

PRTR Protocol

7th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (WGP 7) **(Geneva, 28-29 November 2019)**

Statements by the EU and its Member States

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the agenda

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Since this is our first intervention at this meeting, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the timely submission of comprehensive meeting documents. We would also thank the Chair for her introductory statement and inviting the WGP to adopt the agenda.

I would like to add that the EU and its Member States can accept the proposed agenda as it stands.

We note that considerable time is set aside for agenda item 6 on Development of the Protocol. This is an important topic on which we would like to contribute positively and constructively, especially in the light of the misunderstandings in relation to the follow-up of the outcomes adopted at the 6th Working Group of the Parties in November 2018.

With regard to the European PRTR, we have undertaken considerable work on its implementation and possible future adaptation to technical progress, such as the review of implementation of the E-PRTR Regulation. We will share these findings later today and we hope that other Parties will consider them of interest.

We look forward to a fruitful and efficient meeting.

Agenda item 2: Status of ratification of the Protocol

Member States will be invited to inform at WGP 7 on the state of play of their ratification procedures.

Agenda item 3: Designation of national focal points

Member States will be invited to update as appropriate on the designation of national focal points in WGP 7.

Agenda item 4: Promotion and coordination

a) Coordination mechanisms and synergies

The EU and its Member States believe that synergies with other organizations and parties are important. Identifying synergies in implementing MEAs in other fields with the help of PRTRs should be regarded as highly important.

In this respect, we continue to support PRTR related coordination activities carried out in particular with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and other organisations. This cooperation opens up new perspectives and is helpful in defining areas for improvement as well as for further development of PRTRs.

b) Global promotion of the Protocol

The EU and its Member States support work to promote the Protocol globally, and in particular, cooperation with the partners concerned such as the OECD and UNITAR.

Agenda item 5: Compliance and reporting mechanisms

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Compliance Committee and the Secretariat for their continuous support in implementing the PRTR Protocol. We support the valuable work of the Compliance Committee and are ready to assist the appointed curator in his task. The EU and its Member States also welcome the information that the Committee has not received any communications regarding compliance with the Protocol.

The EU and its Member States would like to highlight the importance of ensuring a straightforward and functional reporting process. In this regard, the EU is pleased to announce that a new Commission implementing decision establishing E-PRTR reporting requirements has been adopted and published in the Official Journal of the European Union. This will enable strengthened reporting to inform environmental performance of installations and ensure consistency of reporting under the E-PRTR and EU's Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

Agenda item 6: Development of the Protocol

The EU and its Member States thank the Bureau for preparing the report on the development of the Protocol and consider it as a useful contribution.

We welcome discussions about options to strengthen the implementation of the Protocol and support a thorough and constructive consideration of development of the Protocol, based on an objective assessment of technical and legal facts.

At the same time, we recall that we are not in a position at this stage to support informal or formal negotiations on amendments to the Protocol or its annexes.

In our view, there is a need for a comprehensive report that provides more concrete information on areas for potential development of the Protocol. This would draw on the report prepared by the Bureau and would inform on the outcome of a deeper exchange of information between Parties to share experience on the issues referred to in Article 6.2 of the Protocol. However, such report should not pre-empt Parties' decision on whether the Protocol should be revised.

We would like to highlight that we have carried out considerable work on the E-PRTR and we believe this could be relevant for any future development of the Kiev Protocol. Building on this work, the EU and its Member States are willing to actively contribute to this information exchange.

We therefore propose the preparation by the Working Group of the Protocol, of a report drawing on the report from the Bureau and synthesising such exchange of information among Parties, based on submissions from Parties and relevant stakeholders, for consideration and possible adoption by the Meeting of the Parties. This report would cover options for Parties to envisage more extensive requirements than contained in the Protocol.

Furthermore, interested Parties wishing to propose formal amendments of the Protocol pursuant to its Article 20 may take this report into account.

Against that background, we have prepared the draft WGP7 decision that has been circulated, and we look forward to engaging with all Parties.

Agenda item 7: Sub-regional and national activities

Member States that wish to make a presentation and share their experiences in the WGP 7 are kindly invited to inform the WPIEI.

Agenda item 8: Implementation of the work programme for 2018-2021, including financial matters

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the reports on the implementation of the work programme for 2018-2021 and on contributions and expenditures.

Agenda item 9: Preparations for the fourth session of the MoPP

9 a) Hosting and preparatory timeline

The Secretariat is expected to give an oral update.

9 b) Substantive preparations

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparations on the work programme for 2022-2025 and the work done on future financial arrangements under the Protocol. Actions taken after the strategic plan for 2015-2020 have been successful. That, and experiences gained in implementing the Protocol and taking into account opportunities of developments in technology, constitute a good basis for planning the work programme for 2022-2025. Most important views on developing the Protocol have already been discussed in item 6.

For further planning on financial arrangements under the Protocol the EU and its Member States would also like to express our appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat and recognise the difficulties posed by limited and unpredictable funding. At this stage, although, we can only support a financial scheme with voluntary contributions.