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| PROPOSED MODIFICATION To RESOLUTION 79 |
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| **Abstract:** | This document contains the proposal for modification of Resolution 79, “The role of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies in handling and controlling e-waste from telecommunication and information technology equipment and methods of treating it”. |
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Introduction

The significant escalation of e-waste generation in the last two decades can be attributed to several key factors, including rapid technological advancements, increased economic activity, urbanization trends, and a rising demand for consumer electronics further fuelled by decreasing price points. Quick advancement and cost reduction of electronic gadgets made a drastic transformation among regular users to access the new electronic products and digital [technology](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/earth-and-planetary-sciences/science-and-technology). The utilization of mobile phone and Internet usage have drastically increased in the last ten years.

Electronic waste (E-waste) accounts for the fastest growing solid waste stream in the world. This rapid expansion of electronic products worldwide could adversely affect the environment by vast deposition of e-waste. According to the 2020 Global E-waste monitor report ([Forti et al., 2020](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667010022000671#bib0026)), the production of e-waste in the year 2019 was around 53.6 million metric tons of which 17.4% were properly collected and recycled then the remaining 82.6% were not accounted for. The prediction on global e-waste is expected to be 74.7 million metric tons by the year 2030.

Hence, with the advent and large-scale adoption of the different ICT devices in day-to-day life, the e-waste management framework needs to be more robust, organized as well as harmonized to handle the massive e-waste that may be generated. The e-waste collection systems, standards, regulations around e-waste management frameworks, recycling methodologies and their standardization also need to be effectively developed and adopted.

Based on above, there are modifications proposed to Resolution 79 “The role of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies in handling and controlling e‑waste from telecommunication and information technology equipment and methods of treating it”.

**Proposal**

APT Member Administrations propose to modify WTSA Resolution 79 “The role of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies in handling and controlling e‑waste from telecommunication and information technology equipment and methods of treating it”.

MOD APT/37A25/1

RESOLUTION 79 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

The role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in handling and controlling e-waste from telecommunication and information technology equipment and methods of treating it

(Dubai, 2012, Geneva, 2022, New Delhi, 2024)

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (New Delhi 2024),

recalling

*a)* Resolution 182 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) in regard to climate change and the protection of the environment;

*b)* Resolution 66 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on Information and Communication technology, environment, climate change and circular economy;

*c)* § 19 of the Hyderabad Declaration (2010), stating that the formulation and implementation of policies for proper disposal of e-waste are of great importance;

*d)* the Basel Convention (March, 1989) on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, which characterizes certain wastes resulting from electrical and electronic assemblies as hazardous;

*e)* § 20 of Action Line C7 (E-environment) of the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003), calling for governments, civil society and the private sector to be encouraged to initiate actions and implement projects and programmes for sustainable production and consumption and the environmentally safe disposal and recycling of discarded hardware and components used in ICT;

*f)* the Nairobi Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste, and the adoption by the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention of the Work Plan for the Environmentally Sound Management of E-waste, focusing on the needs of developing countries[[1]](#footnote-1)1,

considering

*a)* that, owing to the rapid technological advancement in the field of telecommunications and information technology and increased cost effectiveness of electronic goods, consumption of and demand for electrical and electronic equipment has been continuously increasing and this in turn has led to a marked increase in the amount of e-waste, which has had a negative impact on the environment and health, particularly in the developing countries;

*b)* that ITU and relevant stakeholders (such as the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme for the Basel Convention) have a key role in strengthening coordination between interested parties to study the effects of e-waste;

*c)* Recommendation ITU-T L.1000 of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), on the universal power adapter and charger solution for mobile terminals and other handheld ICT devices, Recommendation ITU-T L.1100, on the procedure for recycling rare metals in ICT goods, Recommendation ITU-T L.1020 series on circular economy and circularity, Recommendation ITU-T L.1031 on the Guideline for achieving the e-waste targets of the Connect 2030 Agenda, and Recommendation ITU-T L.1070 on digital sustainable product passport,

recognizing

*a)* that governments have an important role to play in limiting e-waste by formulating appropriate strategies, policies and legislation;

*b)* that most of the e-waste from the telecommunication/ICT sector, particularly obsolete, used, old and unserviceable user devices like mobile phones, power adapters, Wi-Fi routers, IoT devices end up in the informal sector without formal disposal procedures;

*c)* that telecommunications/ICT can make a major contribution to alleviating the impact of e-waste;

*d)* that ongoing work and studies in ITU-T Study Group 5 under Question 7/5, on e-waste, circular economy and sustainable supply-chain management, may include aspects of environmental protection and sustainable design/manufacture and recycling of ICT equipment/facilities and raw materials;

