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## UN report complains of low electronics recycling rates!

## 联合国报告抱怨电子产品再循环率低!

- The recycling of electronic waste in the European Union is far from its targets!
- The authors expect the pile of electronic rubbish in the EU countries to reach an amount of 12.3 million tons annually by 2020!
- 欧盟电子废物再循环远远不及目标!
- 作者期望欧盟国家电子垃圾的回收量到2020年达到每年平均1230万吨!

The recycling of electronic waste in the European Union is far from its targets, says a study authored by a consortium led by the United Nations University (UNU). The study suggests higher collection rates would not only serve the environment but also the industry.

According to the study, presently only 25 percent of Europe's medium sized household appliances and 40 percent of larger appliances are collected for salvage or recycling. Small appliances are collected at a quota of almost zero. This leaves "substantial room for improvement," criticizes study manager Ruediger Kuehr of the UNU office in Bonn, Germany.

Kuehr named a long-term target of 60 percent collection rate for small items such as MP3 players as well as for medium sized audio equipment, microwave ovens and TV sets. Large appliances like fridges and washing machines could even be collected for recycling at 75 percent. This would yield roughly 5.3 million tons of e-waste by 2011, more than doubling the present amount of 2.2 million tons.

The amount of electronic waste is growing slowly, but steadily at a pace of 2.5 to 2.7 percent per year. The authors expect the pile of electronic rubbish in the EU countries to reach an amount of 12.3 million tons annually by 2020. The EU produces roughly one third of the world's e-waste.

While the EU directive on WEEE prescribes a collection rate of 4 kg per capita and year, the rate is divided quite uneven among the EU countries. While the wealthier states easily meet this target, the new members, typically with a lower standard of living, are far from raising this amount. However, the low collection rates observed by the report also result from low public awareness, stated co-author Steve Ogilvie.

"There are clear benefits to the environment to collect and treat all forms of e-waste", said the lead study author Jaco Huisman of UNU. Salvaging and recycling of e-waste benefits the environment in terms of reducing toxic pollution, conserving natural resources and preventing emissions that cause global warming. Top priority is to gain control over chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), a chemical product that destroys the ozone layer. In addition, recycling and salvaging could help to reduce energy consumption, Huisman said.

The report also highlights the downside of the much praised energy saving light bulbs: The 660 million devices sold in the EU only in 2006 contain about 4.3 tons of the extremely toxic mercury, with another 2.8 tons contained in LCD panels.

The study also sates a need for consistent legislation across the EU for registering and reporting with respect to e-waste. Also, bureaucracy keeps particularly small and medium-sized enterprises from adhering to the EU rules: Companies active in all EU member states have to file at last 72 different reports.

Source: EETIMES

2.

## REACH chemicals regulation affects distribution!

- The objective of this regulation is to make manufacturers and importers of chemicals assume the responsibility for the safe handling of their substances!
- REACH also affects to varying degrees the distributors of electronic components!



## REACH 化学指令对销售的影响!

- 此指令的目的是使化学品生产商和进口商，对他们物质的安全处理负起责任!
- REACH 也不同程度的影响电子零件销售商!

'Act instead of reacting', urges the German Fachverband der Bauelemente Distribution eV (FBDi eV), taking up a stance towards the new REACH chemicals regulation

The following is submitted by the FBDi eV. With REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation of Chemicals), a new EU-wide chemicals regulation came into force from 1 June 2007. The objective of this regulation is to make manufacturers and importers of chemicals assume the responsibility for the safe handling of their substances.

Directly affected by this regulation are also stakeholders further down the supply chain along with companies that import products made from such substances from non-EU states both within and outside Europe. As such, REACH also affects to varying degrees the distributors of electronic components.

Due to the legal and technical complexity of this issue, the FBDi has found that a relatively unclear situation with regard to information prevails at present within the electronics industry. Representing the interests of a large proportion of the German distribution landscape, the FBDi is calling for the greatest

possible transparency of information along the supply chain and regards itself as being responsible for acting as an interface for information and expertise between manufacturers, its members and distribution customers.

