



**Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America**

***Annual Meeting of the Consultative Group for the  
North American Pollutant Release and Transfer  
Register (PRTR) Project***

***and the***

***IV Workshop for the Implementation of the Registro de Emisiones y  
Transferencia de Contaminantes (RETC) in Federal Jurisdictions***

***17–18 October 2005, Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico***

**Meeting Summary, Response to Comments  
and Proposed Directions for  
*Taking Stock 2004***

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# SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIVE MEETING, RETC WORKSHOP, RESPONSE TO COMMENTS AND PROPOSED DIRECTIONS FOR THE *TAKING STOCK 2004* REPORT ON NORTH AMERICAN POLLUTANT RELEASES AND TRANSFERS

Monterrey, Nuevo León, Canada, 17–18 October 2005

## 1. Introduction

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), together with Semarnat, organized a public meeting in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico as a forum for exchanging ideas and obtaining stakeholder input in the implementation of the Mexican RETC and the development of the *Taking Stock 2004* report. *Taking Stock* is an annual report which analyzes publicly available data from the Canadian National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI), the US Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) and, wherever possible, from the Mexican *Registro de Emisiones y Transferencia de Contaminantes* (RETC).

About one hundred people from academia, nongovernmental groups, industrial associations and government, from Canada, Mexico and the United States, attended the meeting. The list of participants is attached as Annex A. A discussion paper, entitled "Consultations for the *Taking Stock 2004* report on North American Pollutant Releases and Transfers," was circulated in advance to provide background for the meeting (available from the CEC web site at <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)> or by request).

This document summarizes the discussions from the public meeting of: progress in PRTRs in each country, opportunities for implementation of RETC and opportunities for *Taking Stock 2004*. This document also outlines the directions for the *Taking Stock 2004* report.

The CEC did not receive any written comments following the meeting. The CEC wishes to thank all of the members of the Consultative Group for their comments and suggestions, and for their continued involvement in the *Taking Stock* report and the CEC's PRTR project. Comments on the *Taking Stock* report are welcome at any time.

## 2. Meeting Summary

William Kennedy, Executive Director of CEC, welcomed participants to the meeting. He announced the release of the trilateral CEC "Action Plan to Enhance Comparability among Pollutant Releases and Transfer Registers In North America" (available from the CEC web site at <[www.cec.org/files/pdf/POLLUTANTS/PRTR-actionplan-2005\\_en.pdf](http://www.cec.org/files/pdf/POLLUTANTS/PRTR-actionplan-2005_en.pdf)>). This document outlines areas where the three governments are collaborating to increase comparability among the three national PRTRs. The goal is for the three national systems to work together to provide a North American picture of chemical releases and transfers.

Adrian Vasquez Galvez, Undersecretary for Environmental Protection at Semarnat, extended the welcome of the Secretary at Semarnat and expressed support for the RETC process. He noted the progress made in Mexico over the past ten years, with regulations passed on RETC, hazardous waste, air, wildlife and environmental impact assessment. His goals were to make agreements on implementing RETC with additional states as soon as possible, and to increase

the capacity building for RETC. Emilio Rancel Woodyear, General Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Agency, State of Nuevo León, noted the great strides that Nuevo León has made in the implementation of the RETC, with the publication of an environmental law on 13 September 2005, and the creation of a specific department implementing RETC. Nuevo León is also working with the municipality of Monterrey on the RETC.

Keith Chanon, program manager for the CEC's PRTR program, provided an update on the PRTR program at the CEC; including current activities and future priorities (presentation available at <[www.cec.org/pubs\\_docs/documents/index.cfm?varlan=english&ID=1862](http://www.cec.org/pubs_docs/documents/index.cfm?varlan=english&ID=1862)>). The annual *Taking Stock* report provides a North American picture of chemical releases and transfers. It uses a matched database of the common chemicals and sectors reported to TRI and NPRI. *Taking Stock* will include data from Mexico's RETC program in the future. *Taking Stock 2002* analyzes over 200 chemicals, presents an eight-year trend and contains data on persistent, bioaccumulative toxins and criteria air contaminants. Users can also generate their own searches of the matched database by using *Taking Stock Online* at <[www.cec.org/takingstock/](http://www.cec.org/takingstock/)>.

A draft report focusing on PRTR data and children's health was released for comment in spring 2004. Over 25 comments were received, and a scientific expert panel reviewed the report in fall 2004. Release of the revised report, presenting data for 2002, is anticipated for spring 2006.

The *Taking Stock 2003* report is in preparation for a release in spring 2006, and will present an analysis of the cement manufacturing sector.

The report, *Children's Health and the Environment in North America: A First Report on Available Indicators and Measures*, will be released in January 2006.

### **3. Country Updates**

#### **3.1 Update on the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) in the United States**

John Dombrowski, Chief, TRI Program of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), discussed:

- TRI requires reporting on approximately 650 chemicals from 23,000 facilities with almost 100,000 chemical reports. TRI started in 1998 and has evolved over the years, adding chemicals and sectors. The list of chemicals can change based on petitions from regulatory changes.
- TRI has two main forms: Form R and Form A.
- TRI reports are due on July 1, and are submitted through EPA's Electronic Data Exchange
- The electronic version of the data is released in November, and the brochure overview of the data, data tables and other materials, the following May/June.
- TRI provides a number of tools for reporters: guidance manuals based on sector or chemicals, reporting software called TRI-ME (now moving to more of a web-based application), helplines and state contacts.
- Facilities can now do their own data trends before submission.
- EPA has completed a successful pilot project with four states where TRI data are now sent directly to the federal government which then forwards the data to the states (as opposed to the existing practice of facility submitting data to both federal and state governments).

