Kyiv Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

3rd Global Round Table on PRTRs

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UNECE

Kyiv Protocol
Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

- **Reporting tool** for industry to provide data on their emissions

- **Database** that facilitates data management

- **Data visualization tool** that sets emissions in spatial and other context and makes data accessible

- **Tool for fact based decision making** at multiple levels: government, industry, public

UNECE Protocol on PRTRs

Background

- Adopted at EfE Ministerial conference in Kyiv, 21 May 2003

- Protocol open to all UN Member States

- Only legally binding tool for access to environmental data with its own compliance mechanism

- Entry into force on 8 October 2009

- 35 Parties including EU

- EU level: EPRTR Regulation mostly based on the Protocol

UNECE Protocol on PRTRs

Scope of the Protocol

- 65 activities (capacity/employee thresholds)

- 86 substances/substance categories, such as greenhouse gases, acid rain pollutants, ozone-depleting substances, heavy metals, substances covered by POP's Convention and certain carcinogens such as dioxins

- Releases to air, soil, water.

- Parties choose the capacity threshold system or employee threshold system for determining which facilities report.

- Off-site transfers of waste / wastewater. A threshold system defines which waste transfers have to be reported.

- Progressively include available data on diffuse releases.

- The Protocol sets minimum requirements. Parties developing PRTRs may go further, according to their national priorities and may include activities and substances that are additional to those listed in Annex I and Annex II).

Advantages of a legally binding instrument

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Parties

NGOs

Public Environmental Information Centres and Aarhus Centres

International Organizations

LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT

- Beneficial for national and international cooperation
- → Strong signal to other entities
- Beneficial for good governance, environmental security and socio-economic development
- → Real progress through commitment
- Provides solid structure through which partner organizations (international organizations, IFIs, bilateral donors) can efficiently channel their support
- → Security and trust for new partnerships

The Protocol text

Covers the various aspects of PRTR implementation which, including:

Article 4	**Core Elements of a PRTR System**
Article 5	**Design and Structure of the database**
Article 6	**Scope of the Register**
Article 7,8	**Reporting Requirements and Reporting Cycle**
Article 9,10	**Data Collection, Record-Keeping and Quality Assessment**
Artilce 11,12	**Public Access to information, Confidentiality**
Article 13	**Public Participation**
Article 14	**Access to Justice**
Article 15	**Capacity-Building**
Article 16	**International Cooperation**

Global Round Table on PRTRs
November 2018, Geneva

- How can PRTRs be used for policies related to, for example, health matters, energy consumption, consumer choices or urban planning?

- What should be done to make this a reality?

- What role can PRTRs play in helping Governments to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals?

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- Examples from governmental, non-governmental, research and private sector organisations; including from UNECE, UNECLAC, UNEP MAP regions, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Mongolia;

- Including on the use of PRTRs to:

    - put into practice the **polluters-pays-principle**,

    - address several **waste management issues**,

    - **integrate** a variety of national and international **reporting obligations** and

    - **improve trust between different stakeholders**;

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- It was highlighted in a number of interventions that PRTRs:
  - help governments to fulfil their international **reporting** obligations to e.g. UNEP chemicals MEAs and UNFCCC, in a **cost-efficient** way;
  - can be combined with other data sources for **supporting complex decisions** related to economic, social and environmental matters; and
  - can enable governments and organizations to **make data available** in a form that is **useful to the public**.

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Outcomes that link directly to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals:

- The key prerequisite for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals are **informed decision-making processes**.

- Therefore, **collection and active dissemination of data on pollution and public rights to information** became key drivers for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

- PRTRs clearly have a role to play in that regard. They are the best tool known to date for **providing access to information on releases of pollutants and wastes**.

- The overarching purpose of PRTRs in this context is that by **enhancing transparency and accountability**, they can play a central role in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, and good governance (Goal 16) across the 2030 Agenda.

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Work on Sustainable Development Goals requires:

- breaking silos and
- presenting information to stakeholders in an integrated way.

→**PRTRs can offer an effective way to address this demand.**

Major principles that guide establishment of PRTRs regarding data quality, transparency and usefulness to the public can be applied to databases of other sectors, such as health, urban planning and consumer choices, which in their turn can be linked to PRTR data.

International PRTR Coordinating Group

- Aim **is to improve coordination between international organizations, Governments and other interested parties** in their ongoing and planned efforts related to the further development and implementation of PRTR systems

- Current topics:

  - The scope of PRTRs in the context of **new developments with regard to use of chemical substances and further harmonization** of different PRTR systems and issues of data equivalence for improved exchange of experience and data

  - Good practices for a successful **PRTR awareness campaigns** and interactive, data visualization options for communicating/presenting PRTR information

- **Next meeting:**

October 2019 in Paris, back-to-back with 3rd meeting of the OECD Working Group on PRTRs.

Points to consider for dynamic development of PRTRs

Step by step implementation

- To keep in mind that it is a long process to develop a functional system and it is important not to keep the system static but continuously evolving in order to maintain its relevance and interest among users.

- **Rome was not build in a day: Building PRTRs is a step by step process. E.g. First facilities report on paper, then in word docs, then in excel tables, and then in an online reporting directly in the data base…**

- Promote the register to the public and to make use of its full potential. It is also important to put the information into a context in order to make data useful.

- Need to understand usefulness for users and effort involved for reporting entities.

- Authorities have data on other substances/activities/parameters which they could more easily make available by adding them to PRTRs?

- Industry needs to report on substances which are not part of PRTR in any case, this information could be also made available without meaning additional effort for the industry.

Points to consider for dynamic development of PRTRs

Link to national priority areas

- Technology transfer: PRTRs help to share methods of pollution prevention at national and international level.

- Shift to renewable energy: Integrating resource consumption in your reporting system including e.g. energy consumption can significantly support sound decision making.

- Make a list of substances that takes into account the interests from different parts of the government, the public and industry: PM10/PM2.5, SO2,, Lead, Mercury, GHG.

- PRTRs that provide comprehensive environmental information or are closely linked to such data centres are arguably the most useful to the government and stakeholders.

- Ratification of the legally binging Protocol on PRTRs sends a strong signal and helps bring global knowledge and expertise to the country.

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Thank you for your attention!