;

(c) Specific guidance on public participation in the development and modification of PRTR would be useful.

## B. Reporting requirements — article 7

### 1. Lists of activities and pollutants

34. With regard to annexes I (activities) and II (pollutants) to the Protocol, the 2014 reporting cycle showed that almost all Parties exceed the minimum requirements of the Protocol and have added substances or activities to their national legislation on PRTRs. Meanwhile discussions have started on the merits of realizing synergies between the Protocol and other international instruments, including the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution.

#### *Recommendations*

35. The Protocol sets out the minimum requirements for activities and pollutants to be covered by Parties' PRTRs. These should be seen as the minimum common basis for establishing PRTRs. Parties are encouraged to expand the activities and pollutants covered by their PRTRs at the national level in accordance with their priorities. Exchange of information and views among Parties on the added value of these enhanced national sets of requirements in relation to activities and pollutants and how they help to reach the

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<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EC) No 166/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 January 2006 concerning the establishment of a European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register and amending Council Directives 91/689/EEC and 96/61/EC, 2006 O.J. (L 33), pp. 1–17.



Protocol's objective to contribute to the prevention and reduction of pollution of the environment should also be encouraged.

36. Moreover, article 6, paragraph 2, of the Protocol provides that the Parties may consider a number of issues in relation to the Protocol's further development, such as the revision of annexes I to III and the inclusion of other substantive aspects. This is to be done in the light of experience in the implementation of the Protocol and taking into account relevant developments on PRTRs at the international level.

## 2. Diffuse sources

37. Some Parties have already included data on emissions on diffuse sources; others have not started the process of inclusion. Data on diffuse sources have to be included in PRTRs provided that:

(a) The Party determines that data are being collected by the relevant authorities, which means that there are data (e.g., from other reporting obligations or from research projects);

(b) The data can practicably be included.

Where no data are available, the Party must take measures to initiate the collection of emissions from one or more diffuse sources in accordance with its national priorities (art. 7, para. 7).

38. Emissions from diffuse sources are essential for a complete picture of pollutant sources. Some key pollutants originate to a higher ratio from diffuse sources than from facilities. Examples are nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) from traffic or ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) from agriculture. Including emissions from diffuse sources into the national registers, however, takes time because methodologies have to be developed or adapted and the data have to be collected.

### *Recommendation*

39. Parties should consider if more guidance on inclusion of emissions from diffuse sources is needed. Methodological and technical exchange among the Parties and with other ECE multilateral environmental agreements could be helpful in combination with the sharing of good practices and software tools for the graphic display of data from diffuse sources.

## 3. Scope of information required under the national PRTR system

40. As described in the synthesis report on the implementation of the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/5),<sup>7</sup> some Parties do not seem to comply with all the requirements of article 7, paragraphs 5 and 6. These paragraphs set out the general scope for reporting on transfers or releases of pollutants.

### *Recommendations*

41. Parties should carefully check if they need to undertake efforts to fully comply with the requirements of article 7, paragraphs 5 and 6.

42. In order to make the PRTRs more useful, Parties should consider providing additional important optional information, such as:

<sup>7</sup> Available from [http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2\\_docs.html#/](http://www.unece.org/prtrmopp2_docs.html#/) (category II document).

- (a) The number of employees or production volume;
- (b) Energy and water consumption;
- (c) Fuel provided (energy sector);
- (d) Lower thresholds for waste amounts;
- (e) Waste codes;
- (f) Regional codes;
- (g) The river basin district;
- (h) NACE<sup>8</sup> codes.

43. Upon request, the Compliance Committee or the Bureau could offer preliminary assistance in order to find appropriate solutions for good practice.

### **C. Reporting cycle — article 8**

44. No specific systemic challenges with regard to the Protocol's provisions on the reporting cycle (art. 8) were identified in the national implementation reports submitted for the first reporting cycle (2014). Nevertheless, the benefit to be had from exceeding the Protocol's provisions and making good quality data available in a timely manner to all stakeholders was also evident.

