

The Durban Declaration

on e-Waste Management in Africa

We, the participants at the e-waste workshop held during WasteCon2008 in Durban South Africa, signatories of this declaration,

- (i) recognise the importance of optimizing the life cycle of electric and electronic equipment (EEE), e.g., by improving supply chains, optimising life spans, closing material loops and reducing contamination;
- (ii) are concerned about environmental and health issues related to current recycling and disposal practices of waste electric and electronic equipment (WEEE or e-waste);
- (iii) are aware of the global socio-economic opportunities which processing e-waste presents;
- (iv) are concerned about growing global disparities due to unequal access to EEE (e.g. in the case of Information and Communication Technologies resulting in a 'digital divide');
- (v) are aware of the importance that public perception has towards a sustainable solution of the e-waste problem; and
- (vi) recognise the importance of local, regional and global partnerships between companies, governmental and non-governmental organisations and academic institutions in addressing the e-waste problem.

(in agreement with the MoU of “Solving the e-Waste Problem” StEP)

We have elaborated on the main issues related to an improvement of the current e-waste management practices encountered on the African continent. Based on our experiences from Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda we feel the issues are sufficiently generic and of equal concern to the other African countries. We discussed possible ways and means to tackle the issues. We avoided the formulation of ready made implementable solutions as it was agreed that every country requires its own process to define a roadmap related to specific projects. Our suggested recommendations are as follows:

- improve cooperation among stakeholders (a) by ensuring the right level of African representation in relevant international fora (e.g. StEP, PACE), (b) by establishing African regional platforms and/or an e-waste forum in cooperation with established African networks and international bodies such as the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP) and the European WEEE forum, and (c) by identifying with relevant initiatives, learning from them and utilising their expertise;
- establish an institutional framework (a) by initiating a suitable process that will accommodate negotiation amongst relevant stakeholders within local, national, regional and global levels, and (b) by identifying and/or creating appropriate institutions to allocate the responsibilities, objectives and schedules within the e-waste sector;
- create awareness at all levels of governance and the general public (a) by making information available through appropriate means (e.g. websites, training, campaigns), and (b) by identifying and targeting the right audience with tailored solutions (e.g. schools, vocational/technical institutes, the informal sector, governments, and the general public) towards commitment to sustainable e-waste management;

- support markets (a) by identifying, quantifying, and evaluating existing down-stream material markets and alternative material flows, (b) by sharing of information on new technologies for optimised resource recovery, and (c) by promoting fair local e-waste markets wherever possible;
- collect and manage data (a) by establishing a process for data acquisition which allows for design, monitoring and control of e-waste management, (d) setting up a mechanism for continuous update of these data, and (c) by using data for transparent decision making and system improvements;
- develop a legal framework (a) by reviewing existing legislations in order to enforce sound e-waste management, (b) by highlighting permitting or licensing requirements for improved compliance to existing legislation, (c) by promoting policies that meet the minimum of legislative requirements, (d) by implementing a system of minimum requirements, and (e) by amending existing waste management legislation to allow for a regulation on e-waste management;
- develop a qualified and efficient e-waste recycling sector (a) by documenting tested and best available processes and practises, (b) by developing and improving skills and competencies through training, (c) by satisfying the need for business models to ensure appropriate investments on the right technological and geographical level, (d) by connecting existing and new processes in the e-waste stream in so-called green e-waste channels, and (e) by ensuring continuous improvement of the infrastructure through the establishment of standards and auditing procedures.

In order to formulate National Action Plans we recommend applying the process as applied in the pilot initiatives in Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda, i.e. evolving mechanisms and strategies for developing and implementing the following activities:

- (i) creating a National working group including all relevant stakeholders;
- (ii) integrating the work of the working group with that of existing international networks;
- (iii) conducting a baseline assessment and publicly share the data;
- (iv) proposing a roadmap based on the findings of the national work group;
- (v) examine synergies with neighbouring countries;
- (vi) developing feasibility studies;
- (vii) implementation and evaluation of pilot activities.

The subsequent implementation of the National Action Plan results in a formalised and sustainable e-waste management system.

The signatories, Durban 9 October 2008:

Alan Finlay (Openresearch, South Africa), Caleb Mango (NEMA, Kenya), Cheikhou I. D. GASSAMA (SENECLIC, Senegal), Cissé Kane (DSF, Switzerland), Cynthia Mtshali (Natal Museum, South Africa), David Liechti (eWASA, South Africa), David RoCHAT (Empa, Switzerland), Edgar Mugisha (UCPC, Uganda), Esther Müller (Empa, Switzerland), Gerry Newson (Recover-e Alliance, South Africa), Iris Cloete (ESKOM, South Africa), Jean Cox-Kearns (DELL, Ireland), June Lombard (Lombard & Associates, South Africa), Keith Anderson (eWASA, South Africa), Lene Ecroignard (eWASA, South Africa), Mathias Schluep (Empa, Switzerland), Matthias Kolb (eWASA, South Africa), Mbaweni Manqele (Duyaze, South Africa), Moussa SY (IAGU, Senegal), Muriuki Mureithi (KICTANet, Kenya), Oladele Osibanjo (BCRC, Nigeria), Racheal Raji (UCT, South Africa), Ray Lombard (Agaricus Trading (Pty) Ltd, South Africa), Robert Hediger (SENS, WEEE Forum, Switzerland), Rolf Widmer (Empa, Switzerland), Ruben Janse Van Rensburg (HP, South Africa), Salah Eddine Laissaoui (MCPC, Morocco), Susanne Dittke (EnviroSense, South Africa), Thami Ntuli (eThekweni Municipality, South Africa), Timothy Fasheun (KZN DAEA, South Africa)