

# PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION ON COMPUTING EQUIPMENT (PACE)

Draft Summary Report of the  
Side Event on PACE during the seventh meeting of the Open-ended  
Working Group (OEWG 7)  
Geneva, Switzerland, May 10, 2010

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## **1. Background**

The concept to establish a Public Private Partnership on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment was launched during the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bali, Indonesia, in 2008.

With decision IX/9, adopted by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the Conference of the Parties agreed to establish the Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment Working Group (PACEWG) and agreed with the mission statement, scope, working principles and activities of the PACE, as set out in Annex 1 to the decision IX/9.

Following the launching of the initiative, the PACEWG was formally established in January 2009, as a sustainable public-private partnership for the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment. It is an open forum for all interested Parties and Signatories to the Basel Convention, international organizations, Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres, industry bodies, academic organizations and civil society. The objective of the PACE is to increase the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment, taking into account social responsibility and the concept of sustainable development, and promoting the sharing of information on life-cycle thinking.

The PACEWG prepared its work programme, Terms of Reference and submitted them to the Open-ended working Group (OEWG) for its consideration at its seventh meeting. It contains a set of activities that would assist countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to manage used and end-of-life computing equipment in an environmentally sound manner, it includes activities:

- (a) To develop tools (such as guidelines) and activities on environmentally sound refurbishment and repair, including criteria for testing, certification and labelling;
- (b) To develop tools (such as guidelines) and activities on environmentally sound recycling and material recovery, including facility certification;
- (c) To develop and promote pilot schemes for the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment geared towards the attainment of

the Millennium Development Goals;

- (d) To develop awareness-raising and training programme activities.

Furthermore, the PACEWG has developed financial mechanism, organizational structure, and has established five project groups to work on these 4 activities. These are:

- Ad Interim Project Group on Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) Criteria Recommendations,
- Project Group 1.1 on Environmentally Sound Testing, Repair and Refurbishment of Used Computing Equipment,
- Project Group 2.1 on Environmentally Sound Material Recovery and Recycling of End-of-Life Computing Equipment,
- Project Group 3.1 on Collection and Management of End-of-Life Computing Equipment from Informal Sectors, and
- Project Group 4.1 on Awareness Raising and Training.

In addition, two sub-groups: Sub-Group on Resource Mobilization and Financial Sustainability, and Sub-Group on Transboundary Movement of Used and End-of-Life Computing Equipment, were also established to assist project groups in completing their activities.

A number of waste surveys will be launched, based on 35 country proposals received from 5 United Nations regions. These will lead to initiation of pilot projects on collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment from informal sectors in developing countries and countries with economies in transition as per the Terms of reference of the Project Group 3.1.

## **2. Opening Remarks**

Dr. Katharina, Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary, SBC, opened the side event by welcoming all participants and mentioned that the PACE is one of the high priority public-private partnerships under the Basel Convention. She mentioned that under the Basel Convention, public-private partnerships are viewed as a creative mechanism for Parties and all stakeholders to work together in a voluntary forum to ensure that wastes and end-of-life products are being managed in an environmentally sound manner. She noted that PACE is the flag ship for other partnerships under the Basel Convention.

She mentioned that the PACE is making good progress on number of issues as reflected in the COP 9 decision, and hopes that products developed under PACE would facilitate the transfer of know-how to countries that are considering launching projects on environmentally sound management of computing equipment, and are looking for the best available practices.

Following Dr. Kummer Peiry's opening remarks; Mr. Matthias Kern from the Secretariat of the Basel Convention chaired the side event, and moderated the discussion on all agenda items.

### **3. Overview of the PACE Program**

The Co-chair of the PACEWG, Dr. Marco Buletti from Switzerland, made a presentation on the general overview of the PACE. He described goals for the initiative, mission statement, scope of coverage, activities, membership, working structure, and future plans. He identified five project groups, under the PACEWG, responsible for development of: ESM criteria recommendations, guideline on environmentally sound repair and refurbishment of used computing equipment, guideline on environmentally sound material recovery and recycling, pilot projects on collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment from informal sectors in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and awareness raising and training products. He mentioned that all project groups are making good progress and plan to complete their activities by the tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties in 2011(COP10).

Dr. Buletti highlighted the benefits to Parties participating in this initiative, and outlined the next steps under the PACEWG. He appealed for financial contributions from Parties, Signatories, industry and other stakeholders so that project groups can complete their activities, prior to COP 10. A copy of Dr. Buletti's presentation in PDF is attached to the report.

### **4. Presentations by Project Groups**

Dr. Buletti's presentation was followed by brief presentations by Co-chairs of each project group, and this power point presentation in PDF is attached to the report:

#### **a) Ad Interim Project Group**

The Co-chair of the Ad Interim Project Group, Mr. Ross Bartley from BIR, presented activities of the group, indicating that the group has been very active, held a number of teleconferences and two physical meetings. The Ad Interim Project Group has completed its task and finalized a report on ESM criteria recommendations, which has been forwarded to other project groups that are developing guidelines, activities, and pilot projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The report with ESM criteria recommendations can also be found on the Basel Convention web site.

