



PROPER: A Role Model for Other Countries?

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Topics to be discussed

- Describing PROPER
- Elements of PRTRs
- The research evidence
- Limits of PROPER
- Implementation concerns
- Conclusions about PROPER as a role model



- Basic description
- Strengths: focus on performance related to pollution prevention and environmental management; understandable rating system with color coding
- PROPER is a fascinating program as viewed by policy researchers

Core Elements of Pollution Release Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

- Aarhus Convention – Protocol on PRTRs
- Multimedia – releases to air, land, and water
- Pollutant specific, facility specific
- Standardized and timely data
- Publicly accessible, including in electronic form
- Public participation in developing and modifying the register
- Note: PROPER is not a PRTR.....nor does it claim to be

Research Evidence on PROPER

- Most research focuses on the earlier version of PROPER from the late 1990s
- Evidence suggests that PROPER can influence facility behaviors
- However, limited anecdotal evidence of long-term impact on particular facilities

Limits of PROPER

- Lack of transparency of raw data
- Lack of accessibility of data electronically
- Lack of public participation in any modifications to the program
- Lack of clear linkages to regulatory enforcement
- Lack of access to easily understood compliance data (Note: this is not a core aspect of PRTRs)

Policy options in general

- Standard policy view from the outside: information disclosure can be used when regulatory institutions are weak
- Revised view: Regulations, enforcement, information disclosure, and the relevance of community participation – all must occur **simultaneously** in order to be effective

Conclusions

- **Conclusion 1:** PROPER is an engaging program that offers important ideas to be replicated in other countries
- **Conclusion 2:** PROPER is only a partial model for other countries and must itself improve in key respects
- **Conclusion 3:** Access to raw release data is critical for improvement – movement towards a fully developed PRTR is the “proper” course
- **Conclusion 4:** Access to understandable compliance data important as well
- **Conclusion 5:** PROPER is undermined by a lack of full enforcement of other regulations
- **Unresolved?** Health impacts on communities (a common problem across all PRTRs)