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**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**

**Eighth meeting**

Geneva, 16-18 December 2020

Item 8 (b) (iii) of the provisional agenda
**Preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the
Parties to the Protocol: substantive preparations:
programme of work for 2022–2025**

 Draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers[[1]](#footnote-2)\*

 Prepared by the Bureau

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| *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 (scheduled for October 2021), 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 is prepared pursuant to the above-mentioned mandate. The document contains a proposed draft decision on the work programme for 2022–2025 for 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 (Aarhus Convention), prepared on the basis of decision III/2 on the work programme (ECE/MP.PRTR/2017/6/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its third session, and in line with the Note on the work programme for 2022–2025 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/7) considered by the Working Group at its seventh meeting (Geneva, 28 and 29 November 2019, and the related decisions of that meeting (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/2).  The present document aims to facilitate the Working Group’s discussion on the preparation of a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The costs were estimated based on the experience in implementing the current work programme. As for the previous intersessional period, preparation of the new work programme requires strategic planning and flexibility, as it covers a rather long period, with some uncertainty as to the actual cost implications. The estimated costs should therefore consider such risks and uncertainties as exchange rates, ticket prices and United Nations administrative requirements. The estimated budget presented in the draft work programme takes into consideration these risks and is expected to cover the maximum estimate of potential costs (actual expenditures are usually less than initially estimated in future work programmes).  The Working Group is invited to consider and approve the draft work programme at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 16 - 18 December 2020) and to mandate the Bureau to finalize the draft decision containing the work programme for submission to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its fourth session (scheduled for October 2021). |
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 *The Meeting of the Parties,*

 *Recalling* article 17, paragraph 2, of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, which requires the Meeting of the Parties to keep under continuous review the implementation and development of the Protocol, and with this purpose in mind, inter alia, to establish a programme of work,

 *Recalling also* its decisions I/6, on procedures for the preparation, adoption and monitoring of work programmes and on the work programme for 2011–2014, and II/3 and III/2, on the work programmes for, respectively, 2015–2017 and 2018–2021,

 *Taking into account* the strategic plan for 2015–2020 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, adopted through decision II/2, and the scheme of financial arrangements adopted through decision IV/…,

 *Recognizing* that the Protocol plays an important role in supporting Parties in implementing a number of Sustainable Development Goals, mainly Goals 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16,

 1. *Adopts* the work programme for 2022–2025, containing the estimated costs of each activity, as set out in the annex to this decision;

 2. *Agrees* upon the indicative allocation of resources and the resulting estimated costs set out in the annex, subject to annual review and, as appropriate, revision by the Working Group of the Parties on the basis of annual reports provided by the secretariat pursuant to decision IV/.. on financial arrangements;

 3. *Encourages* Parties to endeavour to ensure that the funding of the activities of the work programme remains stable throughout the period 2022–2025;

 4. *Also encourages* Parties, insofar as possible, and subject to the internal budgetary procedures of the Parties, to contribute to the Protocol’s trust fund for a given calendar year by 1 October of the preceding year, so as to secure staff costs for the smooth functioning of the secretariat, as a priority, and the timely and effective implementation of the activities with core requirements of the work programme for 2022–2025;

 5. *Requests* the Bureau and the Working Group to keep under review the activities of the work programme for the period 2022–2025, and to report and make appropriate recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth ordinary session;

 6. *Calls upon* the Parties and invites Signatories, other States and relevant intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations to contribute actively to the activities contained in the work programme;

 7. *Requests* the secretariat, taking into consideration the results of the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, to prepare a draft work programme for the intersessional period following the fifth 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 fifthsession of the Meeting of the Parties, with a view to its possible adoption at that meeting.

