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GEC Support of India IT Products Sustainability Standard

This Green Electronics Council project seeks to support the development of an India IT Products Sustainability Standard that reflects the priorities and challenges of the country, particularly the challenge of responsibly managing electronics at end-of-life through an existing informal sector. IT product sustainability standards exist; however, they were developed to reflect the end-of-life management infrastructure and workforce challenges faced by countries such as the United States and within the European Union. India is interested in developing a standard that takes into consideration current state realities yet will also serve to improve the end-of-life practices used by India's informal sector.

Green Electronics Council

The Green Electronics Council (GEC) is a mission-driven non-profit seeking to achieve a world in which only sustainable IT projects are designed, manufactured, and purchased. Managers of EPEAT, the leading global ecolabel addressing IT products, GEC works with stakeholders of all types to facilitate the adoption of sustainable design, manufacturing and procurement behaviors.

Project Overview

GEC staff have significant experience in managing multi-stakeholder processes that are inclusive, efficient with stakeholders' time, encourage broad participation in the standards-setting process and produce sustainability leadership standards.

EPEAT, the ecolabel managed by the Green Electronics Council, is based on three of the most widely adopted IT sustainability standards in existence. With this project, GEC seeks to share our insights on which existing IT product criteria, from the current standards used in EPEAT, can be leveraged in the India IT Products Sustainability Standard development process, removing the need for stakeholders to develop certain criteria from scratch and free up additional time for stakeholders to address end-of-life management criteria. This approach will support harmonization with EPEAT and allow products adhering to the India IT Products Sustainability standard to be registered by EPEAT and marketed to global purchasers via the online EPEAT Registry.

GEC advocates for the India IT Products Sustainability Standard to include performance metrics that apply to multiple IT products, including but not limited to personal computer products (desktop computers, laptops and monitors), imaging equipment (printers, scanners, copiers), televisions, servers and mobile phones.

The standard would tailor the end-of-life management performance specifications to India, taking into consideration:

- The realities and needs of the informal sector by incorporating capacity building performance metrics into the standard
- Existing India policies on takeback and associated implementation guidance, and
- Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all) and Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns)

As part of the standard development process, GEC will seek to facilitate a dialogue on the gaps between existing India takeback policies and current informal sector practices so that these gaps can be addressed. The goal is to identify specific capacity building initiatives that could be incorporated into the standard, and/or supported by both government and private sector stakeholders.

Project Goals

This initiative will create an India IT Products Sustainability Standard focused on sustainability priorities and challenges in India. GEC will provide technical facilitation to Indian stakeholders to:

- Develop an IT product sustainability standard specifically for the India market which:
 - Includes performance based end-of-life processing specifications, including capacity building and best practices for the informal end-of-life management and processing sector in India
 - Aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals relating to responsible consumption and production; productive employment and decent work and gender equality
 - Harmonizes with existing EPEAT criteria to allow products meeting the standard to be marketed to global purchasers via the EPEAT online Registry
- Enable a dialogue to Identify gaps between India's existing policy on e-waste and current practices in end-of-life processing. Identification of performance metrics that could be incorporated into the standard, as well as government and private sector capacity building activities to address these gaps.

Project Description

The India IT Products Sustainability Standard will be developed:

- Through a multi-stakeholder process, with representatives from industry (including small and medium enterprises), government, end-of-life representatives from the informal sector, non-government organizations, purchasers, etc.
- Using existing EPEAT standards criteria as a starting point to streamline the process and harmonize with EPEAT to the extent possible.
- Partnering with the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)

The standard will address the life cycle of an IT product. Performance metrics will be determined by participating stakeholders and may include:

- Responsible end-of-life management taking into considerations the unique challenges and infrastructure in India
- Reduction of toxic substances
- Use of preferable materials such as recycled content
- Conducting life cycle assessments & greenhouse gas emission inventories
- Energy efficiency of products and manufacturing
- Designing products for enhancing recycling, repair and reuse
- Environmentally preferable product packaging
- Corporate environmental and social responsibility

Project Schedule and Milestones

- April 17 – 21st, 2017: Project meetings with key stakeholders to confirm project focus, stakeholder participation, outcomes and timeline
- May – October, 2017: Ongoing meetings via skype and other electronic means
- November 2017 – Present draft standard at CRB Standards Conference; confirm interest in finalizing standard

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