

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

Working Group of the Parties

Sixth meeting,

Geneva, 9 November 2018

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Development of the Protocol

List of possible specific actions that could further the implementation of the Protocol and its strategic plan for 2015-2020*

Paragraph 9 of the note on Development of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2018/5) suggests an online platform for PRTR-related actions where Parties and stakeholders voluntarily can report on actions that they have implemented or consider implementing. In order to facilitate the channelling of information, coordinating or organizing activities, a draft list of possible actions and possible positive effects of implementing them is provided in the below table. The table is based on the five pillars of work² and can serve as a basis for such online platform.

Item	Possible actions	Why are they useful?
A.	Integration at the national level	
A1	Aim at a single window access / one-stop-shop approach for current and future reporting to government authorities	Reduce costs for different government authorities; Facilitate reporting for operators and owners; Facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration; Improve inter-ministerial coordination; Create a streamlined and more transparent source of data for users; Render numerous non-compatible data collection obligations and thus different non-compatible databases compatible and increase their respective numbers of users and uses.
A2	Provide context to the PRTR data and use PRTR as context for non-PRTR data	Improve usefulness of data for different users and uses; Create knowledge by adding contextual information to data, including possible risks to human health and the environment, and thus improve journalists and the public's understanding and interpretation of the published PRTR information; Further facilitate the correct comparison of facilities; Allow use of data for benchmarking purposes.

* This document was not formally edited.

² See para. 8 of the note on Development of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2018/5 and para. 12 of the Progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2018/5).

Item	Possible actions	Why are they useful?
A2a	Show permits, inspection reports and relevant monitoring reports (PDF)	Useful to help users of the website to see more of the whole picture.
A2b	Join PRTR maps with geo portals and cadastral information web sites	Reduce costs; Support single window access / one-stop-shop approach.
A3	Sharpen the image of what “PRTR” stands for	Improve knowledge about PRTR-systems and facilitate cooperation with national partners. Shape common understanding of PRTRs, also on complex issues, such as integration with other systems for data management and dissemination; integration should be coordinated also on an international level with binding agreements.
A4	Integrate PRTR as tool for achieving sustainability, including achievement of 2030 Agenda and SDGs	Reduce costs; Make available PRTR data to track success in achieving the sustainable development goals; Facilitate fact-based decisions making processes.
B. Harmonization at the international level		
B1	Understand and make available information on equivalence between different systems and methodologies applied in different countries.	Improve comparability of data between different systems; Increase usefulness at the global scale, including for global transboundary related issues, i.e. climate change and water and air pollution; Reduce costs through facilitated knowledge transfer; Improve data quality on a global scale.
B2	Support stable and continuing progress of PRTR-systems by strengthen multilateral solutions and international cooperation	Overcome limitations of individual national good practices related to PRTRs; Ensure progress in improving harmonization of PRTR systems globally.
B3	Increase efforts aimed at involvement of countries/regions with sizable industrial potential	Increase usability of data from countries/regions with sizable industrial potential; Improve PRTRs quality as a tool to provide comparable data as support for decision making at a global scale.
B4	Revise activities and their capacity thresholds concerning other reporting obligations	Provide a better basis for using PRTR data in other reporting; Harmonize different approaches, such as by adding activities which are in the VOC Solvents Emissions Directive, lower capacities to include GHG management plans and reporting, etc.
B5	Identify elements that are common for all national and international PRTRs, and those areas where different solutions for different countries/regions are needed	Improve and streamline international cooperation; Reduce costs; Improve quality of services at different levels.
B6	Use existing PRTR-standards when developing possible concepts for a chemical management plan at national level, e.g. linked with developments in the SAICM post 2020 process	Provide a harmonized and data driven approach for the development of chemical management plans.
C. Awareness and ease of access and use		
C1	Seek ways to improve private sector and public involvement in PRTRs	Increase awareness on PRTR related matters with stakeholders;