- TRI data can be accessed through the TRI web site at <[www.epa.gov/triexplorer](http://www.epa.gov/triexplorer)>.
- A document outlining all the ways that TRI data are used is also available on the TRI web site.
- A rule to broaden the information collected on dioxins and furans, including data expressed as toxicity equivalents (TEQ), is being further reviewed.
- EPA is also looking at burden reduction. Changes to the TRI Form R have been finalized which eliminate certain data, simplify other data elements, and in some cases reduce data duplication. Changes to the Form A have been proposed, with the comment period ending in December 2005.
- EPA also notified Congress, as required by statute, that the Agency plans to initiate a rule making to reduce the frequency of TRI reporting. This could result in TRI data being reported every other year, rather than every year. Details on the proposal are being worked out and will involve stakeholder meetings.

Participants asked questions regarding the burden reduction proposals and were directed to the EPA comment process.

For more information, see the TRI web site at <[www.epa.gov/tri](http://www.epa.gov/tri)> or TRI Explorer at <[www.epa.gov/triexplorer](http://www.epa.gov/triexplorer)> or call TRI Users Support Tel: 1 (800) 424-9346 within the US or +1 (202) 260-1531 from elsewhere, or Larry Reisman at [reisman.larry@epa.gov](mailto:reisman.larry@epa.gov) or Michelle Price at [price.michelle@epa.gov](mailto:price.michelle@epa.gov)

### **3.2 Update on the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) in Canada**

Ed Piche, Director, Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Branch of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, presented an overview of the air monitoring program in the province of Ontario and efforts to harmonize the Ontario program and NPRI. The Ontario monitoring program phased in reporting of air releases for criteria air contaminants, greenhouse gases and toxics from larger industrial sources starting in 2001, and other sources in 2002. Both programs share electronic formats, reporting software for reporting emissions, training sessions and telephone help line service. Both governments are working to resolve the remaining differences between the Ontario program and NPRI.

Francois Lavallee, Chief of the NPRI program at Environment Canada, provided an overview of NPRI:

- NPRI has worked with the province of Ontario, Alberta and BC to harmonize reporting systems for environmental reporting. Each province has a slightly different mechanism and activities.
- NPRI has introduced OWNERS-the One Window to a National Environmental Reporting System, which most facilities are using to electronically report releases and transfers.
- NPRI has grown over the years, starting with a multi-stakeholder consensus mechanism to provide advice to the minister. In 1995, NPRI had 1,791 facilities reporting on 176 substances, and has grown to 8,425 facilities reporting on 323 substances.
- NPRI has changed the classification method to four categories: releases, disposal, off-site transfers for treatment prior to disposal and recycling/energy recovery. Releases include air and water releases and spills, leaks and others to land. Disposals are divided into on-site disposal, including landfill, land treatment and underground injection, and off-site disposal, including landfill, land treatment, underground injection and storage. Off-site transfers for treatment include physical treatment, chemical treatment, biological incineration and sewage. Recycling includes energy recovery and recycling.

- Future discussions include adding polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, reviewing the mining exemption and reporting.

For more information, see the Ontario Ministry web site at <www.ene.gov.on> and the NPRI web site at <www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri> or contact the NPRI office at Environment Canada at Tel: +1 (819) 953-1656, or by e-mail at NPRI@ec.gc.ca.

### **3.3 Update on the *Registro de Emisiones y Transferencia de Contaminantes (RETC)* in Mexico**

Maricruz Rodriguez Gallegos of the Office of Air Quality Management and RETC, *Directora de Registros y Licencias*, within the Mexican Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources, *Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales* (Semarnat) described the current activities in Mexico related to the RETC.

In December 2001, Mexico revised the Ecological Law to establish the basis for compulsory reporting on the entire Annual Certificate of Operations, the *Cedula de Operación Anual (COA)*, including section V which contains the reporting on specific chemical substances and is similar to NPRI and TRI. COA is an integrated system requiring facilities to report on water and energy use, hazardous waste management, air emissions of criteria air contaminants, greenhouse gases, and releases and transfers of some toxics. Federally regulated industries will report to the federal government, while state and municipally regulated industries will report to their respective governments. Reporting will, therefore, involve three levels of administration.

Previously, federally regulated industries had been reporting voluntarily using the NMX-118-SCFI-2001 standard, which has a list of 104 chemicals and no reporting thresholds. The data collected under the NMX will be used to revise the chemical list and set reporting thresholds for an official Mexican standard (NOM). Reporting software is also under development.

In June 2004, a regulation implementing mandatory reporting was published. Maricruz reviewed the clauses of the regulation, describing which industries need to report and how the information has to be presented and processed. Preliminary estimates are that about 2,500 to 3,000 facilities from the 11 federally regulated sectors will be required to report to the federal government. Under the reporting requirement of hazardous waste generation through the COA, an additional 15,000 to 20,000 reporting facilities are expected to report. Approximately 20,000 additional facilities from the state regulated industrial sectors, such as food and service sectors, will be required to report to state governments.

