

Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on
Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

Working Group of the Parties
Fifth meeting
Geneva, 23- 24 November 2016

DECISIONS AND MAJOR OUTCOMES¹
as adopted by the Working Group at its fifth meeting

Item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the information provided by the Chair;
- ii) adopted the agenda as set out in document ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/1.

Item 2: Status of ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the report by the secretariat on the status of ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs and welcomed Ukraine and Malta as new Parties to the Protocol;
- ii) encouraged Signatories and other interested States to proceed with accession to the Protocol as soon as possible.

Item 3: Designation of National Focal Points

The Working Group took note of the report prepared by the secretariat on the status of designation of National Focal Points (PRTR/WG.1/2016/Inf.1) and called upon Slovenia, which have not designated a focal point to date, to proceed with the designation without any delay.

Item 4: Promotion and capacity-building

a) Synergies with partner organizations

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the information provided by partner organizations and thanked OECD, UNEP, UNITAR and the REC CEE for support provided to furthering implementation of PRTRs systems thereby strengthening countries' capacities to accede to the Protocol on PRTRs;

¹ This document was not formally edited. The decisions and outcomes contained in the document will be incorporated in the report of the meeting.

ii) called upon partner organisations and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to cooperate closely and where possible to create synergies to further the implementation of the projects and programmes related to PRTRs;

iii) reiterated its call upon governments to strengthen cooperation between experts dealing with the Protocol on PRTRs and those dealing with the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP), Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention), Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), UNEP Conventions on Chemicals and other relevant agreements and programmes, as well as those involved in projects carried out by international organisations as to ensure coordination at national level;

iv) reiterated its call upon Parties and stakeholders to consider implementation of the Protocol on PRTRs and Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) in synergy.

b) Subregional and national activities

The Working Group:

i) took note of the Report on the second subregional workshop “Get Your Right to a Healthy Community” for countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and expressed its appreciation to CLRTAP, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus and RUE SRC Belarus for effective cooperation on organisation of the workshop;

ii) noted with regret the little progress achieved in establishing PRTR systems and in furthering ratification of the Protocol in these countries, and called upon countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to take required commitment at the level of decision- and policy- makers as to improve the situation;

iii) requested the secretariat to finalize, in consultation with the Chair, a report on the second subregional workshop “Get Your Right to a Healthy Community” and submit it to the third session of the Meeting of the Parties as a formal document;

iv) took note of the report on the REC CEE on the subregional workshop for countries in South Eastern Europe and the Republic of Moldova and expressed its appreciation to REC CEE and Germany for supporting it;

v) took note of the information provided by other delegations;

vi) encouraged Governments and stakeholders to consider the outcomes of the workshops for the future work on establishing PRTR systems.

c) Electronic tools and technical resources

The Working Group:

- i) took note of the document on technical assistance and resources (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/12) and encouraged delegations to use it;
- ii) took note of the information provided by the secretariat and other delegations and requested the secretariat, OECD and UNITAR to continue working closely as to ensure the effective use of PRTR.net, OECD PRTR resource centre and PRTR-Learn;
- iii) encouraged Governments and stakeholders to support substantive population of these tools by making relevant guidance and other material available in different languages.

d) Global promotion of the Protocol

The Working Group:

- i) welcomed the joint efforts of UNECE and OECD in organising the second Global round table on PRTRs and welcomed cooperation with UNEP and UNITAR on this important event;
- ii) took note of the report on the joint Global round table on PRTRs (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/7) and encouraged delegations to use it;
- iii) took note of the report by the Chair of the International Coordinating Group;
- iv) mandated the Bureau and the secretariat to continue global promotion of the Protocol.

Item 5: Compliance and reporting mechanism

The Working Group:

- i) expressed its appreciation to the Compliance Committee for the work done and approved the two following documents:

- (a) Draft Systemic issues concerning the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and recommendations on how to address them (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/5);

- (b) Draft Guidance for reporting on implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/6);

and requested the secretariat to submit them to the Meeting of the Parties at its third session for consideration;

- ii) took note of the document on Membership of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/10);

iii) agreed to assign the Compliance Committee with the task to prepare a synthesis report on the basis of national implementation reports and with preparing an overview of the progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 with the view of submitting these documents to the Meeting of the Parties at its third session for consideration;

iv) took note of the online reporting tool under the Protocol;

v) urged Slovenia to comply with its reporting obligation as a Party to the Protocol.

Item 6: Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017, including financial matters

The Working Group:

i) took note of the Report on implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/3);

ii) took note of the Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the work programme of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/4) as well as information provided by the secretariat on contributions received between 15 August –16 November 2016 and on human resources;

iii) expressed appreciation for the work done by the secretariat and recognized the difficulties posed by limited and unpredictable funding;

iv) took note of the information provided by delegations on expected contributions and expressed its concern with regard to low number of pledges.

Item 7: Preparations for the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

(a) Hosting and preparatory timeline

The Working Group took note of the information provided by the secretariat regarding the venue and the preparatory timeline for the third session of the Meeting of the Parties (PRTR/WG.1/2016/Inf.3).

(b) Substantive preparations

The Working Group:

i) approved the draft provisional agenda of the third session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/11) and mandated the Bureau to finalize the agenda and submit it to the Meeting of the Parties at its third session for adoption;

ii) requested the secretariat to prepare a note on the role of the Convention and the Protocol in implementing Sustainable Development Goals as to facilitate discussions at the joint high-level segment

of the Convention's and Protocol's Meetings of the Parties in 2017 and submit it as formal document to the high-level segment;

iii) approved the draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/8) and mandated the Bureau to finalize it for submission and adoption at the third session of the Meeting of the Parties;

iv) took note of the statements by delegations and approved the draft decision on financial arrangements under the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/9) with no consensus reached, and mandated the Bureau to finalize it for submission and adoption at the third session of the Meeting of the Parties;

v) considered the draft outline of the Budva declaration (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2016/13) prepared by the Bureaux of the Meetings of the Parties to the Protocol and to the Convention;

vi) took note of the comments received on the draft Budva Declaration, including a number of preliminary substantive comments presented by the EU and its Member States at the meeting;

vii) took note of concerns expressed by delegations that the original procedure foreseen for submitting the comments, namely before 18 November 2016, was not respected, this meeting therefore did not provide an opportunity for a substantive and effective discussion on the comments;

viii) mandated the Protocol's Bureau to finalize the draft Declaration in cooperation with the Convention's Bureau, taking into consideration the comments received, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption at the joint high-level segment of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and its Protocol.

Item 8: Calendar of meetings

The Working Group took note of the information provided by the secretariat.

Item 9. Other business

No issues were discussed.

Item 10: Adoption of decisions and outcomes of the meeting

The Working Group adopted the major outcomes and decisions presented by the Chair at the meeting (as contained in this document) and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to finalize the report and incorporate these adopted outcomes and decisions.