#### **b) Project Group 1.1**

The Chair of Project Group 1.1, Mr. Andy Howarth from UK, presented the activities of the project group, indicating that it has been very active and has produced a number of drafts of the guideline for consideration by project group participants. It is making good progress to finalize the guideline on environmentally sound repair and refurbishment of used computing equipment to be used to prepare the overall Guidance Document for consideration by COP 10.

#### **c) Project Group 2.1**

The Chair of Project group 2.1, Mr. John Bullock, from USA, presented the activities of the group, indicating that it has been very active, held also a number of teleconferences and two physical meetings. It is making good progress to finalize the

guideline on environmentally sound material recovery and recycling of end-of-life computing equipment to be used to prepare the overall Guidance Document for consideration by COP 10.

**d) Project Group 3.1**

The Co-chair of Project Group 3.1, Ms. Patricia Whiting from USA, presented the activities of the group, indicating that it has been very active in developing a call for project proposals, evaluating 35 proposals received, and selecting top ranked proposals in all United Nations regions. It is in the process of developing an implementation plan for waste surveys in these top ranked countries and establishment of Project Management Teams to look after these waste studies. Based on survey results, 2-4 countries will be selected for pilot projects, as per project group's TOR. Recommendations from pilot projects will be implemented in other centers in the country, and regions.

**e) Project Group 4.1**

The Co-chair of Project Group 4.1, Mr. Miguel Araujo from El Salvador, presented the activities of the group, indicating that it is the last project group that was established. Recently its TOR was approved, which lists a number of high and medium priority activities. High priority awareness raising and training products on PACE are being developed for the COP 10 meeting, including a logo on PACE. At the same time at least one workshop on PACE will be organized by BCRCs in each UN region.

**5. Developing Country Perspective on PACE**

Dr. Aisha Mahmood, from Nigeria, presented developing country perspective on PACE, on behalf of Prof. Oladele Osibanjo whose arrival was delayed due to flight delays. She presented developing country problems in managing e-waste and Basel Convention's response, such as the adoption of Nairobi declaration on ESM of e-waste. She also provided a short overview of the PACE. She stressed that illegal traffic, transboundary movement, and awareness raising and training issues are very important for developing countries, and should be addressed by the PACE. She indicated that some developing countries are very active as Co-chairs, and as participants in the PACEWG and project group activities. However, financial constraint is a major challenge preventing other developing countries from taking part in teleconferences. She appealed to all Parties signatories and stakeholders to provide additional financial contributions to the PACE budget to facilitate a more active participation by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in teleconferences and physical meetings. Prof. Osibanjo's presentation in PDF is attached to the report.

**6. NGO Perspective on PACE**

Mr. Jim Puckett from BAN stressed that PACE needs additional resources, and encouraged members to pay their dues, as per the approved Terms of Reference and in accordance with agreed to sliding scales. He stressed that additional resources are needed for additional pilot projects being addressed by the Project Group 3.1. He mentioned that

in most developing countries there is lack of proper recycling facilities to manage end-of-life computing equipment in an environmentally sound manner. In particular, there is a lack of technologies to deal with CRTs and glass. In addition there is an urgent need to develop proper infrastructure and legal framework to manage such wastes. He urged manufacturers of computing equipment to be more involved in the collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment, and to provide a funding mechanism for take back activities. He stressed the importance of finalizing procedures on TBM of used and end-of-life computing equipment, as was done under MPPI, without trying to interpret the Basel Convention. He mentioned that the compromise position, reached under the MPPI, should be adopted by the PACE. Finally, he urged a more balanced participation on the PACE Working Group to include additional members from developing countries, NGOs and OEMs.

## **7. Industry Perspective on PACE**

Mr. Ross Bartley from BIR presented industry perspective on PACE, on behalf of Mr. Rick Goss from ITI, who was not able to attend the side event due to the flight cancellation. He provided a brief overview of industry involvement in the PACE. It was mentioned that ITI is the premier high-tech trade association in the United States, representing 45 of the leading global companies in information and communications technologies (ICT). Members are committed to a proper management of used and end-of-life computing equipment and he highlighted benefits of ESM which can provide significant global economic and environmental benefits. Legitimate refurbishment and reuse extends the useful life of valuable equipment and helps bridge the digital divide. Also, proper material recovery addresses concerns over resource shortages, while reducing the overall environmental footprint. He highlighted key role for PACE as being: development of refurbishment and recycling guidelines, promotion of globally responsible recycling practices through pilot projects, identification of opportunities to facilitate ESM, and working closely with Parties in preparation of the transboundary movement guideline. Finally, he mentioned ITI remains committed to supporting the successful completion of PACE, and looks forward to working with all stakeholders on achieving a consensus result that is environmentally and economically sound. Mr. Goss' power point presentation in PDF is attached to the report.

