



THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN
and
THE REPUBLICAN STATE ENTERPRISE "INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION"

**NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL
INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION OF PRTR DATA**

Astana,
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1. Introduction

The present strategy was developed in the framework of the joint project of the RSE on the CEC "IACEP" of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNITAR, named "Global project on the implementation of the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) as a tool for reporting Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), dissemination and awareness-raising for the Republic of Kazakhstan" (hereinafter referred to as the Project).

This document will constitute the National Strategy for the Distribution of Information on the Environment and PRTR Data (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy). The strategy is designed to conduct an effective PRTR awareness campaign, using modern and relevant means of disseminating environmental information, including PRTR data from companies and reporting industries. The constitutional right of citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan is to receive complete, reliable and timely information on the state of the environment, the degree of pollution, measures taken to protect it and improve health. Effective protection of the constitutional right to a favourable environment is impossible without adequate provision of information to the public with quality environmental information. To realize this right, Chapter 21 of the Environmental Code is devoted to environmental information, including the definition of concepts, such as Environmental information, State fund of environmental information, provision of environmental information, and Dissemination of environmental information".

In 2000, Kazakhstan ratified the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention, Law No. 92-II of 23 October 2000). The main purpose of the Convention is to guarantee the rights of Parties to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in matters relating to the environment.

The legal basis for the formation and use of integrated, nationwide pollutant release and transfer registers is the provision of free public access to environmental information. Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) are one of the tools to ensure the protection of the right to a favorable environment in foreign and international practice.

On 21 May 2003, the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention was adopted. On October 8, 2009, the PRTR Protocol entered into force and became the first international agreement that guarantees the public the right to access to environmental information. More than 30 countries have ratified the Protocol, including Albania, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Switzerland, Ukraine, European Union countries.

In Kazakhstan, inside-governmental procedures for the ratification of the PRTR Protocol are carried out. Ratification of the PRTR Protocol is included in the long-term plan for concluding international treaties of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2018-2019.

The text of the Protocol is coordinated with the interested central state bodies, accredited associations of subjects of private entrepreneurship and the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Positive conclusions of scientific-legal and scientific-linguistic expertise and positive conclusion of legal expertise were received. A positive conclusion was received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the compliance of the provisions of the Protocol on PRTRs, of which the Republic of Kazakhstan intends to become a party.

The Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the expert support of the RSE on CEC "Informational and Analytical Center for Environmental Protection" of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 30, 2005 No. 54 "On International Contracts", a lot of work was done to prepare for ratification of the Protocol on PRTRs.

At present, the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, is working to prepare a draft of decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on ratification of the Protocol, which will be sent for approval to interested state bodies and accredited organizations in accordance with the procedures of the national legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The main goal of PRTRs is to ensure public access to information on emissions and transfer of pollutants and wastes and indirectly to reduce and prevent environmental degradation from pollution. PRTR is a national or regional environmental data base or a list of potentially hazardous chemicals and (or) pollutants emitted into the atmosphere, water or soil and transported from the territory of the enterprises for treatment and disposal. Speaking about the benefits of the register, we cannot fail to mention the contribution that the creation of a national PRTR can have on the political, economic, social and ultimately sustainable development of the country.

The very process of reporting data to a PRTR tends to encourage pollution prevention, as PRTR results help to pinpoint the priority candidates for the introduction of cleaner production technologies, which will become an effective investment for the most polluting enterprises.

Thus, the Protocol is an incentive to reduce the level of environmental pollution, as it provides public access to data on emissions and transfer of pollutants from users of natural resources.

The use of PRTRs for society is guaranteed information support for the right to a favourable environment. The public can use PRTR data to familiarize themselves with the environmental situation in specific communities and to assess the environmental performance of enterprises, economic sectors or government agencies. Using register data, representatives of potentially affected communities can ask questions about environmental well-being or health risks, thereby motivating the company to improve environmental performance.

