

The Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

Kristof Douçot / 27 June 2018, Ulaanbaatar



UNECE

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- **Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers**
- **Overview of the Kiev Protocol** (what are the thresholds to report, which chemicals, etc.)
- International PRTR Coordinating Group
- Link with other MEAs and initiatives
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Up-coming meetings
- Development of PRTRs in Mongolia

Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

- **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

UNECE Protocol on PRTRs

Background

- Adopted at EfE Ministerial conference in Kiev, 21 May 2003
- Protocol open to all UN Member States, including non-Parties to the Aarhus Convention
- Only legally binding tool for access to environmental data with its own compliance mechanism
- Entry into force on 8 October 2009
- 1st MoPP on 20-22 April 2010, 2nd MoPP on 2-4 July 2014, 3rd MoPP Sept 2017
- 38 Signatories
- 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



- 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 will be reflected in the sessions of this workshop, 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
Article 11,12	Public Access to information, Confidentiality
Article 13	Public Participation
Article 14	Access to Justice
Article 15	Capacity-Building
Article 16	International Cooperation

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
 - How to improve leverage of the existing online **PRTR-related websites** under the auspices of ECE, OECD and UNITAR / future architecture of the existing websites

Link with other MEAs and initiatives

- PRTRs develop their potential when used for multiple reporting obligations and across sectors making best use of synergies
- At the international level we promote the use of PRTR for the sound management of chemicals
- Strong linkage with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and initiatives:
 - E.g. link with the Stockholm convention and its reporting mechanism
 - Also including Minamata Convention and UNFCCC Climate Change related reporting

Sustainable Development Goals

- Protocol is a fundamental tool for fact-based, informed SDG-related decision-making and for tracking success in achieving SDGs



- PRTRs have a twofold role as (a) reporting tool and (b) source of pollution-related data
- The Protocol contributes to the prevention and reduction of pollution by increasing transparency and by encouraging improvements in environmental performance in production and consumption

Role of Protocol on PRTRs in implementing SDGs

- Monitoring pollutant releases to water, air and land over time
- Providing electronic tool with information that decision-makers need to identify and scale up possible actions in their field of authority
- Making information on pollution releases and waste transfers public has lead to companies reducing their pollution and identifying smarter production methods
- Making PRTR data more useful through combination with other types of information (e.g. health, infrastructure, demographic and economic data)



EU shows diffuse pollutant emissions to water through electronic maps as part of their E-PRTR



Israel used PRTR air emission data to account for health risks at the planning stage of an industrial zone



Sweden makes available emission data on air quality for easy use by pupils



Norway added energy consumption, production volumes and data on emissions from consumer products to their PRTR

Serbia made reporting data to the government more easy and better quality by using its PRTR as a modular device for reporting on different international reporting obligations

Sustainable Development Goals

- Budva declaration
(https://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhusprtr/mop6mopp3_hls.html)
- OECD's Framework on the Application of PRTRs to Global Sustainability Analyses
- SDGs also a focus of upcoming GRT-3
- PRTRs link e.g. with Goals 3, 6, 9 and 12 but also including 16.10

Up-coming meetings

- Third **Global round table on PRTRs** in Geneva, 7-8 November 2018
 - Exchange of good practices
 - Share knowledge
 - Discuss challenges and how to overcome hurdles
 - Focus on SDGs and knowledge sharing and communication strategies
- Next session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2021

Points to consider for dynamic development of PRTRs in Mongolia

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 in Mongolia

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 binding Protocol on PRTRs sends a strong signal and helps bring global knowledge and expertise to the country.

<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr.html>

<http://www.prtr.net/>

A photograph of a young child with dark hair, wearing a brown hooded jacket with red polka dots and dark patterned pants, leaning over a dark metal railing. The child is looking across a wide river towards a distant industrial cityscape with several tall chimneys. A large blue and white cargo ship is visible on the right side of the river. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Thank you for your attention!