The RETC office is collaborating with the states on the development of national and state reporting. Fifteen coordination agreements have been developed between various states and the federal government to define roles, specify common information and communication mechanisms. The state authorities will define the industrial sectors under state and municipal jurisdiction that will be required to report. Currently, thirteen municipalities, which have the largest concentrations of industry, are already participating in this process (Mexico consists of 32 states and around 2,500 municipalities). Ten states have published their legal framework. The states will collect the information and then transmit the data to the federal government, which will integrate it into a national report. Four states have gathered data. The state of Aguascalientes has already collected data in electronic form for the 2001, 2002 and 2003 reporting years.

The regulations and new format were developed in the spring of 2005, so the first year of mandatory reporting under RETC will be for 2004. A guidance manual and brochure are under development and frequently asked questions are on the web site. Two publications are planned, one for federal data and one for federal and state data. An electronic version of the reporting format was given to the states for their possible use. Maricruz reviewed the status of the implementation in some of the states, including Nuevo León, the Distrito Federal, the state of México, Guanajuato, Durango and Veracruz.

Maricruz was asked about the number of federal facilities and replied that 2,675 facilities had an annual federal COA. A number of participants noted that there was conflicting guidance to industry from state and federal governments, that industry would like only one reporting format and that communities were interested in the RETC information. Some participants expressed frustration with the length of time that it was taking to develop the RETC, noting that 11 years ago, the National Proposal had 177 chemicals and clear criteria to select chemicals. Now the list of 104 chemicals excluded some widely used chemicals like toluene. Maricruz noted that the list of 104 chemicals was a compromise to get the RETC started, with the plan to develop a longer chemical list in the NOM process.

For more information about the RETC, see <[www.semarnat.gob.mx](http://www.semarnat.gob.mx)> or contact Maricruz Rodriguez Gallegos at e-mail: <[mrgallegos@semarnat.gob.mx](mailto:mrgallegos@semarnat.gob.mx)> or by Tel: +55 5 624 3389.

#### **4. Collaboration between the Governments and Stakeholders to Support PRTR Implementation**

##### **4.1 Civil society's contribution to the Mexican PRTRs: Maite Cortes, *Colectivo Ecologista* and Marisa Jacott, Greenpeace**

Eleven NGOs collaborated in the past in the development of the RETC in Mexico. In spite of some advances, much more progress was expected. The most important expectation is the publication of the first national mandatory RETC data in December 2005. Based on a survey of NGOs experienced in the development of the RETC, NGOs have seven concerns: getting the RETC data published on time by December 2005, having a NOM with a list of chemicals that consider the emissions in Mexico and adequate thresholds for the substances, thresholds based on the criteria of "manufactured, processed or otherwise used" and not release-based, defining a mechanism to include NGOs in the development of the RETC, increasing financial support for the NGOs in the RETC process, continuous training for dissemination of the RETC, ending the double threshold (one based on emissions and the other based on manufactured, processed otherwise used) and encouraging Mexico to make its financial contribution to the CEC.

The NGOs are focusing on a number of sectors: petrochemicals, cement manufacturing, pesticides, paper making, steel manufacturing and power plants, hazardous waste treatment, and incinerators which burn waste. Further progress is required in the development of the state RETC, ensuring sufficient government support for the program, ensuring the comparability of the PRTRs in the three countries, continuing with the regional plan for dioxins and furans of the CEC. Maite Cortes noted also the continuing need for capacity building and the previous workshops and training sponsored by the NGOs.

## **4.2 Academic contribution to the Mexican PRTR: Ruth Reyna, ITESM**

Ruth Reyna reported on an analysis of COA data (1999, 2000, and 2001) and RETC data (1999, 2000 and 2002). Most facilities that reported to both the COA and RETC were from the chemical sector. For COA data, the main reporting sectors were the metallurgical sector, primary metals, automobiles and petroleum and petrochemical sectors. For RETC data, the main reporting sectors were the paper making sector, petroleum and petrochemical and automobile sector. Ruth noted that much of the data was difficult to compare and had a large degree of variability and uncertainty. Each sector reported differently, making normalization of the data very difficult. She noted the need to ensure data quality and validate the information. About half of the facilities reported air emissions. Please see the presentation posted on the CEC web site at <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)> for more information.

## **5. Industry Experience with PRTR Data**

### **5.1 Use of PRTRs to track and reduce chemical releases: Duncan Noble, Five Winds Consulting for Interface Inc.**

Duncan Noble presented the sustainability efforts at the carpeting company, Interface Inc. located in Belleville, Ontario, Canada <[www.interfacesustainability.com](http://www.interfacesustainability.com)>. Interface has increased its employment, production and exports at the same time as reducing waste, energy and water. Through redesign and pollution prevention efforts it has dramatically reduced toxic emissions and is now a zero effluent plant. For more information, please see his presentation at <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)>.

### **5.2 Data collection and reporting: success in reducing releases: Tacy Napolillo, Safety, Health and Environment, DuPont (US) and Arturo Pedraza, DuPont Mexico**

Tacy Napolillo described the web-based reporting system used at DuPont to track emissions, roll up reports and communicate environmental data at the facility-, business sector-, global company- and country-levels. The Corporate Environmental Plan sets the company direction on a global basis and contains some specific environmental goals. For example, goals are to hold energy use constant, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 65%, reduce air toxics by 60% from 1990–2000 and reduce TRI releases by 90% from 2000 to 2010. These goals are set even as production has increased by 35% from 1990 to 2003. Individual DuPont facilities choose their own methods to reach the corporately-set goals. Tacy demonstrated the power of the system to help guide decision-making by identifying how to reduce emissions, forecast the effect of a change on future emissions and drill down on emissions to identify processes for potential improvement. DuPont Mexico noted that the company can use the database and information from the Corporate Environment Plan to help fill out the COA form, and also to guide actions. For more information, see the DuPont presentation at <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)>.