*e)* the various and current efforts in developing countries and regions related to e-waste management, notwithstanding the challenges that still persist;

*f)* the need to increase awareness about effective management of e-waste in some developing countries;

*g)* the impact of counterfeit ICT devices on e‑waste generation;

*h)* the role of the circular economy in reducing the global volume of e-waste and moving from the traditional linear production/consumption pattern to one that is sustainable;

*i)* that there is a lack of tools for monitoring, measuring and assessing the environmental impacts of e‑waste and telecommunications/ICTs including e-waste inventories;

*j)* that the informal sector remains the predominant sector for handling e-waste in developing countries;

*k)* that sustainable management of e-waste is essential to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;

*l)* ongoing work in Study Group 2 of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU‑D) under Question 6/2, on ICTs and the environment, studying strategies to develop a responsible approach to, and comprehensive treatment of, telecommunication/ICT waste;

*m)* that digitalization through ICT can be a useful way for optimization of e-waste management to achieve Net Zero targets,

recognizing further

*a)* that large quantities of used, old, obsolete and unserviceable telecommunication/ICT hardware and equipment are exported to developing countries for supposed reuse;

*b)* that many developing countries are suffering from severe environmental hazards, such as water pollution and health risks, due to e-waste, including from the influx of new telecommunications/ICTs;

*c)* that the availability of counterfeit telecommunication/ICT hardware and equipment in developing countries exacerbates the challenge of handling and controlling e-waste;

*d)* that some developing countries are striving to establish effective strategies for e-waste management and promote circularity within the ICT sector,

resolves to instruct the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, in collaboration with the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to pursue and strengthen the development of ITU activities in regard to handling and controlling e-waste from telecommunication and information technology equipment and methods of treating it;

2 to assist developing countries to undertake proper assessment of the magnitude/quantity of e-waste generated in a harmonized manner;

3 to address the handling and controlling of e‑waste and to contribute to global efforts designed to deal with the increasing hazards which arise therefrom;

4 to work in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, including academia and relevant organizations, and to coordinate activities relating to e-waste among the ITU study groups, focus groups and other relevant groups;

5 to organize seminars and workshops to enhance awareness of the hazards and sustainable management of e-waste, particularly in developing countries, and gauge the needs of the developing countries, which are the countries that suffer most from the hazards of e-waste;

6 to assist developing countries and facilitate their work in the implementation of circular-economy principles;

7 to promote e-waste data collection to support effective formulation of regional and national policies and strategies,

instructs Study Group 5 of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector, in collaboration with the relevant ITU study groups

1 to develop and document examples of best practice for handling and controlling e-waste resulting from telecommunications/ICT and methods of treating and recycling it, for dissemination among ITU Member States and Sector Members;

2 to develop Recommendations, methodologies and other publications relating to sustainable management of e-waste resulting from telecommunication/ICT equipment and products, and appropriate guidelines on implementation of these Recommendations;

3 to study and develop Recommendation and reports related to methodologies for life cycle estimation of ICTs, collection systems for e-waste in all types of geographies including rural areas;

4 to facilitate impetus to high quality recycling by formulating standards for secondary/recycled materials including raw material used in manufacturing of ICTs;

5 to work towards promoting harmonized standards with respect to collection, handling, logistics, treatment, re-use, and recycling of e-waste; uniform reporting tools; uniform conformity verification procedures and audit tools; and enforcement of these framework of requirements;

6 to study the impact of used telecommunication/ICT equipment and products brought into developing countries and give appropriate guidance, taking into account *recognizing further* above, to assist developing countries,

invites Member States

1 to take all necessary measures to handle and control e-waste in order to mitigate the hazards which can arise from used telecommunication/ICT equipment;

2 to cooperate with each other in this area;

3 to incorporate e-waste management policies/processes, including their tracking, collection and disposal, in their national ICT strategies and take adequate measures in this regard;

4 to raise public awareness on the environmental hazards of e-waste;

5 to promote the circular utility of e-waste through reusing and recycling efforts;

6 to develop sustainable e-waste management frameworks such as e-waste inventory, e‑waste collection and recycling by adopting harmonized standards;

7 to encourage and promote manufacturers to design durable devices with increased lifespan and further encourage consumers to participate in circular economy by reusing and maintaining user devices;

8 to harmonize e-waste regulations by promoting international collaboration and adopting international standards for sustainable e-waste management,

encourages Member States, Sector Members and Academia

1 to participate actively in ITU-T activities and studies on e-waste, through the submission of contributions and by other appropriate means;

2 to implement Study Group 5 Recommendations on sustainable management of e-waste and circularity;

3 to share best practices amongst members and raise awareness of the benefits associated with e-waste management in accordance with relevant ITU-T Recommendations.

1. 1 These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)