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Multi-Stakeholder Policy Dialogue: Addressing E-waste Challenges and Opportunities through Public- Private Sector Cooperation

The Future WEEE Need: A Call for Action

OSAKA, JAPAN, 20 JULY 2012

Introduction

The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Addressing E-Waste Challenges and Opportunities through Public-Private Sector Cooperation, held in Osaka, Japan, from 18 to 20 July 2012, considered ways to support, strengthen and improve mechanisms of effective cooperation between all sectors to promote environmentally sound management (ESM) of used and end-of-life electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) to and minimize environmental and human health impacts and hazards arising from waste EEE (WEEE) - commonly known as e-waste - while taking advantage of the opportunities it presents. On this basis, and bearing in mind the commitment expressed in the Outcome Document of the Rio+20 Summit to promote a life-cycle approach - including reduction, reuse and recycling of waste (3Rs), increasing energy recovery from waste, and use as a resource where possible¹; as well as the support expressed for meaningful cooperation between all Major Groups in promoting sustainable development², - the present Call for Action is intended to further promote, enhance and upgrade public-private cooperation in WEEE management.

Vision

Used in a responsible manner, EEE supports social and economic growth, knowledge and development. At the end of its useful life, EEE can create risks to human health and the environment if not properly managed; it can also create new opportunities if properly managed. Against this background, environmentally and socially sound management of EEE through to its end-of-life stages should become a flagship activity for green economy development, integrated into the entire life-cycle of responsible materials utilization, through promoting cooperative action between governments, the private sector, international organizations, academia, and civil society. The vision of the participants in this Policy Dialogue is that ESM of end-of-life EEE and WEEE, an

¹ Paragraph 218 of the Outcome Document

² Paragraph 43 of the Outcome Document

exponentially growing global waste stream containing valuable and recoverable resources, will become an exemplar of private and public sector synergies to create sustainable and efficient use of resources in a global context.

Call for Action

Taking into the account the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention, and the Vienna Workshop on Hazardous Substances within the Life-Cycle of Electrical and Electronic Products in 2011, relevant actions should cover the entire life-cycle of EEE (upstream, midstream and downstream). The participants in the Dialogue believe that government authorities, the private sector, intergovernmental organizations, academia and non-governmental organizations must complement each other, each fulfilling their specific roles according to their responsibilities, capabilities and capacities.

The participants call upon these entities to undertake their respective roles in a spirit of cooperation, including promotion of the actions set out below.

Government authorities

A core role of government authorities at all levels (global, regional, national and local) is to develop and foster the establishment, implementation and enforcement of an integrated system for the management of EEE throughout its life-cycle. This may include:

- Regulatory measures, including:
 - Local and national legislation with clear definitions, distinguishing between what is waste and what is not, and including hazardous properties and potential as secondary resources / raw materials or feedstock
 - Definition of roles and responsibilities of stakeholders
 - Collection and recycling targets
 - Measures to ensure security and transparency of WEEE flows
 - Registration and licensing of WEEE recyclers
 - Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) protection measures for the formal and informal sectors
 - Progressive landfill and incineration bans
 - Application of the polluter pays principle, the precautionary principle, and the integrated life-cycle approach while respecting the hierarchy of waste
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Design for end-of-life management
- Use of economic instruments, including:
 - Tax incentives and disincentives
 - Disincentives for non-compliance with regulations
 - Grants
 - Market awareness, including instruments to address market failures and market barriers
 - Soft loans for investment in plants and equipment

- Development and implementation of incentives for voluntary initiatives and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs); strategies and guidelines for building such partnerships
- Promotion and use of third-party EHS certification standards as a means of identifying an environmentally sound facility
- Minimization of barriers to trade, within regions and internationally, taking cognizance of transboundary movement requirements of the Basel Convention and other applicable treaties
- Development and promotion of ESM guidelines for collection, transportation, recycling, and safe final disposal
- Collecting and making available reliable data
- Promotion of research and development
- Maximizing/optimizing the use of resources
- Conclusion and implementation of voluntary agreements
- Establishment of financial mechanisms
- Provision of incentives for the design of end-of-life management by promoting sustainable government procurement strategies
- Implementation and enforcement of laws and regulations, including through
 - Networking and cooperation among and between international, regional and national agencies
 - Evidence-based approaches to support compliance
 - Professional intelligence-led enforcement
 - Training programmes
 - Encouraging the use of non-regulatory tools, e.g. certification schemes
 - Transparent compliance and enforcement regimes with regular reporting systems
- Establishment of effective and meaningful consultation mechanisms with key stakeholders, e.g. the private sector (manufacturers, designers, recyclers, traders, waste managers), workers, communities affected by WEEE, NGOs, scientific organizations, and academia
- Adoption of measures to integrate the informal sector, including opportunities for formalization; and mechanisms for technical and financial assistance to help the informal sector become part of the formal ESM chain
- Cooperation with other stakeholders to promote and enhance effective, efficient and easily accessible collection, transportation and logistical systems
- Raising public awareness, including through campaigns and education
- Development of opportunities for technology transfer and technical assistance (enhancing industry support for knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and technology transfer)

