

Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment

PROJECT GROUP 3.1 ON COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF USED AND END-OF-LIFE COMPUTING EQUIPMENT FROM INFORMAL SECTORS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

Background:

The Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment (PACE) was launched by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, which took place in Bali, Indonesia in June 2008. PACE is a multi-stakeholder public-private partnership under the umbrella of the Basel Convention that provides a forum for representatives of personal computer manufacturers, recyclers, international organizations, associations, academia, environmental groups and governments to tackle environmentally sound refurbishment, repair, material recovery, recycling and disposal of used and end-of-life computing equipment. The Partnership is intended to increase the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment, taking into account, amongst other things, social responsibility, the concept of sustainable development, and information-sharing on life cycle thinking.

For the purpose of PACE, computing equipment is defined as: PCs and associated displays, printers and peripherals; personal desktop computers, including their central processing units (CPUs) and all other parts contained in them; personal notebooks and laptop computers, including docking stations, CPUs and all other parts contained in the computers; computer monitors, including cathode ray tube, liquid crystal display and plasma monitors; computer keyboards, mice and cables; computer printers, including dot matrix, inkjet, laser and thermal printers and any computer printer with scanning or facsimile capabilities, or both.

Under PACE one of the project groups, Project Group 3.1 was established with an objective to identify and select pilot projects, mechanisms and tools, to divert end-of-life computing equipment from environmentally unsound landfill, open burning and harmful recycling operations to environmentally sound and efficient recycling operations locally and globally in a manner that is sustainable and mindful of improving the health and welfare of the informal sector. The pilot projects will also be utilized to test the ESM Guidelines produced by the PACE program.

The major activities of the project group include: developing criteria for selecting countries for e-waste surveys, building, where possible, on work already being done or underway in other programs. From the national survey, pilot countries (2-4) would be selected for the development of environmentally, economically and socially sustainable, means to collect electronic wastes in cooperation with, and to the benefit of informal sectors and small repair, refurbishment enterprises in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including utilizing partnerships and educational programs. Strategies, to overcome obstacles to implementation and to assess and avoid risk to the project's success, will be examined. To launch as a self-sustaining operation, pilot projects will be field tested and, if appropriate, adjustments indicated by the field tests will be made and operations will





continue to be monitored for a minimum of 6 months with a view to identifying problems and improving deficiencies, education and communications of all stakeholders.

Progress Report /Achievements

Project Group 3.1 has made significant progress in terms of achieving a number of tasks that were identified in its Terms of Reference. The Project Group completed e-waste surveys in 5 countries: Burkina Faso, Jordan, Samoa, El Salvador, Serbia, and will be launching first pilot project in Jordan on collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment from informal sectors. Once additional resources are made available, other countries will be considered for pilot projects as none of the countries are eliminated from future considerations.

Further information on activities of this project group can be found on the Basel Convention website: (<http://www.basel.int/industry/compartnership/documents.html>)