

16 November 2016

PRTR Protocol
5th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (WGP 5)
(Geneva, 23-24 November 2016)

EU and its Member States contribution

Agenda item 7): Preparations for the third session of the Meeting of the parties to the Protocol

Agenda item 7biii) Financial arrangements under the Protocol

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Bureau and the Secretariat for the efforts put into preparing the draft decision on financial arrangements under the Protocol on PRTRs.

We would also like to express our appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat and recognise the difficulties posed by limited and unpredictable funding, due i.e. to the fact that contributions from members are still arriving late and that the financial burden has not been evenly distributed, with several Parties and Signatories not contributing at all.

In relation to the draft decision ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/9, we continue to support the current interim scheme of contributions as agreed in Decision II/4. At this stage, we can only support the proposed option B for a financial scheme with voluntary contributions. We wish to maintain the current voluntary scheme for the time being, because of the current budget constraints that affect all EU Member States and bearing in mind the implications for all other MEAs.

Our proposal in this regard is to delete the text in paragraph 1 that relates to option A. We can indicate those parts to the Secretariat without reading them out.

“Option A for mandatory contributions: [Establishes a mandatory scheme of contributions]

“Relevant for Option A only: [(b) The burden of covering the costs of the activities shall be distributed among the Parties and Signatories to the Protocol in proportion to the UN scale of assessments with the indicative contribution of each party for 2018 being shown in the annex hereto;

(c) The scale of assessments shall be adjusted so that no Party or Signatory is required to contribute more than 22 per cent of the estimated costs to be covered by the scheme;

(d) Each Party or Signatory shall contribute each year, as a minimum the amount derived from applying the adjusted scale of assessments referred to in subparagraph xxx to the total estimated costs of the activities, but each contribution should not be less than stated in paragraph xxx;]”.

The footnotes associated with these paragraphs and the Annex should also be deleted.

In line with the position we expressed at the Aarhus Convention WGP 20, we would propose to raise the minimum annual contribution to the Protocol, where a contribution is made, from 500 to 1000 USD (point [b], relevant for both Options A and B).

We would also like to encourage Parties to make, where possible, regular contributions and pledges, as we fully recognise the need for stability, predictability and fair burden sharing in financial matters

In view of the current financial challenges of the protocol, we invite the Secretariat to seek and evaluate alternative and effective options with a view of reducing costs, while maintaining the full functions of the Protocol in the long term. Such alternative options could include IT equipment that would make it possible to holding meetings through webinars or web conferences, thus reducing logistical costs.

In addition, we believe that it is necessary to keep on exploring and using existing possibilities for ensuring adequate funding for the Protocol, in the understanding that the independence of the Protocol and activities related to the Protocol must be preserved. These include *inter alia*:

- funding of specific projects, workshops and other country/region based actions by private sector industries and interested organisations;
- non-financial support from Parties and Signatories including their non-financial support (e. g. in the form of human resources that are usually covered from the Protocol's trust fund) in the Promotion and implementation of the Protocol;
- increasing synergies with activities under other MEAs and organisations as an option to improve the financial stability of the Protocol.
