

COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)

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**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their efforts in
2013 to implement the outcome of the WSIS**

Submission by

UNEP

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 17th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Dear Ms. Miroux,

I hope my Email finds you well. In view of the above request, please accept my sincere apologies for UNEP's late reply.

UNEP and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention (BRS) are contributing to the specific discussion on sustainable life-cycle management of ICT equipment and electronic waste (e-waste) under the action line 'E-Environment'. The facilitator of this action line is WMO and it is understood that WMO is reporting on all issues under this action line.

We would be highlighting the following key issues:

On emergency communications, early warning systems and disaster risk reduction:

Importance of capacity building and raising awareness on the challenges of climate change adaptation and the contribution that ICTs can make to support disaster risk reduction strategies.

Special mention to the role of the UN to assist developing countries in using the best technological solutions for each context.

On e-waste:

E-waste was a new issue when the WSIS process started. Today we have evidences that this problematic topic has become a major issue with strong implications on the environment, on health, as well as in the working conditions on the professionals (usually from the informal sector) working in the recycling of the materials. Addressing the problematic needs to tackle all these issue through a multi-stakeholder and comprehensive approach is crucial.

To move forward the key strategy should be to build on the legal instruments available at the international level, in particular the Basel Convention, as well as in the mandate of the relevant organizations working in each of the previously mentioned domains (ITU, ILO, WMO and UNEP). There is a strong political base and solid organizational support.

In addition, a key challenge is to improve the information available on e-waste, and make it available to decision makers to allow for better policies to be introduced. Good quality information can help decision makers so the problem can be framed in the right proportion

On smart climate monitoring:

The development of advanced smart Climate monitoring using ICTs is significantly increasing due to advancements in climate change. ICTS are essential tools for providing recorded data and analysis leading to information and knowledge on climate change.

The use of ICTs in climate monitoring should be seen as an "end to end" system from observations to predictions. Much progress continues to be made on forecasting. Over the next ten years todays 5 day forecast will be as valuable as a 10 day forecast. Therefore it is very important we continue to protect the available spectrum and satellite orbits to maintain and continue developing new ICT-enabled applications for meteorology

Emerging trends:

Looking into the future, the WSIS+10 process should analyze if action line C7 e-environment should be reviewed to broaden its scope into e-sustainability. This change would allow for more flexibility to the areas that have been brought to the attention of this action line. There is a need to translate all data we have to useful information for the most vulnerable people.

It is also essential that the action line spurs inter-sectoral cooperation between the ICT community and the environmental community, the meteorological community, and other groups working around sustainability. This collaboration should take place at the international, national and regional levels

Finally, communities also need to be actively involved in the application of ICTs to address sustainability issues, in particular climate change. While ICTs are critically important, the challenge of climate change can also be fully met through stronger political will.

All the best,

Sincerely

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