

POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTERS: AN EFFICIENT TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

Side Event

**“Environment for Europe” 7th Ministerial Conference Astana, 22nd September
2011 (13:00-15:00 p.m.) Room A5**

SUMMARY REPORT

I. STATEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Michel Amand, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). The following welcoming speeches/statements were provided:

Welcome by Mr. Adletbek Bekeyev, Deputy Director of Committee on Ecological Regulation and Control, Ministry of Environment Protection, Kazakhstan

Welcome by Ambassador, Head of OSCE Centre in Astana, Mr. Alexandre Keltchewsky.
Statement by Ms. Diana Mukanova, Director of Environment Legislation and Legal Support, Ministry of Environment Protection, Kazakhstan.

Statement by Mr. Marco Keiner, Director, UNECE Environment Division.

Expert speakers then described aspects of the PRTR as follows:

Introduction – Mr. Michel Amand, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs).

PRTRs: An efficient tool for sustainable water management – Ambassador Hugo G. von Meijenfheldt, Deputy Director-General for the Environment, the Netherlands Special Envoy for Climate change.

NGOs role in developing and implementing PRTRs - Ms. Lidia Astanina, European ECOForum / Greenwomen Analytical Environmental Agency.

Experiences of Kazakhstan on the development of PRTRs - Mrs. Lyudmila Shabanova - Head of Green Bridge Office, Deputy General Director of Informational and Analytical Center of the Ministry of Environment Protection.

Sustainable water management: Private and public sector best practice in Finland – Ms. Katri Mehtonen, Managing Director, Finnish Water Forum.

These presentations are available for download at <http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/treaties/public-participation/protocol-on-prtrs/areas-of-work/envppprtrcb/events.html>

II. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following questions and topics were raised and discussed:

The question was raised why has Kazakhstan started the process toward developing a PRTR system before joining the protocol? The panel responded that under the protocol it is possible to ratify after development of PRTR has taken place.

The question was raised why did the government of Kazakhstan choose the region Ust Kamenogorsk for the pilot national PRTR project ? The panel responded that a local expert had proposed this because there is a lot of industry in that region/city.

The question was raised why small enterprises are not included in the PRTR as small enterprises are providing a lot of pollutants to the environment. (i.e. is enterprise capacity a right indicator of pollution ?). The panel responded saying it is true sometimes small enterprises emit more than big enterprises. It was emphasised there are thresholds for small and medium enterprises and that significant pollutant streams are addressed by the PRTR. The importance of starting the process of PRTR development by making data available was emphasised.

The question was asked how the Ministry of Environment of Kazakhstan is reacting to these processes i.e. what is its intentions regarding establishing a PRTR register. The panel responded saying work is being done and efforts are in progress to ratify the PRTR Protocol by Kazakhstan. The process of preparation and development of both technical capacity, legislation and financial aspects has begun, but that of course significant financial resources are required in these times of crises. It was mentioned that next year a proposal will be submitted to the government of Kazakhstan to join the PRTR Protocol, and that if the government agree to this proposal this will start the process toward ratification i.e. consideration in the parliament of Kazakhstan. The first stage is developing the proposal outlining technical and financial issues and how the PRTR will benefit interests in Kazakhstan. It was mentioned the Ministry is positive in relation to PRTR and the preparation period required to join the PRTR Protocol.

There was an intervention describing the developments toward implementation of PRTR in Kazakhstan and several points in the project, including: the need to find key national features and the need to adapt the PRTR into national and institutional infrastructure; to ascertain the gaps for implementation; the first recommendation to the Ministry to develop methodology for calculation of volumes; that there are separate databases that list GHG emissions, waste, water discharges, but that there are gaps (dioxins, furans, sewage) and there is not enough data to implement a PRTR; that there is no regulatory body for managing how enterprises report sewage water, (there is a water body but no data on sewage and this is a problem for Kazakhstan); a training program being required for all stakeholders on how to calculate data and place the data in PRTR format; that a pilot instruction set has been prepared in which instructions were sent to 64 enterprises in Kazakhstan and a final version was created with good input from these enterprises; that

eight departments were created within the Committee for Environment Regulation using river basin principles and that it is important to create a training program for each of these departments and that the data be verified.

The question was raised why do we try to fix pollutants and polluters and why don't we consider mitigation of pollution. It was mentioned that lakes (and agricultural ground systems) in Kazakhstan are polluted and it is hard to identify exact pollutants and polluters. The issue of how to treat lakes was raised and it was mentioned we must start to radically consider pollutant treatment mechanisms. The panel responded stating the goal of the PRTR was for the population to know whether pollutants are reduced or not and that in relation to agricultural land systems that pesticides used are tested by state expertise (and in the Netherlands if the pesticide is not registered by the Ministry of Agriculture suppliers are not allowed to provide these pesticides - they are sent back). It was mentioned that it is the scientists who explain to government the risks associated with substances used for agriculture. The cradle to cradle design was mentioned in relation to these processes. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants was mentioned as an example of EU legislation on nitrates. It was mentioned that the PRTR includes and covers treatment of wastewater releases to land and water systems. The importance of respecting the process of the PRTR Protocol and developing data including GIS data was mentioned. It was mentioned that promoting PRTR data at a national level is desirable for compatibility of synergies with other conventions (e.g. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants) thereby assisting these legislations