#### *Recommendation*

45. Data should be made available as soon as possible in order to increase the usefulness of the database to the public. For example, a significant number of Parties reported in the 2014 reporting cycle that they made data available within 12 months after the end of the reporting year. Parties may also be able to share insight with interested peers about practical arrangements related to this practice, including, e.g., on how to achieve a 100 per cent rate for electronic submission of PRTR data.

### **D. Access to justice — article 14**

46. No specific systemic challenges have been identified through the national implementation reports for the first reporting cycle with regard to access to justice. The only reason for potential concern is the complete absence or non-identification of cases. There may be different reasons for this — it could be due to a lack of user friendliness of a PRTR for the general public, the technical nature of the register, etc., or it could simply be the non-availability of statistical data on the actual cases.

#### *Recommendation*

47. Noting that almost all the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs are also Parties to the Aarhus Convention, any systemic challenges that Parties may face, as well as solutions and recommendations to overcome them, regarding access to justice can be sought in the work of the Task Force on Access to Justice under the Convention. The provisions of the Aarhus Convention's article 9 are broader and cover almost all the issues that may arise in relation to accessing justice in environmental information cases.

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<sup>8</sup> NACE is the “statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community” (“nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne”).

## E. International cooperation — article 16

48. While the benefits of cooperating with other Parties is widely recognized by Parties, bilateral approaches are often limited due to a lack of financial resources and capacity of staff.

### *Recommendations*

49. In the light of the general issue of limited resources for international cooperation, Parties should more actively exchange information with other Parties and combine their efforts with the aim of more easily overcoming common obstacles. Obstacles occur in the process of implementing the Protocol as well as in operating a PRTR system. Parties can work together, for example, through:

- (a) Sharing experience more widely using electronic means;
- (b) Creating a working group with neighbouring countries to combine limited resources and make use of synergies;
- (c) Making information available in ECE languages such as English, provided that there are available resources to do so;
- (d) Participating in sessions and workshops, e.g., of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs and the International PRTR Coordinating Group;
- (e) Including a component on PRTR cooperation in economic cooperation plans, such as trade agreements;
- (f) Using PRTR data as a basis for cross-border cooperation, e.g., related to projects for water protection or reducing emissions to air, or in the framework of other conventions, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention).

50. Parties are also encouraged to use existing tools, such as the PRTR capacity-building database and PRTR:learn.<sup>9</sup> In that context, feedback from users will help to develop such tools and further and increase their value in solving PRTR-related problems.

## IV. Selected good practices

51. The sharing of good practices among Parties and stakeholders is a key factor for good cooperation under the Protocol; it provides concrete assistance to Parties looking for ways to effectively and efficiently implement their obligations.

52. Parties and stakeholders are encouraged to submit good practices to the secretariat.<sup>10</sup> All those mentioned in this document and any additional suggestions submitted will be analysed and made available on the global PRTR portal, PRTR.net. Furthermore, Parties are encouraged to promote their work, including activities that go beyond the Protocol and the use of the recommendations addressed in this document, by making their efforts public and sharing their experience through PRTR.net or the Protocol's website. The selected good practices below are structured according to the seven topic areas set out in sections A to G.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://apps.unece.org/ehlm/pp/NIR/RLsearch.asp> and [prtr.unitar.org](http://prtr.unitar.org), respectively. Both websites are also available on the PRTR.net web portal (<http://www.prtr.net/>).

<sup>10</sup> Please use [prtr.survey@unece.org](mailto:prtr.survey@unece.org) to submit any suggestions for good practices.

## **A. Organization of work at the national level**

53. Good practices regarding the organization of work at the national level include:

(a) Establishing working groups to deal with the implementation of a PRTR (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Spain);

(b) Forming a PRTR stakeholder group, which includes representation from all competent authorities, regularly meets to consider all aspects of PRTR data (e.g., trends, issues and improvements) and takes joint steps to secure uniform action (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or the European Union).

