



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP

EMG

Issue Management Group Tackling E-waste: Towards Eco-design and a Life-cycle Approach for E-products

01/06/2017

Discussion Note on Next Steps

This Note follows points 3.), 4.) and 5.) outlined in the draft Agenda.

I. Update on finalization of the draft Analytical Report

The [E-waste Analytical Report](#) was drafted and distributed to IMG Members for their review prior to the 2nd meeting of the IMG held on the 29th March 2017. All comments made to date, have been incorporated in the updated text. The Report provides two types of recommendations:

- Those which pursue substantive changes to the UN system's e-waste initiatives;
- Those which propose suggested follow-up actions for the IMG on Tackling E-waste.

The Report is open for the consideration of any final comments during this meeting, after which it will enter its editing and design stage during July and August.

The possibility may exist to prepare a joint statement signalling the commitment of UN Heads of agencies relating to the recommendation(s) below; either annexing this at the end of the report or incorporating this in the beginning.

The substantive recommendations (in short)

1.) The UN system already works closely with the private sector in a number of areas to address various aspects of the global e-waste problem. However, UN agencies may wish to consider the following: investigating further need to address private sector involvement in reducing waste arisings from used and end-of-life EEE; engaging national governments – alongside the private sector – in supporting or developing national extended producer responsibility legislation; conducting more detailed research into the opportunities and challenges of national EPR implementation.

2.) In order to wholly address the full life-cycle of EEE, there is a requirement for increased attention on the early stages like design and production. Without equally dividing its efforts across the life-cycle stages, the UN system will likely continue to address results at the end of life and use of EEE – which are often – the outcome of design issues present early on in the life-cycle. The UN system may consider working more closely with EEE manufacturers for upstream operations, especially, and other private sector entities from the recycling industry involved in downstream operations.

3.) UN agencies may wish to consider expanding their scope geographically to more frequently include developed countries in their activities to tackle e-waste. Since the majority of e-waste is generated here, UN entities may wish to consider 4 key areas of focus in developed countries:

- Support for law enforcement and customs authorities to address the transboundary movement of used and end-of-life EEE leaving developed countries;
- Establishing policies to remove the hazardous components used in EEE;
- Enhancing national consumer awareness around the damaging effects of their e-devices;
- Enforcing policies on extended producer responsibility for manufacturers in developed countries.

The suggested follow-up recommendations (in short)

4.) The UN system might consider a United Nations inter-agency/system-wide coordination mechanism to cater for the e-waste challenge from a life-cycle perspective; for example, by building on existing e-waste mandates such as ITU Connect 2020 Agenda or through other avenues such as developing an inter-agency coordination mechanism such as a UN E-waste;

5.) The UN system may wish to consider the development of a platform built for the purpose of sharing data, knowledge and expertise with the aim of making information on e-waste initiatives of all types and focus available to all entities across the UN system; for example, through the use of existing entities such as the IOMC Toolbox, SAICM or UNU Step E-waste World Map;

6.) The UN system may wish to consider higher-level engagement of Heads of UN agencies; for example, through the signing of and commitment towards a joint statement. The Environment Management Group serves as a possible mechanism to facilitate such a statement.

II. Next Steps of the IMG

We would like to pay particular attention towards the three below areas in our discussion. Considering these points could provide direction for deliberating the next steps to be taken by the IMG.

- The substantive recommendations listed above, considering in particular the recommendation on developing an inter-agency/system-wide coordination mechanism.
- The following steps 18(e) and (d) of the [E-waste IMG Terms of Reference](#):
 - To sketch modalities and prepare a work-plan/strategy, including a financing strategy for the development of a UN system-wide coordination mechanism;
 - To develop a system-wide approach and a related strategy for implementation within the UN system to address the global e-waste challenge.

Whilst considering points 18(e) and (d), participants may also wish to consider point 19. on the potential liaison between the IMG on Tackling E-waste and the internal work on e-waste by the IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management.

- The thoughts expressed by the respective agencies during bilateral discussions hosted by the EMG Secretariat (*see below*).

The outcomes of the bilateral discussions are as follows:

Secretariat of the Basel Convention

The IMG is well-positioned to ask who the agencies are to take the lead; with ideally more attention being paid to the production and trade side of EEE and e-waste.

An opportunity exists to use ITU's Connect 2020 Agenda as a means to for focussing out activities on e-waste. ITU has a link to government, industry and providers and is currently leading the Focal Area on e-waste under the GPWM.

It could be pragmatic that all agencies provide support to the driving efforts of ITU, as we require a goal to move forward especially when moving forward may require asking donors for money. Funding from GEF and the European Commission may only be possible over the short-term. Having a timescale is thus also important here.

