

Dallas, 13 June 2000

COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 00-07

**Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers**

THE COUNCIL:

RECALLING the importance of the objectives of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) and the commitments set forth in Council Resolution 97-04 on Promoting Comparability of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers;

RECOGNIZING the importance of preventing and reducing pollution from industrial and other sources in protecting the environment and the health of present and future generations;

CONVINCED of the value of pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs) as tools for the sound management of chemicals, for encouraging improvements in environmental performance, for providing the public with access to information on pollutants released and transferred into and through their communities, and for use by governments in tracking trends, demonstrating progress in pollution reduction, setting priorities and evaluating progress achieved through environmental policies and programs;

NOTING the opportunities for using PRTR data, when combined with health, environmental, demographic, economic and/or other types of relevant information, for gaining a better understanding of potential problems, identifying 'hotspots,' and setting environmental management priorities;

ALSO RECALLING the principles and commitments agreed to by the Parties in adopting Agenda 21 at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular, the provisions calling for the development of emissions inventories and the development of programs to promote the public's and workers' right-to-know;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the principles outlined in a document of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) entitled “Guidance Manual for Governments,” and recalling the 1996 OECD Council Recommendation which calls upon member countries to establish, implement and make public national PRTRs and promote comparability among national PRTRs and sharing of PRTR data between neighboring countries;

ALSO NOTING the growing international interest in PRTRs, access to information and public participation in environmental decision-making; and

CONSIDERING the opportunities for North America to serve as a global leader in the development and use of PRTRs nationally and regionally;

HEREBY:

RECOGNIZES that there is a set of basic elements central to the effectiveness of PRTR systems, which includes reporting on individual substances that is also facility-specific, multimedia (i.e., releases to air, water, land and underground injection, and transfers from one location to another for further management), mandatory, periodic (e.g., annually), and which allows for public disclosure of reported data on a facility- and chemical-specific basis;

FURTHER RECOGNIZES that the basic elements of national PRTRs also include: standardized database structures to facilitate electronic reporting, collection, analysis and dissemination; limiting data confidentiality and indicating what is held confidential; a comprehensive scope; and a mechanism for public feedback for continual improvement of the system;

RECOGNIZES AND ACCEPTS that the responsibility for designing and implementing national PRTRs rests with each individual country of North America and that the establishment of such basic elements depends on the environmental policies and capacities of each country;

AGREES to continue their individual and collective efforts to promote PRTRs, including public access to and use of PRTR data, domestically, regionally and internationally;

REAFFIRMS its commitment to publish an annual report on pollutant releases and transfers in North America (the *Taking Stock* report) based on information collected through the national PRTR programs; and

COMMITTS to a continued exchange of information and expertise of relevance to the effective implementation and further development of the respective national PRTR programs including, *inter alia*, guidance on estimation techniques and lists of substances and reporting thresholds, with a view toward promoting cooperation and enhancing comparability among the North America PRTR systems.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

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