To date, the legislative base of Kazakhstan has been amended in the field of environmental protection, where the principles are defined (Article 160 of the Environmental Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (and the requirements for maintaining the State of Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (SPRTR), the order and amount of environmental information provided by users of natural resources (Rules of reference of State Pollutant Release and Transfer Register, approved by Order of Acting Minister of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan of June 10, 2016 No. 241).

World experience shows the positive effect of the introduction of such a system in the field of pollution control chemicals and waste.

For the effective implementation of the PRTR in Kazakhstan, it is required to implement activities aimed at increasing public access to environmental information and PRTRs.

2. Analysis of the environment for providing access to PRTR information

For the effectiveness of the awareness campaign on PRTR implementation and ensuring public access to environmental information and PRTRs, it is necessary to clearly understand the specificity of the target audience, the portrait of its representatives, its expectations and needs.

The key target audience for the PRTR awareness campaign is the economically active population of Kazakhstan. According to the latest data of the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the year 2015, the economically active population (aged 15 and over) is 9,074.9 thousand people, the economically inactive population is 3,680.1 thousand people. (Table 1).

Table 1 - Economic Activity of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2015

| Name | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Economically active population, thousand people | 9 041,3 | 8 962,0 | 9 074,9 |
| The level of economic activity, in percentage terms | 71,7 | 70,7 | 71,1 |
| Employed population, thousand people | 8 570,6 | 8 510,1 | 8 623,8 |
| Employment level, in percentage to: | | | |
| population aged 15 years and over | 68,0 | 67,1 | 67,6 |
| Economically active population | 94,8 | 95,0 | 95,0 |
| Employees, thousand people | 5 949,7 | 6 109,7 | 6 294,9 |
| Percentage of the employed population, in percent | 69,4 | 71,8 | 73,0 |
| Self-employed workers, thousand people | 2 621,0 | 2 400,4 | 2 328,9 |
| Percentage of the employed population, in percent | 30,6 | 28,2 | 27,0 |
| Unemployed population, thousand people | 470,7 | 451,9 | 451,1 |
| Unemployment rate, in percentage terms | 5,2 | 5 | 5,0 |
| Economically inactive population, thousand people | 3 569,4 | 3 715,9 | 3 680,1 |
| Level of economic inactivity, in percent | 28,3 | 29,3 | 28,9 |

Source: Committee of Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan - www.stat.gov

The main sources of information in the field of the environment are television, radio, the Internet, prints, family discussions, as well as conversations with relatives and friends. According to the Ministry of Information and Communication of the Republic of Kazakhstan, at the moment 100% of the territory of Kazakhstan is covered by broadcasting (Figure 1).



Figure 1 - Coverage of the territory of Kazakhstan by broadcasting

Source: Ministry of Information and Communication of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The Internet, radio and social networks as a means of getting more popular among the urban population, while television and newspapers are more attractive to the rural population. Inactive use of the Internet by rural residents is associated either with its lack of in rural areas or high prices for Internet services for rural residents.

The percentage of the population using smartphones and mobile applications is growing rapidly. As a result, social networks are continuously expanding their function as an aggregator-a collector of various information. In terms of popularity, the economically active population of Kazakhstan uses information from the networks Facebook, Instagram, YouTube. Taking into account the specifics of PRTRs, PRTR information within the frame of Strategy will be provided through the social networks Facebook, VKontakte and Twitter.

Social networks are the most popular means of communication, which in the future can overtake communication in real time and is an effective tool for informing the public.

Thus, television and the Internet, including smartphones and computers, can be determined as the dominant communication channels for public. The official and information portal of the project will be broadcast via the Internet and national channels. Moreover, information pages of the project will be created on networked portals. Also, a separate group can be identified non-governmental and public organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which deal with environmental issues, including the Aarhus Centers of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Effective means of communication with the non-governmental sector will be presentations at seminars, conferences, e-mail distribution, publication of articles in specialized literature, an invitation to social networks and an information portal for the project. Active involvement of this category will increase the effectiveness of the information campaign.

