

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

Bureau

Twelfth meeting

Budva, Montenegro, 13 September 2017

Report of the twelfth meeting of the Bureau¹

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden, Chair), Ms. Ulrike Schüler (Germany, Vice-Chair), Mr. Øyvind Hetland (Norway, Vice-Chair), Mr. Nebojsa Redzic (Serbia), Ms. Carmen Canales (Spain) and Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland).

Observers: Mr. Alex Radway for Mr. Chris Allen (European Union), Mr. Iñigo de Vicente-Mingarro (Spain) and Ms. Mara Silina (European ECO-Forum).

Not present: Mr. Chris Allen (European Union).

II. Opening and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair opened the meeting and the Bureau adopted the provisional agenda.

III. Future membership of the Bureau

2. The Chair informed the Bureau about the status of nomination of candidates for the future Bureau.

IV. Open issues with regards to category I (action) documents

3. The secretariat informed the Bureau that paragraph 6 of the Draft decision III/1 on reporting requirements (ECE/MR.PRT/2017/12) will need to be revised due to a recent receipt of one national implementation report. Recalling the outcomes of the latest meeting of the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 23-24 November 2016), the Chair expressed her expectation that the Draft decision III/2 on the work programme for 2018–2021 for the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MR.PRT/2017/13) will be adopted with no amendments and Draft decision III/1 on reporting requirements will be adopted only with factual amendments reflecting the status of submission of national implementation reports. Furthermore, the two documents prepared by the Compliance Committee: Draft systemic issues concerning the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release

¹ This document was not formally edited.

and Transfer Registers and recommendations on how to address them (ECE/MR.PRTR/WG.1/2016/5) and Draft guidance for reporting on implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MR.PRTR/WG.1/2016/6), are expected to be endorsed with no amendments. The Bureau agreed with the Chair's position.

4. With regard to Draft decision III/3 on financial arrangements under the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MR.PRTR/2017/11) the Chair recalled different options proposed in the document and informed on the recent discussion amongst the Parties. She also informed the Bureau about the latest decision on the same subject matter within the framework of the Aarhus Convention.

V. Organizational matters for the joint high-level segment

5. The Chair informed the Bureau on organizational matters regarding the joint high-level segment under the Meetings of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs (Budva, Montenegro, 14 September 2017).

VI. Outcomes of the second reporting cycle

6. The Bureau discussed the outcomes of the second reporting cycle summarized in the Synthesis report on the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (ECE/MR.PRTR/2017/10).

VII. Overview of the progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020

7. The Bureau discussed an overview of progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MR.PRTR/2017/10, annex I). The Bureau agreed to suggest to the Meeting of the Parties to request the secretariat to organize a survey among Parties in order to collect information related to the progress in implementing the strategic plan that is not provided through the national implementation reports. The Bureau also found that the issue identified by the Committee, that Parties set priorities in different ways in terms of the implementation of the strategic plan (e.g. with some countries investing resources in developing their pollutant release and transfer register system and increasing their usefulness) should be addressed further.

8. Furthermore, the Bureau suggested to identify where further action is needed to successfully implement the targets of different focal areas of the strategic plan and to prepare a possible future strategic plan for 2021–2029 taking into account the overview of progress in implementing the strategic plan for 2015–2020 and the outcome of the above-mentioned survey.

9. In addition, the Bureau noted that there was a risk for the Protocol to become rather outdated and less relevant as recent developments related to PRTRs go beyond the Protocol's requirements. To address this challenge, the Protocol could be developed further taking into account its article 6 para. 2, the strategic plan for 2015–2020 and relevant developments at national and international levels. The Bureau agreed to discuss this matter at its next meeting and requested the secretariat to organize a survey among the Bureau members to facilitate this discussion. The outcomes of the discussion could provide a basis for possible future development of the Protocol.

VIII. Evaluation of the success of the Protocol and the development of indicators

10. The Chair brought to the attention of the Bureau a note on the evaluation of the success of the Protocol and the development of indicators (ECE/MR.PRT/C.1/2017/2, annex) prepared by the Compliance Committee. The Bureau expressed its general support to the proposals outlined in the document, but stressed at the same time that before any decision on the evaluation is taken, there is a need to clarify goals and resource implications of such exercise. The Bureau agreed to discuss this matter at its next meeting and, if appropriate, present a detailed proposal, for consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting.

IX. Global promotion of the Protocol

11. The Bureau reaffirmed its support to the global promotion of the Protocol and reconfirmed that the two past joint global round tables on PRTRs were successful. The Bureau also agreed to consider organisation of a similar event in the future, possibly in 2018.