Item	Possible actions	Why are they useful?
		Build a sense of responsibility with NGOs, industrial sector representatives and other stakeholders and social actors that may play a more active role in the use and development of PRTRs.
C2	Develop better sorting and filtering of PRTR data	Reduce hurdles for easy use of PRTR data.
C3	Allow users to export large datasets	Facilitate the use of data for specific applications, e.g. by consultants and researchers.
C4	Simplify and reduce complexity of PRTRs	Increase awareness on PRTR related matters, ease of use of PRTRs with non-expert stakeholders; Communicate more easily the added value PRTRs represent to stakeholders and decision-makers; Increase the political relevance of PRTR related activities.
C5	Maintain and improve relevance of the Protocol in comparison and cooperation with other organizations and initiatives including private sector and NGO initiatives	Improve degree of awareness on PRTR in related international fora.
C6	Develop and use PRTR related activities to support the broadest possible awareness of chemical risks as a prerequisite for chemical safety (see chapter 19, agenda 21)	Improve awareness of PRTRs and provide stakeholders with a trusted resource for knowledge on pollutant emissions in addition to current sources such as ad-hoc news coverage on pollutant related issues; Provide a consistent, non-dramatic educational background on implication of living in a society that is constantly dealing with chemical substances as well as pollution; Raise the level of concern for the quality of environmental media by the public and politicians and therefore allow for long-term support of sound chemical management.
C7	Encourage/require those who use PRTR data professionally (scientists, companies, NGOs, journalists, government agencies, etc.) to make results of their work available through the PRTR webpage	The results of the professionals' work will be made available to general public and other stakeholders who may benefit from learning about specific issues; Promote awareness on PRTR related topics.
C8	Provide information important for consumer and facilitate the traceability of products	Increase usefulness of PRTRs by bridging gaps, e.g. between consumers and producers; Encourage and enable companies to link to facilities listed in PRTRs of other countries; Provide information on relative pollution per consumer article; Provide information on chemical substances in products and used in the production facilities; Use PRTR-related data for certification of products and companies as to increase transparency; this will also provide a tool for companies to advertise their efforts in setting environmental standards for their production facilities; Promote cooperation and synergy between authorities managing PRTR data and organizations that use pollution related data for certification of products.
C9	Add context relevant to risk assessment.	Provide e.g. information on toxicity of substances and aggregate pollution levels (see guidance on implementation of the Protocol).

Item	Possible actions	Why are they useful?
C10	Apply an appropriate budget for PRTR promotion to match the financial resources put into its development and maintenance.	Increased awareness and use of PRTRs necessary for the fulfilment of the Protocol's objective.
D. Scope of the Protocol		
D1	Review the list of pollutants	Increase coherency with other environmental reporting obligations; Make the PRTR stay up-to-date on relevant economic and scientific and political developments; Facilitate to streamline the reporting process for operators and governments; Improve the national data set (completeness) for other MEAs; Improve the overall picture of pollutant emissions available to the public; Help PRTRs to become more dynamic and, thus, more useful systems.
D2	Review thresholds, especially pollutant thresholds, with an aim to lower or remove them	Improve the completeness of the PRTR data set, reflecting e.g. about 90% of current pollutant emissions; Avoid problems related to reporting of emissions close to threshold values without significantly increasing administrative burden to industry; Improve trust in PRTR datasets by researches and other stakeholders that voice skepticisms regarding the application of PRTR thresholds.
D3	Review the list of activities	Remove existing inconsistencies among MEAs in terms of both activity thresholds and codes used to identify the type of activities; Improve usefulness and up-date PRTRs to become more dynamic and, thus, more useful systems.
D4	Add releases of chemicals from products e.g. as diffuse emission from products in use	Improve completeness of PRTRs and support sustainable decision making with PRTR data.
D5	Add information about obsolete storage places of different pollutants and other hazardous materials	Provide a more complete picture of emissions; Make use of synergies when using PRTR as a platform for related topics; Increase usefulness for different stakeholders.
D6	Include resource (e.g. energy and water) consumption and other data/parameters (e.g. production volume) into PRTRs	Improve relevance of PRTRs for tracking success in achieving the sustainable development goals; Enable to assess environmental performance of facilities.
D7	Present aqua culture data on website	Provide a more complete picture of emissions.
D8	Provide information about the quality of environmental media through PRTRs in spatial aggregation.	Improve relevance of PRTRs for tracking success in achieving the sustainable development goals; Improve usefulness of PRTRs and make use of synergies by using PRTRs as a platform for other datasets.
E. Data (including its reporting, management and quality)		
E1	Aim at a single window access / one-stop-shop approach for current and future reporting to government authorities	Reduce costs for different government authorities; Facilitate reporting for operators and owners; Improve data quality; Create a streamlined and more transparent source of data for users; Render numerous non-compatible data collection obligations and thus different non-compatible databases compatible and increase their respective numbers of users and uses.

Item	Possible actions	Why are they useful?
E2	Further develop and harmonize methods and methodologies used to obtain PRTR data	Decrease the level of inconsistency among the PRTRs worldwide; Make use of synergies with related national and international activities; Promote the use of standards already used in “other” international environmental agreements (e.g.: CO2 and other GHG under the UNFCCC framework).
E3	Report on waste by pollutants, not by amount	Improve usefulness of data; Facilitate reporting.
E4	Inform on accidental pollutant releases in a differentiated and timely manner	Use PRTR maps to provide a trusted platform of information on possible accidental releases of pollutants for the concerned public.