New Question 24/1 – Strategies and policies for the proper disposal or reuse of telecommunications/ICT waste material

1   Statement of the situation or problem

The growth of telecommunications/ICT, especially in developing countries has been exponential in recent years. For instance, between 2002 and 2007, the mobile phone penetration in the Americas region grew from 19 to 70 terminals per 100 inhabitants. Globally, the share of mobile phone subscriptions in developing countries, increased by 20 percentage points, from 44% to 64% over the same period of time.

The growth of electrical and electronic equipment and their peripherals, as well as continuous updating of technology, has generated a non-negligible growth of telecommunications/ICT waste. It is estimated that every year are generated between 20 and 50 million tonnes of telecommunications/ICT waste worldwide. However, recycling and responsible disposal of telecommunications/ICT waste is found at low levels, making it difficult to even find figures on this issue at regional level.

The consequences of not carrying out a proper recycling or disposal generated environmental problems of a large magnitude, especially for developing countries.

Given the exponential growth of telecommunications/ICT terminals associated with the high turnover of them, as well as technological advances make it imperative to advance in the immediate future actions to prevent environmental catastrophe that would be generated in developing countries if it does not produce an adequate regulatory framework and work for policies that address this problem.

2   Question or issue for study

Strategies to develop a responsible approach and integral treatment of telecommunications/ICT waste: policy and regulatory actions required in developing countries in close collaboration with ITU-T Study Group 5.

3   Expected output

The final result expected is submitting a report with recommendations and actions to be taken by developing countries to implement a comprehensive system of management of telecommunications/ICT waste.

This final report should contain the technical classification of e-waste related to telecommunications/ICT policy recommendations and regulatory proposals, economic models and methods of financing for developing countries, mainly government and regulatory entities.

4   Timing

Two years with an interim report by 2012, and a final report by 2013.

5   Proposers/sponsors

Ministry of Information and Communications Technologies, Columbia. Office of Communications.

6   Sources of input

Member States

Sector Members

Associate Members.

7   Target audience

	Developed countries	Developing countries[1]
Telecom policy-makers	X	X
Telecom regulators	X	X
Service providers/operators	X	X
Manufacturers	X	X

a)   Target audience – Who specifically will use the output

Telecom regulators, telecom policy makers, service providers/operators and manufacturers, principally of developing countries and LDCs.

b)   Proposed methods for the implementation of the results

A set of guidelines and recommendations about the strategies to approach a responsible and integral treatment of waste related to telecommunications/ICTs: policy and regulatory actions required in developing countries and LDCs.

This Guide could be implemented by the developing countries and LDCs, as well as operators and manufacturers in the establishment of actions for a responsible and integral treatment of waste related to telecommunications/ICTs.

8   Proposed methods of handling the Question or issue

a)   How?

1)   Within a Study Group:

It is proposed to perform the following tasks within the Study Group 1:

1)   Technical classification of telecommunications/ICT waste, according to the components and hazardous substances.

2)   Identify and assess the problems of the countries and/or regions in the implementation of a comprehensive system of management of telecommunications/ICT waste.

3)   Experiences of various developed and developing countries, as well as manufacturers and operators in the comprehensive management of telecommunications/ICT waste, including policy, regulatory, economic studies, methods of financing, among others.

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[1]   This includes least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and countries with economies in transition.

4) Examine how the transfer of information and knowledge, training and skills development in people and institutions can strengthen the ability of countries to manage the handling of telecommunications/ICT waste. Browse effective systems for sharing information that assists in these tasks.

2) Within regular BDT activity:

– Programmes

– Projects

– Expert consultants

3) In other ways – describe (e.g. regional, within other organizations, jointly with other organizations, etc.)

b) **Why?**

To have the set of guidelines it would be necessary to have the experience of the different countries, operators and manufacturers, as well as different organizations related with the topic who could provide information.

The Study Group must develop questionnaires and the set of Guidelines.

9 Coordination

• regular ITU-D activities;

• other Study Group Questions or issues;

• regional organizations, as appropriate;

• work in progress in the other ITU Sectors.

10 Other relevant information

Any other information that may become available during the period of validity of the Question.

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