## **B. Database design**

54. Among good practices regarding the database design are to:

(a) Use open source software for cost reduction and possible cooperation in the further development of the database software (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Germany);

(b) Use an integrated reporting form for all environmental data and store the information in a database that is searchable from different points of view and for different reporting obligations (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by the Flemish and Walloon Regions of Belgium). Key aspects related to this practice are:

(i) To avoid double reporting;

(ii) To have the same source data for all reporting requirements, resulting in the process being transparent (enabling to trace all data), consistent and comparable, reported and backed by the facility operator (Tier 3 detailed information) and verified and validated by the competent authority;

(c) Provide owners and/or operators and the competent authorities with simplified reporting procedures and easy access through the design of the electronic reporting system (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Austria, Serbia or Spain);

(d) Aim for 100 per cent online reporting;

(e) Provide the possibility to download PRTR search results in file format (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Spain or Switzerland).

### **C. Data quality**

55. Selected good practices regarding data quality include:

- (a) Expansion of the E-PRTR cross-pollutant-check tool<sup>11</sup> (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Germany);
- (b) Improvement of applied emission factors, which are used in reporting tools (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Germany).

### **D. Pollutants, activities and emissions from diffuse sources**

56. Good practices regarding pollutants, activities and emissions from diffuse sources include:

- (a) Making a periodic analysis of reporting to the PRTR system and adjusting practices according to the results, as appropriate, to effectively reflect new developments (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Serbia);
- (b) Including data on diffuse emissions from products, considering the gradual improvement of methodologies for obtaining such data (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Denmark).

### **E. Website design and improved usability**

57. Good practices for website design and improving the usability of the PRTR are:

- (a) To have a multilingual design and/or the availability of information in several languages, including English and national language(s) (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Serbia, Spain or Switzerland);
- (b) To test the website among people outside the organization or agency setting up the PRTR before launching the site. This can provide useful information on how to build a user-friendly website with quick and easy access to emission data (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Norway);
- (c) To provide information on various chemical substances used in production processes and emitted from their use, as well as their possible impacts on human health. This is a relevant tool to inform the public according to its needs and demands (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Latvia or Spain);
- (d) To supply additional explanations and/or information for the public, e.g., a section of the website with material containing relevant legal and technical references;
- (e) To include tools for data visualization, for example, the possibility to view graphics showing time series data (e.g., see the national implementation report submitted by Spain);
- (f) To provide more possibilities for searching, consultation, or queries than foreseen in the Protocol (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain or Sweden).

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<sup>11</sup> Available from [http://forum.eionet.europa.eu/x\\_e-prtr-reporting/library/e-prtr/e-prtr-incompleteness-check/cross-pollutant-check/e-prtr-cross-pollutant-check-methodology-background-report-and-manual-v3](http://forum.eionet.europa.eu/x_e-prtr-reporting/library/e-prtr/e-prtr-incompleteness-check/cross-pollutant-check/e-prtr-cross-pollutant-check-methodology-background-report-and-manual-v3).

## **F. Promotion of pollutant release and transfer registers and awareness-raising**

58. In promoting PRTRs and awareness-raising, among others, it is a good practice to:
- (a) Strengthen international activities to promote the national register (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Germany, Spain or Sweden);
  - (b) Collect and analyse statistics about visitors or users of PRTR web pages, their queries and other related information (e.g., see the national implementation reports submitted by Spain or Switzerland).

## **G. International cooperation**

59. Good practices regarding international cooperation include:
- (a) Pragmatic cooperation between neighbouring countries (e.g., the Nordic PRTR group, comprising Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden; Switzerland allowing Liechtenstein to use its electronic database for reporting; and countries sharing data with their neighbours through E-PRTR);
  - (b) Where there are other relevant fields of cooperation, such as economic cooperation, including a component for cooperation regarding PRTRs, as has been done between Israel and Japan under the coordination of the Israeli Foreign Ministry (see the national implementation report submitted by Israel);
  - (c) Using PRTR data as basis for cross-border cooperation, e.g., related to projects for water protection or reduction of emissions to air, and in the framework of other agreements, such as the Basel Convention.
-