The aim of the FBDI is, by taking specific proactive action, to avoid reactive measures along the supply chain and to establish a continuous flow of communication between the stakeholders involved. In an initial step, the FBDI has set up its own REACH study group and promoted active dialogue with the manufacturers. In connection with this, a discussion forum with manufacturers and distributors is also planned, in addition to a legal workshop for the FBDI members with leading legal experts.

By way of a practical approach to finding a solution, the FBDI is calling for a debate on the need for a standardised REACH database for the electronics industry. To date, no uniformly regulated procedure is in place that enables companies to ascertain the degree to which they are affected. Different information platforms provide comprehensive data entry forms, which however are primarily geared to chemical producers rather than the electronics industry.

For its members, the FBDI provides a fact sheet for downloading within the restricted members' section of the website ([www.fbd.de](http://www.fbd.de)), which allows companies to gain an initial idea of the degree to which they are affected.

'At present, the reactions to REACH amongst manufacturers, distributors and distribution customers vary greatly. Accordingly, the degree of enlightenment and the standard of knowledge on the topic also vary greatly.

Generally speaking, the quality management department within a company is entrusted with this task. Some of our members are in the process of setting up their own in-house REACH database, whilst others prefer to wait entirely to see how the explosive nature of this topic further develops on the market', explains Wolfram Ziehfuss, Managing Director of FBDI eV.

FBDI sees one possible comprehensive approach to finding a solution within the electronics industry in establishing a standardised database with controlled data access for all the parties involved along the supply chain.

'To achieve this, however, it would be necessary for all the stakeholders involved in the supply chain to pull together, to provide comprehensive information and not to hide behind the smokescreen of corporate secrets or pending patent applications', says Ziehfuss.

#### \* EU or non-EU as a key criterion

The REACH regulation distinguishes between substances, preparations and products as well as between users, downstream users, manufacturers and importers (e.g. dealers). Under REACH, the typical distributor is regarded as a dealer who procures products. If he procures his goods from EU states, he has no direct obligations under REACH. He must assume that the products are manufactured in accordance with the legal regulations, i.e. that the substances they contain have passed through the REACH procedure. The situation is different when it comes to the procedure for products that originate from non-EU countries. If the distributor procures goods from outside the EU, according to the REACH regulation, he is regarded as an importer.

According to article 7 of the REACH regulation, this may imply an obligation to register. This article governs the registration and/or disclosure of substances in products. REACH applies to all chemical substances of at least one tonne or more in volume that are manufactured in or imported into the EU each year. In the future, they must be registered at the newly founded European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki.

#### \* Importer - and what happens next?

According to article 7 section 1, an importer of products is obliged to register a substance if the substance contained in the imported products is equal in volume to one tonne or more in total per year and per importer and can be expected to be released under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use.

This obligation does not apply for substances, which have already been registered for the use in question. Furthermore, various groups of substances and/or individual substances are exempt from the obligation to register, whilst REACH is not applicable for other substances, since they are already covered by other regulations.

The onus is on the importer to legally check whether, and if so which, obligations actually apply in individual cases.

\* 'Voluntary duty to supply information' creates transparency

The information that the distributor is obliged to provide his customers with is also derived from the REACH regulation.

According to this, the distributor as the supplier of a product is only obliged to disclose information to his customers if the product he is dealing with contains substances with particularly worrying properties in parts over 0.1 percent.

In such cases, the FBDI recommends ensuring a transparent flow of information and issuing corresponding data sheets or 'REACH certificates' from the manufacturers to the customers, provided that the information is made available by the manufacturers.

'It is precisely here that our members find an immense need for action on the manufacturer's side. What we would like to see would be a declaration similar to that for RoHS, which both distributors and customers can inspect in order to ensure maximum transparency in the supply chain with regard to this issue', says Ziehfuss.

**Source: [processingtalk.com](http://processingtalk.com)**

3.