The implementation of the Strategy will also involve industrial enterprises and government bodies with a view to increasing their PRTR capacity and promoting openness and accessibility of environmental information and PRTR data to the general public. Involvement of industry and government bodies will be carried out by holding seminars, posting information on PRTR website, e-mailing, publishing articles in specialized literature, informing through social networks.

Thus, the Strategy will cover all stakeholders: the public, the non-governmental sector, government agencies and industry of Kazakhstan. This approach will achieve tangible results in ensuring public access to PRTR data.

3. Ensuring access to PRTR information

To ensure public access to environmental information and PRTRs, the following means of information should be used:

- Placing environmental information and PRTR news on the PRTR web portal (<http://prtr.ecogofond.kz/>), placed on the domain of RSE IAC;
- Creation of accounts in social networks "Facebook", "VKontakte" and "Twitter", constant updating of information in social networks;
- Coverage of environmental issues on television, radio, in newspapers (speech on the Atameken Business Channel, publications in the national newspapers Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, Egemen Kazakhstan, Ecology of Kazakhstan);
- Preparation of information materials, articles for publication in popular scientific publications, journals (corporate editions of users of natural resources);
- Publications in the monthly newspaper "Ecology of Kazakhstan";
- Regular distribution of environmental news and relevant information to representatives, businesses, NGOs, public organizations and MASS MEDIA through informational letters and press-releases;

- Regular dispatch of information through the departments of ecology (for users of natural resources) and accredited associations of subjects of private entrepreneurship;
- Work with the press services of users of natural resources;
- Conducting a survey among stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the campaign;
- Informing the public in the framework of other international projects on the "green" economy;
- Release of presentation materials, brochures on PRTR issues;
- Posting on the PRTR website manuals, handbooks, recommendations on public access to justice in environmental matters.

The specified measures, their terms and the form of completion are included in the plan of measures for the implementation of this Strategy (Paragraph 6).

4. Public participation in the decision-making process

Ensuring public participation in the decision-making process will be carried out by:

- dissemination of information on upcoming public hearings on PRTRs (via distribution by email.);
- dissemination of information on the preparation of draft regulations, programs and plans;
- placing drafts of normative acts, programs and plans for discussion at the Forum of the PRTR web portal (<http://prtr.ecogofond.kz/>) and web-portal, developed by UNITAR (<http://prtr.unitar.org>);
- regular dispatch to representatives of business, public organizations, state information bodies, enterprises about seminars, conferences, preparation of normative acts, programs and plans in the field of environmental protection.

5. Expected results

Realization of the present Strategy (plan) will promote:

- raising awareness and knowledge (understanding) of the population and other stakeholders about PRTRs;
- the involvement of society in the process of achieving the PRTR goals, the formation of public environmental consciousness;
- development of public opinion in the issues of environmental protection, affecting the state of the environment;
- assist the public in providing access to information on PRTR, facilitate its participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters;
- improved awareness of environmental problems; improving the quality of decisions taken in the field of environmental protection and nature management and the process of their implementation;
- stimulation of users of natural resources to introduce "green" technologies;
- environmental education and raising public awareness of environmental issues.

To assess the effectiveness of the Strategy, the following quantitative indicators are established:

- Number of published information press releases - at least 42;
- Creation of an official project page in a social network - at least 3 social networks

- Publications on the implementation of the project in the newspaper "Ecology of Kazakhstan" - at least 7 articles;
- interview of the National Project Coordinator on the channel - at least 3;
- release of information bulletins in electronic format - no less than 4;
- holding seminars for interested parties - no less than 7
- presentations at conferences, seminars, roundtables - at least 6;
- speeches and lectures in universities - at least 4;
- published articles on PRTRs in republican publications, specialized newspapers, nature users' journals - no less than 15;
- Interviews with stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign - at least 2 000 questionnaires
- the number of NGOs involved in the information campaign - at least 5;
- Coverage of users on the site and in social networks - at least 500 people;
- number of printed brochures about the project and PRTR - at least 300 brochures;
- release on the radio - at least 2.