### **5.3 Pollution Prevention: Linking PRTR data to Complimentary Programs: Octavio Valdivia, Manager, Industrial Security and Environmental Development, Grupo CYDSA (Mexico)**

Octavio Valdivia discussed different environmental management systems (EMS), including ISO 14001, Responsible Care and the Mexican Clean Industry Certification program. EMSs have



important benefits to a company, including: improving emergency response plans, understanding processes and emission points, training employees, reducing product loss through spills and emissions and improving safety. The integration of the different systems is crucial for effective and efficient environmental management. Environmental Management systems can also help change the culture of the companies. For more information, please see presentation at <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)>.

## **6. Outreach Strategies**

### **6.1 Survey of community outreach tools used by Industry: Keith Chanon, CEC**

Keith Chanon presented a summary of a survey of different tools used by 16 companies to communicate with their communities. The survey was conducted by the CEC with the help of Marisol Romero. In general, the companies surveyed found that as they shared more information about their operations and use and releases of chemicals with their surrounding communities, greater trust was established. Mechanisms for communicating with communities included open houses, newsletters, reports, and community advisory panels. For more information, please see <[www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)>.

### **6.2 Media outreach, CEC experiences with *Taking Stock* and practical strategies for working with the media: Evan Lloyd, CEC**

Evan Lloyd noted that active community outreach is good media relations. Reporters are often interested in two different types of stories around *Taking Stock*—general stories focusing on overall findings, trends and changes, and specific stories on a particular facility or community. Reporters always ask, “so what?” and this can be a difficult question to answer with PRTR data, which is silent in the areas of risk, exposure, health and environmental impacts. NGOs often make these connections and rank facilities even if an agency does not. He suggested that an agency should be well prepared ahead of launch of the report or data, begin to educate media in advance of launch, seek out key reporters and brief them, have a clear presentation and make every effort to provide missing context and use experts to help provide missing context. The media often have troubles with the complexity of the PRTR data and seek a simpler story or message.

During discussion, participants noted that the media often seek sensational stories, may “tar the good companies with the bad” and do not emphasize positive stories. Some felt that a sensational story may be a good thing as it draws attention and forces citizens to reflect on environmental issues and actions. The Mexican NGOs noted that they had previously conducted media training workshops, had a media strategy and wished to run these workshops again, pending funding.

## **Day Two: Tuesday, 18 October 2005**

### **7. Discussion Groups: Collaboration across Countries and Sectors**

On Tuesday, 18 October 2005, the meeting participants were divided into four groups. Each group discussed the same series of topics: (1) opportunities for industry, NGO, government collaboration, (2) communication of technical information to citizens and the media, and (3) identification of needs for implementing the Mexican RETC and opportunities for co-operating

across borders. Group leaders reported lively discussions with lots of ideas brought forward. See Annex B for the summaries of the discussion groups presented to the entire group in the afternoon. Recommendations of the discussion groups for each topic follow.

### **7.1 Opportunities for Industry, NGO and Government Collaboration**

- Strengthen existing intersectoral coordinating mechanisms (rather than creating something new)
- Need a consultative group
  - Need committees for specific issues; each committee has government, industry and NGO representatives
  - Provide background documents before meetings, hold regular meetings, supply minutes of meetings
  - Establish medium and long-term goals
  - Involve NGOs in public management of the environment
- Sector groups for discussion and analysis
  - Identify best practices in Mexico and other countries and adapt and implement them in Mexico
  - Work with companies that have already shown strong commitment to the environment
  - Share successful experiences in collaboration
- Need state and regional forums
  - States to develop better mechanism for communicating amongst each other
  - Mobilize municipal governments to promote outreach to industry and communities
  - Encourage states and others to propose additional chemicals for NOM process
- Semarnat
  - Keep Internet information updated
  - Develop inventory of businesses (at federal/state/municipal levels) and list RETC substances likely to be reported as guide for businesses
  - Semarnat develop survey of regulatory status of states to encourage all states to develop RETC
  - Semarnat to clarify roles of federal/states/municipalities
  - Develop agreement for one window reporting to federal/state/municipal agencies (one format with annex for customized reporting)
  - Develop guidance for filling out forms
  - Provide hotline
  - Provide feedback if reports are done incorrectly

### **7.2 Communication of technical information to the citizen and to the media**

- Semarnat's Role
  - Identify audience
  - Define needs for information, from there define communication mechanisms (may differ by sector)
  - Test and adapt message with different groups
  - Each sector has responsibility to disseminate information
  - Links to web pages with information
  - Gather feedback on web and on information

- Establish coordination mechanism for workshops and conferences in advance of first public release of RETC data
- Augment program for environmental education for journalists (done by the *Centro de Educación y Capacitación para el Desarrollo Sustentable* (Cecadesu))
- Need citizens guide for general public
- Use work already done by NGOs
- CEC Role
  - Help in sharing of experiences and expertise of other countries and groups
  - Provide examples of company reports
- NGO Role
  - Publish training materials already developed
  - Work with communities to explain RETC
  - Consider continuing training workshops
- Academia Role
  - Engage academia as a trusted third party in providing context for RETC data
  - Involve academia in integration and diffusion of information
- Business Role
  - Use employees to disseminate information to communities
  - Use teams of employees to implement RETC and identify pollution prevention activities
  - Companies to conduct open houses and sponsor community events
  - Industry work with their chamber to communicate RETC information
  - Before RETC data are available, publicize environmental goals, pollution prevention activities
  - Educate in the schools
  - Use clean industry to promote success stories