## More harmonisation needed for WEEE Directive!

### WEEE法律指令需要更多协调!



- Greater harmonisation of the provisions of the WEEE Directive relating to producer responsibility has been recommended!
- WEEE法律指令中关于生产商应承担责任的条款需要进一步被协调!
- The level of financial guarantees for the future recovery of WEEE should be "the same" for individual and collective systems!
- WEEE法律指令关于未来回收所承担的经济担保的水平应该对个人和集体系统一致!

Greater harmonisation of the provisions of the WEEE Directive relating to producer responsibility has been recommended in a new study for the European Commission, prepared by a group of consultants led by Hamburg-based Ökopool. Ökopool recommended the harmonisation of registration procedures across the EU so that "the same set of information is requested and the same definitions apply". These should be elaborated and published in a European Standard encompassing, at the least registration procedures and forms, reporting, application of the distinction between B2B and B2C, definition of weight and reporting by distance sellers. The Directive should require this standard to be applied in all member states.

The level of financial guarantees for the future recovery of WEEE should be "the same" for individual and collective systems, the authors concluded. Furthermore, the study pointed out that in some member states producers running an individual system do not have the same advantages of publicly financed collections (for instance through municipal collection points) as collective systems do. A level playing field and "harmonised implementation of financial and physical responsibilities" were needed.

Ökopool did not propose and amendments to Article 8.2, which allows a producer to choose whether to meet its obligations individually or through a collective scheme for "new WEEE". With proper implementation, there is an "adequate framework" for the development of potential individual approaches, the study found.

Coordination on national activities, cross order payments and waste flows could be addressed by a supranational "European Clearing House Mechanism", comprising a network of national institutions for supranational communication and coordination, the study said.

Source: EUWID

4.

## Germany closer to new packaging legislation!

## 德国新的包装立法!

- Germany's fifth revision of its Packaging Ordinance has been approved by the country's parliament!
- Under the new rules, all packaging which is likely to arise as waste in private households must be registered with a "dual system" waste recovery scheme!



- 德国包装法令的第五次修订已经得到国家议会的批准!
- 根据新的规则,所有可能成为私人家庭垃圾的包装,必须在一个“双元系统”的废物回收系统注册登记!

Germany's fifth revision of its Packaging Ordinance has been approved by the country's parliament. The legislation will now be voted on in the upper house (Bundesrat) on 20 December. The Bundesrat, which represents the federal states, is expected to make a number of amendments to the draft legislation.

The revision aims to bring "fair competition" to Germany's packaging recovery market, according to the environment ministry (BMU). The new rules will secure the future of residential collections of packaging waste and stop some packaging producers from getting a "free ride" in the system, according to environment minister Sigmar Gabriel.

Under the new rules, all packaging which is likely to arise as waste in private households must be registered with a "dual system" waste recovery scheme. "Every producer will be required to fulfil his obligations. Other operators will no longer have to pay the costs for managing the packaging waste of the free-riders," Mr Gabriel said.

It had been estimated that up to one third of packaging waste ending up in the "yellow bin" for household packaging waste was not registered with one of the dual systems that financed the management of this waste stream. The BMU expects that "increasing competition among dual systems will lower the waste management costs for packaging".

The packaging waste management market had become increasingly complex and intransparent in the past few years, with a rising number of dual systems and self-compliance schemes. The new revision will no longer allow retailers to meet their collection and recovery obligations for consumer packaging waste by collecting recyclable waste from commercial and industrial enterprises. This practice had led to distortion of competition, many producers complained. In certain sectors, "functioning take-back solutions" of this type will be allowed to continue, provided they are approved by the competent authorities and do not include packaging waste that ends up in private households.

Another important aspect of the revision is a new obligatory reporting system for all packaging material brought on the market. Producers will have to report this information to a system run by the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK).

With the new revision, there will be more opportunities to expand the range of materials accepted in the municipal "yellow bins", the BMU said. The "yellow bin plus" could be a receptacle for not only packaging

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waste, but also other recyclable household waste made of the same material as packaging, such as plastic toys or aluminium foil.

**Source: EUWID**