Private sector

Private sector operators such as producers³, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), EEE importers and exporters, waste managers, refurbishers, and recyclers involved in the management of EEE at various stages of its life-cycle, should undertake the following:

- Invest in infrastructure for collection, refurbishment, processing and material recovery of used and end-of-life EEE and WEEE
- Conduct Environmental Impact and Risk Assessments and comply with all applicable legal requirements
- Consign exported WEEE to third-party certified environmentally sound facilities as appropriate, while complying with the Basel Convention provisions on transboundary movements, and taking into account the proximity principle
- Recognize and use third-party certified, auditable EHS standards
- Strive to integrate the informal sector and subcontractors into business models along the supply chain
- Make available information to workers, communities and the public about the types of treatment or processes used and measures taken to protect worker safety, human health and the environment
- Undertake capacity building, knowledge and technology transfer
- Participate actively in the development of legislative frameworks

Producers/OEMs in particular should undertake the following:

- Implement effective voluntary take-back programmes in all countries and regions where mandatory programmes do not exist
- Implement the principle of integrated life-cycle at the design stage of the EEE
- Integrate designs for repair, disassembly and recycling at the product design stage
- Support, advocate and implement EPR and take-back schemes
- Support the principle of collective responsibility for orphan and legacy EEE and WEEE
- Invest in research, technology and innovation that can reduce and substitute the use of hazardous substances, increase the useful life of EEE, simplify dismantling, and allow increased material recovery and recycling
- Provide sufficient data in order to create transparency about real end-of-life flows
- Use recycling facilities that are audited to a third-party EHS certification standard

Waste managers and recyclers in particular should undertake the following:

- Comply with the principles and standards of ESM of WEEE
- Strive for high quality treatment and cooperation along the recycling chain
- Maintain adequate record keeping to verify ESM throughout the recycling chain
- Ensure environmentally sound disposal of non-recyclable wastes

³ “Producer” means the international and local manufacturer or importer of record of new and used EEE to be placed on the market at first invoice by sale.

- Operate environmentally sound facilities, meeting the same standards in developed countries, countries with economies in transition, and developing countries
- Establish and implement EHS monitoring systems for facilities, based on risk assessment
- Work with governments to develop model licenses for collectors and recyclers, based on operational best practices for facilities

International Facilitation

International organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies, scientific organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, and other public interest and civil society groups have the important role of facilitating public-private cooperation on the management of end-of-life EEE and WEEE, especially in countries with economies in transition and developing countries. They should undertake the following:

International organizations and bilateral/multilateral agencies

- Assist governments in the implementation of regional and global legal rules, consistent with and complimentary to relevant international conventions, including multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) on wastes and chemicals
- Develop guidelines and guidance materials
- Facilitate the development of international standards, and recognize third-party certification in accordance with the requirements of the decisions of the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention, and other related international conventions and initiatives, including MEAs on wastes and chemicals
- Facilitate and promote the use of PPPs

Scientific organizations and academia

- Provide a scientific basis for policy-making at all levels, as well as Best Available Technologies and Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP) for used and end-of life EEE and WEEE management
- Develop programmes to reduce, eliminate and substitute the use of hazardous substances, and promote innovation and green design
- Training and education
- Awareness raising
- Knowledge and data dissemination
- Carry out baseline evaluation and modeling for prediction of future scenarios
- Develop pilot programmes on new technologies and materials
- Develop scientific capacities through education, as well as North-South and South-South cooperation
- Monitor the performance of WEEE management systems

Civil society organizations and public interest groups

Civil society can contribute in multiple ways and levels by:

- Initiating and engaging in grass root activities, including projects at the community level, with the informal sector, WEEE producers and recyclers
- Participating in consultations with governments, the private sector, and public interest stakeholders in decision-making processes, development of guidelines, and appropriate standards of operation
- Monitoring activities of governments and the private sector
- Advocating and raising awareness on the health, environment and socio-economic impacts of WEEE and promoting sustainable solutions
- Mediating and facilitating conflict resolution between communities affected by WEEE management, decision makers, and the private sector
- Informing consumers about the purchase of EEE products that are designed for end-of-life management
- Promoting sustainable production and consumption of EEE products
- Disseminating information on sustainable EEE products to key stakeholders