### **7.3 Identification of needs for implementing the Mexican RETC and opportunities for cooperating across borders**

- Government
  - Provide legal framework that is uniform nation wide
  - Develop national emission factor database using the many studies being done in states
  - Provide basic training on computer use, reporting requirements, goals and benefits of RETC
  - Develop incentives and disincentives by which to gain industry participation in RETC
  - Seek commitment from industry to implement improvements based on PRTR data
  - Provide financing and information for industry that is localized
  - Provide additional technical workshops on how to fill out COA
- Involve different organizations
  - CEC support sector forums on best practices and information exchange
  - Semarnat send letter to industry associations in US and Canada asking them to solicit commitment of Mexican counterparts participation
  - Enlist multinational companies to help Mexican subsidiaries and Mexican subsidiaries to help their suppliers/vendors
  - National industry associations coordinate across three countries
  - Share experiences and best practices through industrial chambers
  - Seek out and adapt available guides from US, Canada, OECD, others

- CEC provide examples of guidance manuals, media releases, chemical lists, etc. from other countries

## **8. Opportunities for *Taking Stock 2004***

### **8.1 Discussion of key trends in *Taking Stock***

Catherine Miller of Hampshire Research Institute presented a summary of *Taking Stock 2002*, which was based on over 200 commonly reported chemicals and more than 24,000 reporting facilities. In 2002, 3.25 million tonnes of chemicals were released and transferred in North America. From 1995 to 2002 there was a 7% reduction in total releases and transfers. From 1998 to 2002 there was a 7% decrease in releases and transfers, with TRI facilities decreasing by 7% and NPRI facilities increasing by 8%. Overall, air releases decreased by 18%, with TRI decreasing by 21% and NPRI increasing by 8%.

Transfers across the borders have changed over this time period as well, often due to a few facilities. TRI facilities have decreased the amount of substances sent to Canada and increased the amount sent to Mexico, and Canada increased the amounts of substances sent to the US. No data are yet available on transfers from Mexico to the US or Canada.

Most of the reductions in NPRI and TRI have come from a group of facilities reporting larger releases and transfers (more than 100 tonnes). Another group of facilities reporting smaller amounts of chemicals released and transferred (less than 100 tonnes) is generally increasing their releases and transfers over time. Mercury releases have decreased from 2000 to 2002. Lead emissions are mainly from smelters. Because of reporting changes, *Taking Stock 2002* was also able to present criteria air contaminant data on a North American basis for the first time.

The *Taking Stock 2002* report and database are available at <[www.cec.org/takingstock](http://www.cec.org/takingstock)>.

### **8.2 First Trilateral Picture of Releases and Transfers of Pollutants in North America**

The most significant new opportunity for the *Taking Stock 2004* report is the potential ability to incorporate mandatory Mexican RETC data with Canadian NPRI and US TRI data. At the Consultative meeting, the CEC sought discussion on how best to incorporate Mexican RETC data. Most participants expressed support to:

- continue to present the matched TRI/NPRI data. This analysis could continue to present the 2004 data, the 1995–2004 trends and the 1998–2004 trends
- add a new chapter to present for the first time, trilateral, matched PRTR data on releases and transfers of pollutants in North America. The chapter could present matched RETC/NPRI/TRI analyses by chemical, sector and facility etc. Approximately 50 chemicals match between all three North American systems. The matching sectors include chemicals, primary metals, paper, petroleum refining, transportation equipment, electric utilities, stone/clay/glass, and hazardous waste management. This opportunity is based on the availability of Mexican RETC data by spring/summer 2006.

- consider adding a limited analysis of other bilateral matched data sets (RETC/TRI and RETC/NPRI). For example, analysis could focus on common elements, such as certain pesticides and PCBs reported to both RETC and TRI and not to NPRI.
- add an overview of the complete 2004 RETC data, analyzed by sector, chemical and facility. In addition to the data analysis, this section could summarize the historical development of the RETC, provide an outline of future federal activities and highlight the current programs and data from the Mexican states, such as Nuevo León, Aguascalientes, the Federal District and others that are implementing a RETC-like system.

Participants discussed possible opportunities for *Taking Stock 2004*, based on the discussion document that was distributed in advance of the meeting. The opportunities were:

- mapping of PRTR data
- five years of PBT reporting
- focus on recycling
- other ideas

### **8.3 Opportunities for *Taking Stock***

#### **Opportunity One: Mapping PRTR Data**

The PRTR data present a huge potential to be explored using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping. Mapping these data would allow readers to see the relative amounts of releases of a selected chemical(s) from industrial sources in North America. The CEC is exploring the development of a North American Environmental Atlas, and mapping the PRTR data could constitute one or more layers of this map. The outcome of this work would be a series of static maps to present in the report and possibly the CEC publication TRIO, static and perhaps interactive maps presented on the *Taking Stock Online* web site, and the development of several PRTR data layers in GIS format for the North American Environmental Atlas, or other open source GIS applications.

