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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****Seventh meeting**

Geneva, 28 and 29 November 2019

Item 9 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol: Substantive preparations****Note on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers****Prepared by the Bureau***Summary*

At its third session (Budva, Montenegro, 15 September 2017), the 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 requested the secretariat, taking into consideration the results of the implementation of the work programme for 2018–2021, to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties, including a detailed breakdown of estimated costs, for consideration and further elaboration by the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties, at the latest three months before the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to its possible adoption at that meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.1, decision III/2, para. 7).

The present document was prepared by the Bureau pursuant to decision III/2. It aims to facilitate the Working Group's discussion on the preparation of a draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. The document includes information on the approach to drafting the future work programme and an indicative timeline for its preparation. It also highlights issues that could be taken into consideration when preparing the future work programme.

The Working Group is invited to consider the note on the work programme for 2022–2025 at its seventh meeting and to mandate the Bureau to prepare the draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025 in the light of the discussions at the



seventh meeting, for submission and approval to the eighth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties in 2020, with a view to its possible adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (scheduled for 2021).

## **I. Approach to the drafting of the work programme**

1. With regard to the preparation of the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol, it is proposed that the main structure and key elements of the current work programme be maintained, and its contents updated, as appropriate. In particular, the following issues could be addressed:

(a) Experience gained in implementing the Protocol, the work under the Protocol's Compliance Committee and capacity-building activities;

(b) The decision of the Working Group regarding the development of the Protocol, as well as the progress made in implementing decision II/2 on the strategic plan for 2015–2020 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (see ECE/MP.PRTR/2014/4/Add.1);

(c) Developments in the field of information and communication technology;

(d) Alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and taking into account related work under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and the outcomes of the third Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Geneva, 7 and 8 November 2018);

(e) A stronger focus on the need to strengthen cooperation with relevant multilateral environmental agreements and bodies dealing with human rights matters and the increasing importance of pollutant release and transfer registers in the light of informed decision-making processes and sound management of chemicals, waste and resources around the world.

## **II. Indicative timeline**

2. The below indicative timeline for preparing the work programme corresponds to the approach to the preparation of the current work programme and takes into consideration the need to: (a) provide Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the general public and other interested stakeholders with an appropriate time frame for consultations within their respective constituencies, organizations and networks; and (b) ensure that an advance draft of the document is ready for approval by the Working Group of the Parties at its eighth meeting in 2020, prior to the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (scheduled for 2021). On the occasion of the preparation of previous work programmes, this approach was welcomed by both Governments and stakeholders, including NGOs, which had the possibility to provide inputs and negotiate text well in advance of its formal adoption.

3. The indicative timeline is as follows:

(a) A proposal regarding the preparation of the work programme will be submitted to the seventh meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 28 and 29 November 2019) for consideration;

(b) The draft of the work programme will be prepared taking into account the comments received at the seventh meeting of the Working Group of the Parties, and made available online to Parties, NGOs, the general public and other interested stakeholders for comments (early 2020);

(c) Taking into account the comments received, the revised draft of the work programme will be prepared by the Bureau, made available online for comments and

submitted to the eighth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (2020) for further discussion and approval, with a view to submitting it for adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its fourth session (scheduled for 2021).

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