When ready, the IMG could hand the work of coordination over to ITU, whilst at the same time the IMG could act as a broker undertaking 2-year monitoring reviews on the progress of this coordination.

International Telecommunication Union

There is an opportunity to focus on ICTs, especially in the context of the programming level and ITU targets.

It could be pragmatic to follow up on the recommendations of the report in reference to increased private sector involvement, especially in the context of product design and standardisation which ITU has a strong network in.

Paying attention to the work of UN entities such as Sustainable UN on the facilities of UN agencies and their e-waste management is welcomed by ITU as a consideration also by the IMG on Tackling E-waste.

In general, it would be a good idea to continue with the IMG, extending it and following up on the recommendations.

United Nations University

There is an opportunity to develop a UN E-waste which follows a similar structure as UN Water and UN Oceans, but with a framework built around the life-cycle approach of EEE. A set of UN agencies would be allocated work plans based around their expertise.

This structure may be welcomed by entities such as the European Commission (EC), in particular from a funding perspective. Other possibilities include financing by governments –as it may be in their interest for a more coordinated UN approach.

Considering work by the World Bank and Global Environment Facility (GEF), and any funding possibilities from these entities may be worthwhile. From a funding perspective, there needs to be buy-in meaning that a voluntary structure might not lead to as much concrete action. The possibility of funding is only foreseeable with a concrete road map in place.

The IMG is in a neutral position as a platform which should have its mandate extended to follow-up on the UN E-waste idea. Paying attention to the work of UN entities such as Sustainable UN on the facilities of UN agencies and their e-waste management is welcomed by UNU, who sees a harmonised approach as very important.

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

An opportunity exists for a “one-stop” shop, either hosted by a separate secretariat or by a lead agency. With a separate secretariat approach, an independent entity could be created; whilst through the lead agency approach, different agencies could rotate in taking responsibility among themselves in chairing the one-stop shop. ITU is in a particularly good position to begin with taking the lead/chairing.

The one-stop shop may include provision of a toolbox in similar fashion to the IOMC Toolbox for decision making in chemicals management. the possibility to avoid duplication exists, e.g. through a platform on knowledge-sharing/guidance/projects/funding etc. Training would be possible via this platform too, with which UNITAR are happy to work with UNU.

The possibility may exist to source funding from the EC, whilst GEF may also be an option. Bringing together a UN membership around the one-stop shop, with a small membership fee provided by UN agencies may help raise funds.

The IMG could be extended as plans and a strategy are put in place for the development of a one-stop shop. However, with the extension of the IMG, there needs to be much more concrete work perhaps becoming more so coordinated by the agency that could first host the one-stop shop, such as ITU.

UN Environment Economy Division (DTIE)

From a content perspective, there could be more focus on the life-cycle and value chain, whilst at the same time we need more focus on over consumption issues. Focussing on governments and the private sector may help in tackling consumption issues.

From a UN collaboration perspective, there is a need to consider how we find funding and support from member states. If a joint work plan can be developed together by UN agencies with an organised timeline, then there may be an opportunity to gather funds. It would be great for example, for the Paris branch to receive more funds to focus part of its work specifically on e-waste.

Having a joint work plan (a succinct road map) which identifies the added value of the proposed work in the e-waste arena and which could be put forward to Heads of agencies may provide more opportunity for funding, resources and senior level commitment.

Currently, the Paris office has little direction on e-waste but rather a focus on consumer awareness and labelling etc. Although, if there is high-level backing and a concrete roadmap then entities such as UN Environment in Paris may be more willing and able to join any work on e-waste.

III. The next meeting of the IMG and proposed short-term timetable

In September 2017, the Senior Officials of the EMG will meet in New York. At the meeting, the Secretariat will provide a report on the progress of work over the last year. Suggested actions are proposed as part of the progress reporting for decisions by Senior Officials, of which at least one will refer to the future of the IMG on Tackling E-waste.

Between now and the Senior Officials' Meeting in September, the following timetable for the IMG is proposed.

<u>3rd Meeting of the IMG</u>	June 1st
I. Consider the substantive recommendations of the E-waste Analytical Report, steps 18(e) and (d) of the IMG Terms of Reference and the thoughts expressed during the bilateral discussions.	
II. Based on the outcome of discussions taken place during the 3 rd meeting of the IMG, develop a Note which details the proposed next steps and follow-up of the recommendation(s).	June-July
<u>4th Meeting of the IMG</u>	July
III. Based on the outcome of discussions taken place during the 3 rd and 4 th meetings of the IMG, agree on and develop a proposal or recommendation(s) as suggested actions for the Senior Officials' Meeting.	July – September
<u>23rd Senior officials' Meeting</u>	September 18th/20th
IV. Submission of the E-Waste Analytical Report and a Progress Report to the EMG Senior Officials' Meeting.	September