Participants supported the use of GIS systems to map the data. They were interested in data layers that mapped all and matched RETC/TRI/NPRI facilities in North America, or in a specific region, watershed or airshed; mapped releases of one chemical of particular interest such as mercury, lead and its compounds etc., from one industrial sector; or releases of a list of chemicals associated with health effects.

#### **Opportunity Two: Five Years of Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxics Reporting for NPRI and TRI**

*Taking Stock 2004* has an opportunity to analyze the five-year trend in releases and transfers for many of the compounds considered persistent, bioaccumulative toxics (PBTs), such as mercury, dioxins and furans, hexachlorobenzene and polycyclic aromatic compounds (PACs or PAHs), and the four-year trend in the case of lead. Participants expressed less interest in this proposal, as it was felt that there were many other sources for this information, and that the limited resources could be better spent integrating Mexican data or GIS mapping.

### **Opportunity Three: Focus on Recycling**

Participants expressed interest in a special feature focusing on recycling. The section could analyze the amounts and types of chemicals sent for recycling, the sectors reporting large and small amounts of chemicals sent to recycling and changes over time in recycling. Some of the sectors that show large swings between metals sent to landfill in one year and to recycling in another year could be interviewed to determine the factors influencing these changes. It could contain case studies of facilities that have reduced their releases or transfers through recycling efforts. Previous *Taking Stock* reports have documented that a large portion of the materials sent across borders is destined for recycling. This chapter could explore some of the reasons for these cross-border transfers to recycling.

This chapter could also explore the recycling sector more generally: the number of recyclers that report to PRTR, the amounts and types of chemicals reported from recyclers and trends. Some of the products that use metals and chemicals (such as electronic products) could also be discussed, along with the challenges to recycling and the benefits of design for reuse or design for disassembly. Participants felt that this chapter had the potential to tell a new and positive story.

### **Opportunity Four: Other Ideas**

Participants were encouraged to come to the meeting with other ideas for special analyses or areas of interest that could be considered for the *Taking Stock* report. No suggestions were received.

## **8.4. Proposed Directions for *Taking Stock 2004***

The annual consultative meetings provide an important opportunity for stakeholders to help guide the development of the *Taking Stock* report. Taking into account comments heard at the meeting and availability of resources, the following is an overview of the proposed directions to be taken for *Taking Stock 2004*.

- Continue the existing analysis of TRI/NPRI data,
- Integrate Mexican data,
- Start to map the PRTR data using existing GIS frameworks, such as the CEC North American Environmental Atlas and
- Focus the special feature on recycling.

Comments on the *Taking Stock* reports are welcome at any time. Please direct comments to the CEC:

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## Annex A: Summary of Discussion Groups

### Topic 1: Opportunities for industry, NGO and government collaboration in PRTR process:

#### Existing mechanisms:

- Consultative forums exist at a national level
- Meetings with industrial groups have taken place at a local level

#### Barriers:

- Missing diffusion of information
- Different opinions on what is RETC
- Common goals are not identified
- Missing funds for financing the implementation in all sectors
- Semarnat has only a reduced budget
- Environmental education and training is missing for all the sectors
- There does not exist an adequate established mechanism for collaboration on the RETC field: there exist isolated activities in the states about RETC

#### Roles and responsibilities

*Government:* Information divulgation, updating the legislation

*Industry:* should do good practices and check for information veracity, make the processes more efficient

*NGO:* Adequate and responsible information diffusion

*Academia:* Training and professional assistance, information diffusion

#### Opportunities and challenges

- Reduce prejudice
- More education and diffusion

#### How to increase collaboration:

- Constitute a consultative group
- Constitute sector groups for discussion and analysis
- Establish medium and long term goals
- Satisfy the requirements of the different groups
- Do a good diffusion of the information
- Implement regional forums
- Involve NGOs in the public management of the environment
- Organize events like this at a state level
- Amplify the program for environmental education for journalists (done by Cecadesu)
- Update the information on internet (web page of Semarnat)
- Integrate interdisciplinary working groups
- Share successful experiences in collaboration
- Involve the academia in the integration and diffusion of the information

#### Other:

- Revise the utility of the information



- Many groups have a role in collaboration

## **Topic 2: Communication of the technical information to the citizen and to the media.**

### Experience:

- The academia always has communication forums, but communication to the NGOs and journalists is also important.
- Semarnat should update the information on the web in a timely way.
- Important to know what, to whom and for what in communication.
- The information has to be exact.
- It is impossible to require people to read the information, and impossible to restrict people on the use of the information.
- There exists the possibility that the information could be badly used.
- Government should hand over the raw data and information.
- The press exaggerates sometimes, because of pressure for extraordinary contents or sensation.
- The information does not reach the society in general.
- The difficulty related to the data starts when it is required to know about exposure routes etc.
- We have to talk to the industry in terms they understand—cost/benefit—to know why they are doing it. Especially among the small and medium-size enterprises there still does not exist an environmental conscience.
- The sector has to know the reality of other sectors.
- Having common goals helps a communication process.
- The RETC provides information related to risk, danger and health. This should be our national goal.
- We have to be more conscientious in the process; the conditions in Mexico are different than in other countries. The objectives have to be therefore different and according to each country's needs.

### Tools:

- Regional maps focused on communities or sectors.
- Indicate links to web pages with information.
- Support the diffusion of information.
- Education for the journalists should be offered to increase their environmental understanding.
- Educate the ones who should be educated.
- Identify the audience or public to whom the information is meant (adequate information)
- Develop sector maps
- Feedback on the web and in the information
- User friendly citizen guidance for a general public (where to get information, “a press kit,” “background into the PRTR,” how to use the information...)
- Recover all the work that was already done by the NGO groups.

