



# SUSTAINABLE ELECTRONICS PLATFORM

ITU Symposium on ICTs, Environment, Climate Change and Circular  
Economy – Malabo, 19-22 May 2026

STEP



# THE WORLD GENERATES **MILLIONS** **OF TONNES** OF E-WASTE ANNUALLY

**62 Mt,**  
in 2022

**<25%**  
formally  
recycled

Why is that a problem?

## Toxic exposure

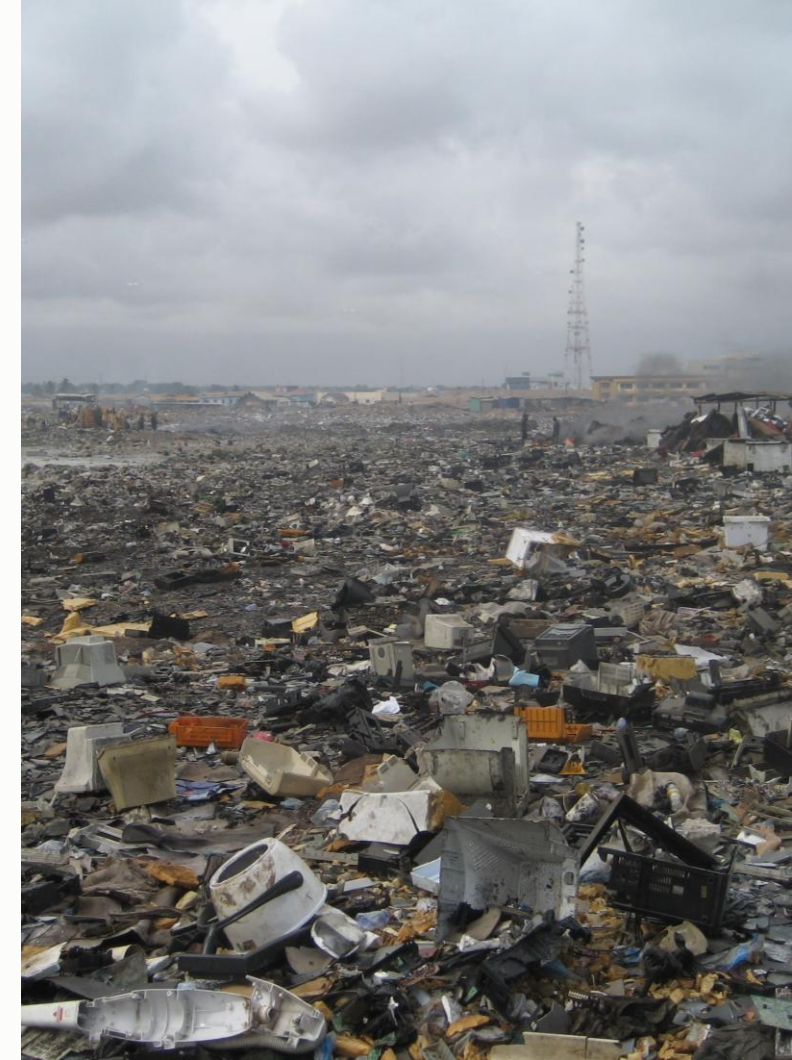
Miss managed electronic waste will lead to release of toxic substances. This will affect the health of people and the environment.  
→ lead, mercury, flame retardants, cooling gases, etc.

## Lost resources

Critical raw materials (gold, cobalt, copper, rare earths) are lost when e-waste is mismanaged. This is a missed opportunity!