6. Work plan for the implementation of the Strategy

For effective implementation of the Strategy, the implementation of the activities indicated in Table 2 is necessary. This plan details the measures to ensure public access to environmental information and PRTRs, the timing of their implementation and the form of completion.

→ **Timeframe for the implementation of the strategy:** July 2017 - February 2019

Table 2 - Workplan for the implementation of the Strategy

| № | Event | Term | Indicators | Outputs |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Conducting a workshop on developing a national public access strategy for PRTRs | June 28, 2017 | Meeting report | Proposals for draft strategy |
| 2 | Harmonization of the strategy with PMC and UNITAR (working out of comments and proposals if available) | October 2017 | n/a | The coordinated strategy of the PMC and UNITAR |
| 3 | Stakeholder interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign | January 2018 December 2018 | 2 000 questionnaires | Results of conducted surveys are collected into a final report. |
| Information space | | | | |
| 4 | Preparation of information press releases for posting on official websites of the Ministry of Energy, RSE «IAC EP». 1. Preparation of the draft press release; 2. Placement on official Internet resources; 3. Distribution of the press release to representatives of NGOs, MEs and users of natural resources | During all the events held. | 2017 - 10 press releases; 2018 - 25 press releases; 2019 - 7 press releases | Published Press Releases on the official website of the Ministry of Energy |
| 5 | Maintenance and continuous updating of information on the progress of the project through the PRTR Website and social media accounts - Develop and maintain a national PRTR website - Creation of the official page of the project | July 2017 February 2018 | - PRTR webpage developed and available in different languages such as English - Facebook, Twitter, VK accounts and official pages created and users regularly | - The PRTR webpage was created in July 2017 (http://prtr.ecogofond.kz/), however it needs to be updated and completed with contents in both English and Russian. The PRTR website will be also the dissemination platform of the reported PRTR data during the pilot project. |

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| | in the social networks | | commenting and sharing information and activities on the page. - On an ongoing basis, increase the number of subscribers (representatives of NGOs, universities, Experts, international organizations, government bodies, academic and academic audience, etc.) | - Facebook page was created and available link at https://www.facebook.com/groups/809971802498092/?fref=nf The page is administrated by RSE "IAC EP" . |
| 6 | Placement of the banner of the official site of the PRTR on the websites of regional and city akimats, the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Preparation of draft letters for mailing akimats of regions and cities of national importance (Almaty, Astana) for consideration, the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the possibility of placing a banner. | October 2017 March 2018 | The number of placed banners - at least 7 | Placement of a banner on websites of akimats and the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan |
| Publications | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 | <p>Publications on the implementation of the project in each issue of the newspaper Ecology of Kazakhstan:</p> <p>1. Preparation of an article in the newspaper, taking into account all the latest and planned changes in the legislation, about the conducted and planned activities for the introduction of PRTRs, explanations on the need for PRTR implementation and its benefits.</p> <p>2. Approval of the draft article with the project supervisor by the Department of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.</p> <p>3. Publication of an article in the newspaper</p> | Every 3 months from September 2017 | <p>2017 year - 2 articles</p> <p>2018 - 4 articles</p> <p>2019 year - 1 article</p> <p>- Circulation of at least 1,000 copies of the articles.</p> | - At least 7 articles published in the national newspapers (in Kazakh and Russian language). |
| 8 | Publications in the republican newspaper "Egemen Kazakhstan" in Kazakh language on PRTR and the project being implemented | Every 6 months from 2017 | Number of publications at least 3 | Article in the newspaper Raising awareness and knowledge (understanding) of the population about the usefulness of PRTR implementation. |
| 9 | Publications in the republican newspaper Kazakhstanskaya Pravda in Russian on PRTR and the project under implementation | Every 6 months from 2017 | Number of publications at least 3 | Article in the newspaper Raising awareness and knowledge (understanding) of the population about the usefulness of implementing PRTRs |
| Media | | | | |
| 10 | <p>Organization of the interview of the National Project Coordinator on the channel "Atameken Business Channel"</p> <p>1. Working off with the representative of the</p> | <p>April 2018</p> <p>February 2019</p> | <p>2018 - 1 interview</p> <p>2019 - 2 interview</p> | At least 3 interview on the national TV channel with a representative from the Ministry of Environment and/or national coordinator of the project. |