### Needs:

*Government:* Strengthen the diffusion and communication processes (define how to diffuse the information and what information).

*Industry:* Establish communication groups at a state and local level.

There exists a joint responsibility in the use of the information.  
It is necessary for everyone to act responsibility within their field of action.

Recommendations:

- Topics 1 and 2 have to be seen together.
- Define needs for information.
- Define own objectives as nation in each of the sectors, from there define the communication mechanisms.
- Define a RETC to satisfy the needs of the country.
- The CEC could help to share experiences and expertise of other countries and groups
- Consultation processes are to be done based on the effort of information gathering.
- We have to show a general panorama.
- Define information needs.
- Select the existing information.
- Ensure the adequacy of the information.

**Topic 3: Identification of needs for implementing the Mexican RETC and opportunities for co-operating across borders**

Barriers:

- There exists a duplication of information on reporting to the authorities.
- Lack of resources in the state and municipal authorities to implement the RETC
- There exists a high turn over of personnel at the municipal and state level.
- There is no connection between RETC and production. The industry does not see it as an instrument or useful tool but only as bureaucracy.
- There are a lot of disorganization and time problems in the rule making and administrative processes.
- An official legal framework is missing (state and municipal level).
- There is no support for the industrial sector.
- There are regions which have no access to technology (no internet).

Opportunities:

- Focus support on those companies and sectors with the largest pollution.
- Implement a system for information gathering.
- Homogenize the information levels according to authorities' levels.
- Clarify the legal framework of the RETC.
- Give training on use of the software.
- Improve the information quality.
- Clarify the information access and how it impacts the company.
- Train the ones who have to complete the COA—all sectors: data validation, estimation methods etc.
- Define the substances that have impact in Mexico for the list in the NOM.
- The systems are dynamic, feedback and experience is required.

How to implement and increase cooperation across borders:

- Different organizations have to be involved in the implementation of the RETC.
- Through the industrial chambers, experiences and best practice cases can be shared.

- The CEC could support sector forums on industrial best practices.
- Financing sources, incentives and information for the industry should be localized and diffused.
- Implement technical workshops for completing the COA (they have not been sufficient).

Other:

- We have to inspire trust in the reporting sectors on how the reported information will be used.
- A code of ethics to prevent giving the information to a competitor is needed.

### Red Group Summary

<b>Topic 1: Opportunities for Collaboration for Industry, NGO and Government Collaboration</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
A number of intersectional coordinating mechanisms already exist within the three levels of government in Mexico. Strengthen and utilize these existing mechanisms rather than creating something new. Ensure adequate resources exist to support their activities.	Identify best practices in Mexico and other countries and adapt and implement them in Mexico.
Strengthen existing electronic fora for all sectors with an interest in following the development and implementation of RETC	Mobilize municipal governments to promote outreach about RETC to industry and communities within their jurisdiction
Encourage financial support from the private sector for intersectoral RETC fora and mechanisms at the local, national and trinational level	Semarnat and state governments should strengthen collaboration mechanisms
To ensure timely publication of RETC, it is important to receive RETC data from industry in a timely manner and thereby allow adequate time for Semarnat to review the data sets	First, establish links with companies that already have a strong commitment to the environment and follow that by linking to industry associations (using these leading companies as a positive example of how they are responding to public release of RETC data with their environmental programs)

<b>Topic 2: Communicating Technical Information to the Public and the Media</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Ensure coordination between government, industry, NGOs and academia in preparing and disseminating information material associated with public release of first RETC data	Incorporate the aspect of sustainability in formal and informal education
Provide and disseminate contextual information for the data contained in <i>Taking Stock</i> and other international and national publications	Since academia is a trusted third party for the public and can speak with authority on environmental issues, engage them as an ally in providing context for the RETC data
Support academia and industry in identifying solutions to environmental problems as identified by the RETC data	Provide and disseminate information at the community level
Share technical information on emission factors and estimation techniques for PRTR among the three countries	Recognize and provide for the information needs of the various sectors
	Provide information to the public that is friendly, simple and understandable
Strengthen environmental reporters' knowledge of RETC data	Establish coordination mechanisms for all sectors to work together to arrange workshops and conferences to build understanding of the first public release of the RETC
Take advantage of and use as an example what has been done in other countries in working with the media and briefing them and providing background information in advance of release of the first RETC report	Each sector of society should assume its responsibility in communication of RETC data

<b>Topic 3: Identification of Needs for Implementing the Mexican PRTR and Opportunities for Co-operating Across Borders</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Publish the list of substances and related thresholds in the NOM ( <i>Norma Oficial Mexicana</i> ) to ensure all sectors are clear as to what chemicals they need to report	Seek out and adapt available guides and other relevant information from USA, Canada, OECD, etc., that suit the needs of Mexico and use them to facilitate reporting of RETC data in Mexico
Provide support and training to the industry so that it knows what information it has to put in the COA and that that information is of a high quality; this could be done through personal contact, workshops, training sessions, etc.	Develop incentives and disincentives by which to gain industry participation in RETC
Improve communication with generators of hazardous wastes regarding the RETC reporting requirements	Establish and maintain fora for exchanging information between industries and governments in the three countries using the CEC as a facilitation and coordinating mechanism as appropriate
Provide for greater interpretation of RETC data by taking advantage of the experiences in the USA and Canada and support academia and NGOs in the three countries to build their capacity to understand and interpret and use this data	Semarnat should send a letter to the industry associations in the USA and Canada asking them to solicit the commitment of their counterparts in Mexico to participate fully in the RETC
Seek a commitment from industry to implement improvements in environmental quality-based on PRTR data	The CEC should stimulate the process of environmental performance and reporting to the RETC by the industry