## Governance gaps

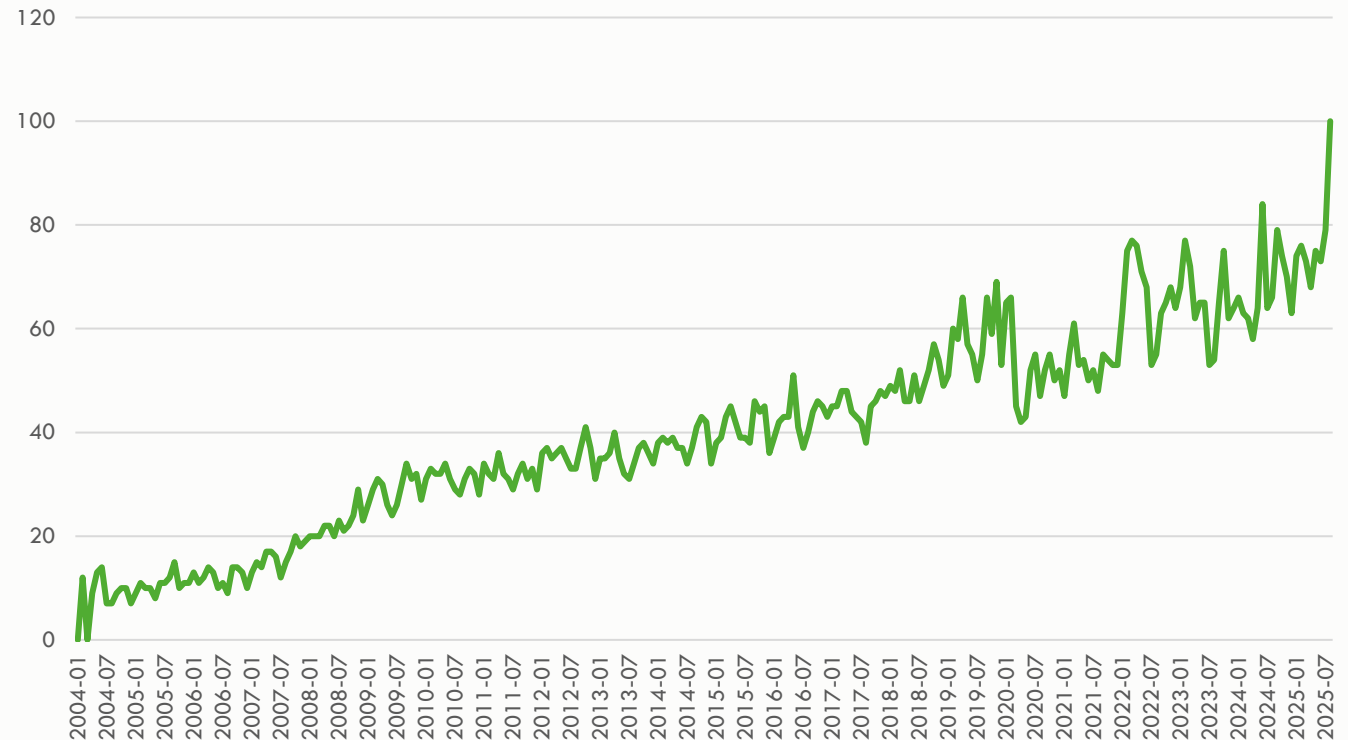
There are countries that still lack functioning EPR legislation, recycling infrastructure, or data systems to manage e-waste properly at scale.



# WELCOME

- A changing landscape opening on a more comprehensive focus, to achieve circularity in electronics.
- New challenges and a fast development of the electronic landscape.
- Reimagine, relaunch one of the first global platforms on e-waste!

E waste Google search trend



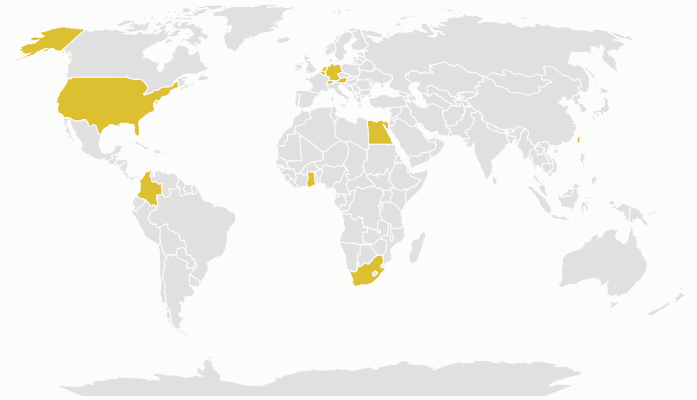
# WHAT IS STEP?

