

PRTRs: PROMOTING INFORMED DECISIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE¹

3rd Global round table on PRTRs

7–8 November 2018
Geneva, Switzerland

Organised by

The secretariat of the ECE Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Protocol on PRTRs) to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

and

the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

in cooperation with

the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

and

the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Chairs: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden), Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers and Mr. Noriyuki Suzuki (Japan), Chair of the OECD Working Group on Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

as of 18 July 2018

Background

1. Pursuant to the success of the previous joint Global round tables, held in November 2013 in Geneva, and in November 2015 in Madrid, the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties at its third session (15 September 2017, Budva, Montenegro)² and the OECD Working Group on PRTRs at its 1st meeting (27-29 June 2017, New York, USA) entrusted their respective Bureaux to explore an opportunity to organize a third global event. Given the extensive experience of UNITAR and UNEP in activities on PRTRs in different regions, they have been invited to cooperate on the organisation of the event.

2. The round table is expected to foster exchange between Governments and different stakeholders on PRTR-related issues. The presentations and discussions during the event will be centred on good practices, common challenges and new opportunities related to the further development of PRTRs.

¹ This document was not formally edited.

² See https://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr/mopp3_docs.html for the report of the third session.



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3. The Chair of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties and the Chair of the OECD Working Group on PRTRs will co-chair the event. The output document will be the Chairs' summary on the main outcomes of the meeting, prepared with the assistance of the ECE and OECD secretariats after the meeting.

4. The Global round table will have the following format: the invited panellists from different regions (e.g. Latin America, North America, Asia, Africa and different subregions of ECE) will make short opening statements/presentations (up to 7 minutes), after which an open debate will be started. Such format can be adapted to the needs of specific agenda items.

5. Two-hour lunch breaks can be also used for bilateral networking.

DAY I³ Wednesday, 7 November 2018

10.00-10.10 1. Opening

A high-level official will deliver a welcoming statement.

10.10-13.00 2. PRTRs across the world

This session aims to provide information about current status of PRTRs in the world, including major challenges in implementing or developing PRTRs, and activities to address these by international organizations.

13.00-15.00 Lunch break

Time for bilateral or small group discussions

15.00-18.00 3. How to apply PRTRs to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

The session will provide an opportunity to share experience and opinions on how PRTRs contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

a) Introduction

Representatives of the two Bureaux will provide introductory remarks and inform participants on current work under OECD and the Protocol related to the topic;

b) PRTRs building on existing reporting structures

Delegates will discuss the role of PRTRs in assessing progress in PRTR-related targets of SDGs, green chemistry and assessing sectorial environmental performance/measuring environmental policies impacts;

c) The potential of PRTR systems “designed from scratch”

Delegates will discuss the potential of PRTR systems designed from the beginning to support promotion of sustainable development by e.g. offering additional information on energy and water consumption, taxation systems that account for environmental performance, etc.

³ Coffee breaks are around 11:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. if time permits.



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DAY II⁴ Thursday, 8 November 2018

10.00-13.00 4. Emerging PRTRs

The session will address common challenges and emerging opportunities in the development and implementation of PRTRs. To foster interactive discussions between participants, small (maximum 3) groups will be set up, where the participants will share their experience and knowledge about key steps in the development, implementation and use of PRTRs. The session will be organized as follows:

a) Presentations (10:00-10:30)

A brief introduction to the following three topics by the groups' rapporteurs:

i) Variety of uses and users of PRTR systems and related communication strategies

The discussion will address different user groups for PRTR data and existing or potential use for PRTR data, including through combination with other information and data and using PRTR data for adaptation measures against climate change. It covers strategies that aim at promoting PRTRs and improving the use of PRTR-systems by different stakeholders and strategies to avoid wrong use of data and use of PRTR platforms as a tool for education.

ii) Role of equivalency in comparability

The discussion will address possible methodologies to expand comparability of data from different PRTRs, e.g. the identification of equivalence (e.g. using tables comparing code classifications (Industrial activities, NACE / ISIC)), flexibility in comparing chemicals with similar characteristics. It may also include efforts to harmonise PRTRs among countries.

iii) Single window approach International reporting

The discussion will address sharing of experience from PRTR-systems that are cross cutting and serve as a single window access point to e.g. government services or fulfilment of a variety of reporting obligations, including good practices on reporting to different international agreements by using PRTRs. It may also include discussion on how to overcome common difficulties in establishing a PRTR-system that is used by a variety of government entities.

b) Discussions (10.30-11.45, including coffee break)

The rapporteurs will facilitate the discussion in the topic groups and will summarise their outcomes.

c) Report back and Discussion (11.45-13.00)

The rapporteurs will inform all participants on the outcomes of the discussions in the groups. This will be followed by comments and questions from the participants.

13.00-15.00 Lunch break

Time for bilateral or small group discussions

⁴ Coffee brake is around 11:00 a.m. if time permits.

15.00-17.20 5. PRTRs for different stakeholders

The existence of a PRTR can serve as a major driving force for pollution reduction throughout many sectors. For instance, PRTRs provide policymakers with key indicators for measuring progress in reducing pollutants, advancing sustainability and the success of a green economy. The public, central and local governments, academia, research institutions, and businesses can utilize the PRTR as a common tool to e.g. inform their strategic goals.

The session will provide an opportunity to share experience and opinions of Parties and different stakeholders and to discuss how PRTRs contribute to the sustainable development.

After the panellists have introduced the topics through short presentations (see a to c below), the discussion will be opened to all participants.

- a) Pollution data: science, education and risk assessment**
- b) Consumption and production: PRTRs as tools for sustainability**
- c) Hurdles and opportunities in establishing a PRTR**

17.20-17.35 Coffee break

17.35-18.00 6. Closing statements by the Chairs

The Chairs will summarise key points derived from the discussions and will close the meeting.