### Yellow group summary

<b>Topic 1: Opportunities for Collaboration for Industry, NGO and Government Collaboration</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Improve the knowledge of which businesses are where, and what type of businesses emit which type of substances	Develop 1) an inventory of different businesses and then 2) based on work from other countries, list the possible RETC substances that the businesses could be reporting—as a guide to help ensure completeness of RETC. Inventory would be joint effort by federal/state and municipal governments.
Need comprehensive legal framework for RETC, need adequate regulations to request information from company, need to make it a requirement that all states must implement the RETC	Semarnat to develop a survey of current regulatory status of states—those that have transparency law, RETC agreement and those that are collecting data. Semarnat to encourage states not yet

	developing RETC to do so
Need to have clear vision and roles. It is vital to understand responsibilities and to reduce confusion and overlap.	Semarnat needs to articulate clear goals and vision for the RETC and clarify roles of federal, states and municipalities. Government needs to be consistent, clear and serious about their commitment to RETC
Need simplification of approach—a one window reporting system desired. Current system is too complicated and confusing, many formats are different.	Develop an agreement between federal, state and municipal agencies to permit one window reporting. States and Semarnat have to agree on one format, allowing for an annex that a state can customize with additional information.
Need increased involvement of all parties in developing RETC and state programs	States, companies and NGOS would like to be involved in the development of the NOM. State authorities to take into account involvement of industry and NGOS in development of their programs, increase the sharing of knowledge among all parties.
Need comprehensive list of chemicals for NOM process	Encourage states and others to make a proposal for chemicals to be added for NOM process
Need increased and improved training of industry and states. There is a lot of confusion of who needs to report. Some companies make the same mistake every year. It is difficult to get answers to clarify questions.	Semarnat needs to develop guidance manuals for filling out forms, consider a hotline for providing answers, update the material on the web and provide feedback if reports are done incorrectly. States to develop better mechanism for communicating amongst each other.

Need to clarify the flow of information. Is it first to the state and then to the federal government or vice versa?	Semarnat should clarify the flow of information so all parties understand their roles, and consider a one window approach for reporting
Need to improve the quality of the data—some estimates off by 4,000%, high turnover at companies results in inconsistent information from year-to-year	Semarnat needs to create guidance manuals, audits and feedback
<b>Topic 2: Communicating Technical Information to the Public and the Media</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Need to recognize that information is public, needs to be published and needs context to give interpretation	
Companies need to recognize that they have the responsibility to get the data right. Industry has a responsibility to inform	CEC and other agencies could provide examples of guidance manuals, company reports to be used by industry in RETC reporting. Industry could work with their chamber to communicate RETC information.
NGOs to create awareness of RETC in their communities	

<b>Topic 3: Identification of Needs for Implementing the Mexican PRTR and Opportunities for Co-operating Across Borders</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Capacity building required for industry, states, federal government and NGOs	CEC could provide information from other countries: guidance manuals, examples of media releases, chemical lists, etc.

### Blue group summary

<b>Topic 1: Opportunities for Collaboration for Industry, NGO and Government Collaboration</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Establish national government stakeholder process	Identify interested parties through media, decentralized in whole country, provide background documents before meetings, hold meetings regularly, supply minutes of meetings
Since current mechanism not working, need state/local committees	Committees for specific issues: sectors, substances, etc. Each committees have representatives from government, industry, NGOs
<b>Topic 2: Communicating Technical Information to the Public and the Media</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Keep simple and consistent	Adjust message to audience, test and adapt message with different groups
For Industry, involve employees and others	Use employees to disseminated information to families and community; use teams of employees (production, sales, maintenance) to implement RETC and identify pollution prevention activities; open houses and sponsor community activities
For Industry, be proactive	Before RETC data are available, publicize environmental policies, goals, conduct pollution prevention activities; educate in schools.
For government, national/state/local access to data, be proactive and provide	Both web site and printed materials



education	
For media, be transparent and proactive	Coordinate press conferences with government, industry, NGOs; Use clean industry to promote success stories; provide with easy to understand background materials
<b>Topic 3: Identification of Needs for Implementing the Mexican PRTR and Opportunities for Co-operating Across Borders</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Path Forward—Next Steps</b>
Need legal framework for states	Should be uniform mechanism nation-wide
Enlist support and expertise of other organizations	Chain of support: multinationals help Mexican subsidiaries, Mexican subsidiaries help their supplier/vendors
	National industry associations coordinate across three countries
	Semarnat state/local delegations provide teams and resources to assist companies in filling out form
	Develop national emission factor database using the many studies being done in states to disseminate information from states nationwide.
Basic Training	Training on computer use, reporting requirements, goals and benefits of RETC program



**Annual Meeting of the Consultative Group for the North American Pollutant  
Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) Project**

**Grupo Consultivo del proyecto Registro de Emisiones y Transferencias  
de Contaminantes (RETC)**

**Monterrey, Nuevo León, México  
17-18 October 2005**

**Final List of Participants / Lista final de participantes**

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