Annex

 Draft work programme for 2022–2025

| *Activity* | *Objective and expected outcome* | *Lead country, body or organization* | *Method of work* | *Approximate time frame* | *Estimated costs in United States dollars per year (average)a* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Item* | *Core requirements* | *Additional requirements* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| A.Compliance mechanism(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Monitor and facilitate compliance with the Protocol | Compliance Committee | Compliance Committee to meet to review submissions, communications, etc., prepare decisions, reports and guidance material, and undertake fact-finding missions; secretariat to publicize the mechanism, develop a database of cases and service the Committee | Ongoing | Committee meetings (travel + DSA) | 30 000 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Expert missions | 20 000 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Subcontracts (i.e., translations, management of electronic databases, website maintenance and improvement) | 10 000 |  |
| B.Technical assistance(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Assist countries in the effective implementation of the Protocol | Secretariat in close cooperation with partner organizations (i.e., UNEP, UNITAR, OSCE and European ECO-Forum) in the Framework programme on PRTR capacity-buildingb | Advisory support by the secretariat, specific projects in countries needing assistance; training workshops, guidance materials and technical assistance, mostly separately funded; questionnaires, analysis of results | Ongoing | Meetings, (travel + DSA for eligible participants) |  | 30 000 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Subcontracts (i.e., preparation of guidance material, research, analytical studies) |  | 10 000 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Expert missions |  | 10 000 |
| C.Information exchange on a technical level(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol, including any relevant developments  | Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol  | Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; ad hoc expert meetings and missions; use of electronic tools including the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy, the PRTR capacity-building database, PRTR.net and the PRTR:Learn website  | Ongoing | Ad hoc expert meetings (travel + DSA for eligible participants) |  | 30 000 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Subcontracts (i.e., maintenance and improvement of PRTR-related databases and other electronic tools) | 20 000 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Expert missions |  | 10 000 |
| D.Reporting mechanism(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Protocol; facilitate reporting, review of compliance and experience | Working Group of the Parties to the ProtocolSecretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessaryCompliance Committee | Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; use of the e‑reporting tool; preparation and processing of national implementation reports; analysis of reports and preparation of a synthesis report | Ongoing | Subcontracts (i.e., preparation of background material; maintenance of online applications for reporting) | 20 000 |  |
| E.Awareness–raising and promotion of the Protocol and its interlinkages with other treaties and processes(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Further knowledge of the Protocol throughout the ECE region and beyond, increase the number of Parties to the Protocol; further application of the Protocol in the context of other MEAs and related processes (i.e., OECD, post-SAICM/ICCM process, UNEMG, IOMC) | Secretariat in cooperation with all other partners | Participate in key regional and international events and processes; provide support to workshops organized by others; prepare leaflets, publications, news bulletins and other materials; update website; write and review articles on the Protocol | Ongoing | Participation in relevant events where funding is not provided for by the organizers (travel + DSA) | 10 000 | 10 000 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Subcontracts (i.e., organization of outreach campaigns) |  | 10 000 |
| F.Coordination and oversight of intersessional activities, organization of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Coordination and oversight of the activities under the Protocol, i.e., through the implementation of this programme of work | Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol and the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties | Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol; meetings of the Bureau as necessary; consultations among Bureau members using electronic means; session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol | Ongoing | Expert and secretariat travel and DSA, subcontracts (i.e., translations, promotional material, preparatory background material, reports and studies, media coverage of events) | 100 000 |  |
| G. Technical assessment of provisions of the Protocol(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Drafting of recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties on technical issues, based on the assessment and implementation reports | Secretariat; Compliance Committee, Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol;Lead countries or organizations for specific issue(s) related to the implementation and development of the Protocol, Secretariat, enlisting expert and administrative support as necessary | Meetings of the Working Group of the Parties to the Protocol and electronic consultation; drafting of assessment report(s) on experience gained in the development of national PRTRs according to article 6 (2) of the Protocol, as appropriate, and implementation reports | Ongoing | Subcontracts (draft recommendations on technical issues) | 10 000 |  |
| H. Horizontal support areas(mainly supports SDGs 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) | Overall support that covers multiple substantive areas of the work programme | Secretariat | Staff training, operational expenditures, equipment | Ongoing | Staff training, technical and operational support | 4 000 |  |
| **Subtotal (activities)** |  |  |  |  | **224 000** | **110 000** |
| Staff requirements: |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| One P-3c full-time |  |  |  |  |  | 180 000 |  |
| One G-5d |  |  |  |  |  | 38 600 |  |
| **Subtotal (staff requirements)**  |  |  |  |  | **218 600** |  |
| Programme support costs (13 per cent) |  |  |  |  | 57 538 | 14 300 |
| **Grand total** |  |  |  |  |  | **500 138** | **124 300** |

*Abbreviations:* DSA, daily subsistence allowance; ECE, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; ICCM, International Conference on Chemicals Management; IOMC, Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals; MEA, multilateral environmental agreement; OECD, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; OSCE, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; PRTR, pollutant release and transfer register; SAICM,Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management; SDG, Sustainable Development Goal; UNEMG, United Nations Environment Management Group; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UNITAR, United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

*a* The estimated costs shown here are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions made under the Protocol’s scheme of financial arrangements, either through its trust fund or in kind. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. Figures are rounded up. They may change in accordance with the United Nations administrative regulations.

*b* See www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/public-participation/protocol-on-prtrs/areas-of-work/envppprtrcb/framework-programme-on-prtr-capacity-building.html.

*c* One P-3 Environmental Affairs Officer servicing all activities under the Protocol on PRTRs. If no provision is made under the United Nations regular budget for this post, it will require extrabudgetary funding.

*d* This staff member is required in order to provide the necessary administrative support to activities under the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol, including administrative arrangements for the meetings of the governing and subsidiary bodies of the two treaties. The change from G-4 to G-5 reflects the current seniority in grade. The costs will be distributed between the contributions to the Aarhus Convention (70 per cent) and the Protocol (30 per cent).

1. \* This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)