## **8. Cooperation between PACE and Solving the E-Waste Problem (StEP)**

Dr. Schluep presented StEP's initiative, which is coordinated by the United Nations University. He identified StEP's vision, objectives, core principles, its membership, organizational chart, and explained activities of 5 task forces: policy, redesign, reuse, recycle, and capacity building. He also presented the Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariats of the Basel Convention and the Solving the E-waste Problem Initiative, which was signed in September 2008. He mentioned that StEP members participated in the Interim Group which developed the PACE program, and currently are participating on the PACE Working Group and all PACE Project Groups. Finally, he stressed that both PACE and StEP share substantial areas of mutual interest and

undertake complementary activities, designed to enhance coordination of their work and strengthen cooperation, thereby facilitating synergies and minimizing any duplication. The power point presentation in PDF is attached to the report.

## **9. Question and Answer Period**

Following these presentations the floor was opened for questions and comments:

- A number of countries have indicated that they are interested in participating in PACE and discussions on the pilot project dealing with collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment.
- A number of participants suggested that the PACE should further strengthen its efforts to include participants of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the deliberations and the work of the PACEWG. PACE should make resources available for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to participate in teleconferences and meetings.
- One participant raised the issue of the pilot project in Pakistan and asked that the issue be reconsidered as there should be no security issues for outside officials to be involved in such studies in Pakistan.
- A number of participants asked for information on procedures to be followed to join the PACE. Both the Secretariat and Co-chair of the PACE Working Group suggested that those, who would like to join PACE, should send an email to the Secretariat.
- A delegate from Brazil asked that EMPA clarifies issues associated with the methodology being used for the e-waste study in Brazil.

## **10. Conclusion**

The side event was well attended, with over 60 participants (see Annex 1). Following this side event, Parties to the Basel Convention adopted the decision on PACE extending the PACE work program until COP 10 in 2011 (see Annex 2). The decision calls upon all stakeholders to make voluntary financial and in-kind contributions towards PACE in order to complete its activities, in particular pilot projects on collection and management of used and end-of-life computing equipment from informal sectors in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

## **Annex 1: Participant's List and Advance Copy of OEWG 7 Decision on PACE**

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## Annex 2: Advance Copy of the OEWG 7 Decision on PACE

**United Nations  
Environment  
Programme**

**UNEP/CHW/OEWG/7/CRP.2**  
12 May 2010

Original: English

**Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention  
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of  
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal**

Seventh session

Geneva, 10–14 May 2010

Agenda item 5 (c)

**Strategic issues: Basel Convention Partnership Programme**

### **Draft decision on the Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment**

#### **Submission by the European Union**

*The Open-ended Working Group,*

*Recalling* its decision IX/9,

*Also recalling* the Basel Declaration on Environmentally Sound Management and the Nairobi Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste,

*Welcoming* initiatives of the working group of the Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment to coordinate and collaborate in, as appropriate, its activities with other bodies and undertakings, such as the Solving the E-waste Problem initiative, coordinated by the United Nations University, to establish synergies and to prevent the duplication of activities in the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment,

*Acknowledging* that awareness-raising and information-sharing on the environmentally sound management and control of the transboundary movement of used and end-of-life computing equipment are of particular importance to Parties, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the progress made in the implementation of the Partnership and welcomes the report submitted by the co-chairs of the Partnership;<sup>1</sup>
2. *Takes note* of the final terms of reference for the Partnership set out in annex B to that report;

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP/CHW/OEWG/7/INF/6.

3. *Also takes note* of the financial arrangements for the Partnership referred to in annex 3 to those final terms of reference;

4. *Further takes note* of the elements for a more detailed workplan contained in annex A to the report submitted by the co-chairs of the Partnership and requests the working group of the Partnership to finalize and publish a more detailed workplan for 2009–2011;

5. *Requests* the Partnership to develop a draft overall guidance document on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment and requests the Secretariat to publish this document on the Basel Convention website;

6. *Invites* Parties and others to submit comments to the Secretariat by 31 May 2011 on the draft overall guidance document on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment based on their experiences and needs, to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting for its consideration;

7. *Requests* the Partnership to revise the draft overall guidance document taking into account the comments received;

8. *Invites* Parties, signatories, members of industry organizations and international governmental and non-governmental organizations to make financial and in-kind contributions in order to enable the Partnership:

(a) To initiate additional e-waste surveys and pilot projects on the collection and management of end-of-life computing equipment from the informal sector in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(b) To facilitate the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(c) To facilitate the development and implementation of guidelines, tools and activities;

9. *Requests* the Secretariat:

(a) To submit the revised draft overall guidance document to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting for its consideration;

(b) To report to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting on progress in the activities undertaken by the Partnership;

(c) To prepare a draft decision on the Partnership for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.