It's a platform that brings together stakeholders which share the same aim to be at the **forefront of circularity in the electronics** and to tackle the related challenges.



# STEP IS A NETWORK OF MEMBERS

UN agencies; Academic and research institutions; Private companies; Government department; Individuals



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...as well as multiple individual members.



# LAUNCHED IN 2007 AT THE UNITED NATIONS



This is the transformation we aspired to achieve for the STEP Initiative:

*“To be agents and stewards of change, uniquely leading global thinking, knowledge, awareness and innovation in the management and development of environmentally, economically and ethically sound e-waste resource recovery, re-use and prevention.”*

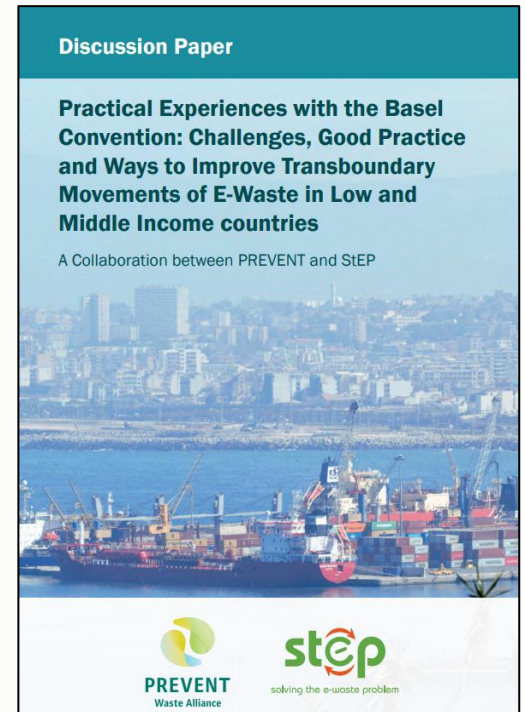


# NOW STEP IS HOSTED BY THE **WORLD RESOURCES FORUM**

STEP rehoused at World Resources Forum Association; strategic reorientation toward circular electronics lifecycle platform.



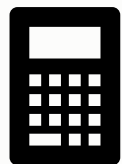
Focus groups to explore new topics and deliver innovative solutions, bringing together the right experts around specific regional and thematic challenges.



# FOCUS HUBS...AMONGST OTHER



**African platform** – ITU, UNITAR, UNEP, etc. projects overlap to some extent and can benefit from a platform which facilitates the exchange of knowledge.



**Business Calculation Tool** – Update it with new data and for new needs. Integrated and built-in the new website.



**Latin American countries RWG** – revive the current group and start with new activities → stakeholder mapping → understand stakeholder needs.

# WHY AN **AFRICAN** PLATFORM?

## **Informal sector dominance**

Limited formal infrastructure and informality in e-waste handling across most African countries.

## **EPR still in its infancy**

Extended Producer Responsibility obligations (common in Europe) are rarely enacted or enforced across Africa.

## **Financing gap**

Lack of financing mechanisms to fund the proper handling of e-waste remains a critical structural barrier for the growing IT demand.

Challenges

## **Resource optimisation advantage**

Africa is historically most effective at resource optimisation → a strong foundation for circular electronics models that prioritise function recovery.

## **Coordination opportunity**

Many parallel initiatives exist and a targeted coordination around concrete implementation gaps can unlock impact.

## **Youth opportunity**

A young, growing population and rising device ownership create both urgency and opportunity to build circular systems from the ground up.

Opportunities



# FOCUS WILL BE GIVEN TO...

### **Coordinate Project**

Map gaps and overlaps. Connect technical demands with STEP's global expertise.

### **Policy Support**

National and regional e-waste and EPR policy development.

### **Circular Business Solutions**

EPR design, e-waste financing, best practice repository, EEE business tool.

### **Policy Harmonisation**

Advocate for Africa-wide harmonised circular electronics standards.



**AFRICAN** CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY NETWORK



THANK YOU!

Want to join our  
network or get more  
information?

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