

INFORMATION BRIEF

MOBILE PHONE PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The concept to establish a Public Private Partnership won the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life telephones was launched by the President of the 5th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Mr. Philip Roch, State Secretary, Director of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape. Subsequently, this initiative was formally established at the Sixth Conference of the Parties, Geneva, 9-13 December 2002, as a sustainable Public-Private Partnership for the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life mobile phones to the benefit of the partners and the environment. Initially, twelve mobile phone manufacturers signed the partnership agreement. The decision and agreement are set out in decision VI/3: Sustainable partnership for the environmentally sound management of end-of-life mobile telephone.

The Mobile Phone Working Group is composed of mobile phone manufacturers, telecom operators, countries, recycling and refurbishment industry, environment NGOs and industry associations.

The objectives of the partnership are to:

- achieve better product stewardship;
- influence consumer behaviour towards more environmentally friendly actions;
- promote the best disposal/recycling/refurbishing options;
- mobilize political and institutional support for environmentally sound management;
- create an initiative that could be replicated to build new public/private partnerships for the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other waste streams.

Since the start of the Initiative, five guidelines have been completed that address the refurbishment of used mobile phones, recovery and recycling of end-of-life mobile phones, raising awareness on design considerations of mobile phones, and on the collection and transboundary movement of used mobile phones. The Parties and signatories to the Basel Convention on many occasions lauded the work of this first Public-Private Partnership within the framework of the Basel Convention and consider its' work to be a priority.

Next phase, 2007 and beyond:

- With the completion of the guidelines and overall guidance document, the next phases focuses on the dissemination of the guidelines and training government officials in order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and know-how to countries. To this end, there will be workshops held in a select number of countries over the next 1.5 years. The first continent would be Latin America.
- This phase also involves the launching of pilot projects on collection and treatment schemes in Developing countries and countries with Economies-in-Transition. These countries are looking for the best available practices by testing the guidelines produced under this Initiative.
- A key aspect of the pilot projects is to help us test the guidelines and based on the outcomes of the pilot, modify the guidelines, as appropriate. The pilot projects will be very instrumental in raising awareness on environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life mobile phones. We expect that this work will ensure that used and end-of-life mobile phones are diverted away from landfills towards environmentally sound refurbishment and/or recycling operations.