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>channel the date and time of issue.</p> <p>2. Coordination of topics and dates with the National Project Coordinator.</p> <p>3. Dissemination of information on the upcoming release of NGOs, international organizations and government bodies.</p> <p>4. Duplication of the program's recording in social networks and sites of the RSE "IAC EP", Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.</p> | | | |
| 11 | Notification of PRTR implementation efficiency through the radio | Twice a year from January 2018 | Number 2 | Interview and/or promotion of national PRTR on the radio |
| Information Brochures | | | | |
| 12 | <p>Issuance of information bulletins (electronic format) on PRTR implementation in Kazakhstan:</p> <p>1. Identify the target audience for distribution of newsletters</p> <p>2. Development of design of bulletins in an accessible presentation for the population</p> <p>3. Distribution of newsletters to environmental departments, international organizations, research institutes.</p> | <p>January 2018</p> <p>April 2018</p> <p>October 2018</p> <p>January 2019</p> | At least 4 bulletins issued | Distribution to the business community, NGOs, universities, media, an additional tool to raise awareness and improve knowledge on PRTR. |

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|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13 | <p>Preparation of brochure and leaflets on environmental news and relevant information on PRTRs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collection and analysis of environmental information on PRTRs 2. Design and print brochures/leaflets 3. Distribute the materials to the public (on the streets, during workshops, conferences, etc.) | Full time | <p>2017 year -7 news</p> <p>2018 year - 30 news</p> <p>2019 year -3 news</p> | <p>Distribution to representatives, businesses, NGOs, public organizations and the media; Distribution of information through the departments of ecology (for users of natural resources) and accredited associations of subjects of private entrepreneurship; Increased awareness of potential PRTR participants,</p> |
| 14 | <p>Working with the press services of users of natural resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gathering information on users of natural resources (potential PRTR participants) 2. Preparation of the list of users of natural resources (PRTR participants) 3. Distribution of PRTR information to the press services of users of natural resources | 2018-2019 | | <p>Sent Press Releases</p> <p>Published articles</p> |
| 15 | Cooperation with other international projects on chemicals management, environmental risks, pollution monitoring, air emissions, green economy, climate change, etc. | 2018-2019 | | Participation and organization of side events and booths on national PRTR implementation during international conferences, meetings in Kazakhstan and/or in the region. |
| 16 | Involvement of NGOs in conducting an information campaign and distribution of brochures, information materials through their social networks | January 2018 December 2018 | <p>- At least 5 environmental NGOs</p> <p>- 10 publications on social networking sites and social networks</p> | Publications of non-governmental organizations |

Seminars and conferences

| | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 | Training of representatives of government agencies, industrial enterprises, NGOs, the media on PRTR issues | October 26, 2017 October 30, 2017 November 2, 2017 February - March 2018* | 6 seminars organized and hosted | 6 Reports on seminars / Capacity building for PRTR implementation in Kazakhstan |
| 18 | Speech at the conference in the framework of the international exhibition EcoTech 2018 | April 2018 | Participation and presentation at the conference | Reports on events, speaking programs, lists of participants / Capacity building for PRTR implementation in Kazakhstan |
| 19 | Speeches at seminars, roundtables on environmental issues | December 2017 June 2018 November 2018 February 2019 | 2017 – at least 1 participation 2018 – at least 2 participations 2019 – at least 1 participation | Reports on events, programs of speeches, lists of participants. / Capacity building for PRTR implementation in Kazakhstan |

**The exact date of the second series of seminars has not yet been determined. Interested parties will be informed in advance*