***DRAFT* Terms of Reference for an Issue Management Group on**

Tackling E-waste: Towards Eco-design and a Life-cycle Approach for E-products
Coordinating delivery by the United Nations

A. Introduction

1. At their 21st meeting (SOM21) in September 2015, the senior officials of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) considered a proposal put forth by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to establish an interagency Issue Management Group (IMG) with a focus on enhancing coordination on electronic waste (e-waste) within the UN system.

> *Decision II : "Invite the ITU and other interested agencies, in consultation with the EMG Secretariat, to provide a proposal on the rationale and Terms of Reference for a potential Issue Management Group in the area of Electronic Waste, on the basis of which the EMG will make a decision on whether to establish an IMG on this issue."*

2. In response to this decision, informal consultations were held with ITU, the United Nations University (UNU), the Secretariat for the Basel Convention, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (through its International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the Sustainable Lifestyles, Cities and Industry branch), the Secretariat for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as a result of which these Terms of Reference were prepared.

B. Background

3. "E-waste" is generally categorized as hazardous waste if toxic materials such as mercury, lead and brominated flame retardants are contained. E-Waste is a term used to cover items of all types of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and its parts that have been discarded by the owner as waste without the intention of re-use. Since 2002, the Basel Convention deals with environmentally sound management of e-waste including prevention of illegal traffic to developing countries and; capacity building for better management of e-waste worldwide.

4. The Nairobi Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Waste and decision IX/6 adopted in 2006 by the Conference of the Parties of the Basel convention gave a mandate to the Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC) which is administered by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP/SBC) to implement a work plan for the environmentally sound management of e-waste. Activities implemented since then include public-private partnerships on mobile phones and on computing equipment, programmes of activities for the environmentally sound management of e-waste in Africa, in Asia Pacific and in South America, and the preparation of technical guidelines on transboundary movements of e-waste, in particular regarding the distinction between waste and non-waste.

5. The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development was launched in 2004 as an interorganizational and multi-stakeholder initiative to improve the availability and quality of ICT data and indicators, particularly in developing countries. The Partnership helps developing countries collect ICT statistics, particularly through capacity-building and hands-on training for national statistical offices, and collects and disseminates information society statistics. UNU leads the Task Group on Measuring E-waste, that developed guidelines on e-waste classification, reporting and indicators.

6. United Nations University (UNU) started its work on e-waste in 2000 as part of its activities on strategic approaches towards sustainable development. The book "Computers and the Environment" published in 2003, illustrated the need for a holistic and life-cycle approach to electronics, requiring concerted action by all key-stakeholders representing industry, sciences, governments, international organizations and civil society. UNU has since conducted a range of e-waste projects including country studies on quantifying and qualifying the e-waste challenge in e.g. the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Italy, Romania, the first Global E-waste Outlook, the E-waste Academy with editions for young scientists (EWAS) and managers/policy makers (EWAM), studies on illegal e-waste shipments and projects on resource aspects associated with the production, usage and final disposal of electrical and electronic equipment. Moreover, UNU has advised several governments and the European Commission in developing e-waste policies.

7. In 2004 the "Solving The E-waste Problem" (StEP) Initiative was launched and formally established in 2007 as a global initiative coordinated by the UNU. StEP contributes to global thinking, knowledge, awareness and innovation in the management and development of environmentally, economically sound e-waste resource recovery, recycling and re-use. StEP also hosts the E-waste Worldmap that covers detailed information and country-level data on the amount of e-waste generated, and e-waste related legislation and policies.

8. The Partnership for Action on Computing Equipment (PACE) was launched in 2008 by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention. PACE is a multi-stakeholder public-private partnership that provides a forum for representatives of personal computer manufacturers, recyclers, international organizations, associations, academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governments to tackle environmentally sound refurbishment, repair, material recovery, recycling and disposal of used and end-of-life computing equipment. PACE continues to work on improving the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life computing equipment, taking into account social responsibility and the concept of sustainable management of e-waste.

9. In 2010, the Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM) was established as an open-ended partnership for international organizations, governments, businesses, academia, local authorities and NGOs, to enhance international cooperation among stakeholders, identify and fill information gaps, share information and strengthen awareness, political will, and capacity to promote resource conservation and resource efficiency. The UNEP IETC serves as a secretariat for the GPWM. E-waste management is one of several focal areas of the Partnership, coordinated by ITU. UNEP IETC has also produced series of e-waste management manuals and organized regional and international meetings and workshops on e-waste related topics. At the Multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on e-waste management organized by UNEP IETC in July

2012, “The Future WEEE Need: A Call for Action” was produced and called for the promotion, enhancement and upgrading of public-private cooperation in WEEE management. The UNEP SLCI branch published a report “Recycling: from E-waste to Resources” in 2009 attracting global attention on the e-waste issue, and has also worked on topics such as eco-design, consumer information and waste minimization to tackle the e-waste problem from a life cycle perspective.

10. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is a policy framework to promote chemical safety around the world. The SAICM Secretariat is administered by UNEP. The third International Conference on Chemicals Management held in 2012 endorsed an addition to the Global Plan of Action of new activities related to hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products, including the work areas of e-products green design, environmentally sound manufacturing of e-products and awareness-raising for e-products.

11. In 2014, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference adopted its resolution “Connect 2020 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology development”, by which ITU and its Member States under goal three on “Sustainability — Manage challenges resulting from telecommunication/ICT development”, agreed to work towards minimizing the potential negative impact of ICT, including damaging effects on the environment by reducing the volume of redundant e-waste by 50% by 2020. The Connect 2020 agenda also aims to ensure that e-waste related activities organized by various United Nations agencies, are conducted in a harmonious and integrated manner to build synergies.

12. Upon the initiative of the Rector of UNU, the heads of UNEP, UNIDO and the Deputy Secretary-General of the ITU welcomed the idea of developing a “UN-E-waste”. Accordingly, such a “UN-E-waste” initiative could serve as a UN inter-agency coordination mechanism with the purpose to add value to UN initiatives on e-waste by fostering greater cooperation and information-sharing. The outcome of this IMG can identify if/how such mechanism can add value to strengthening cooperation on e-waste in the UN system.

13. Other initiatives have been carried out in the UN system including a study undertaken in 2015 as a collaboration between ITU, UNU, Basel Convention Regional Centre for Latin America, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNEP/SBC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Regional Bureau for Sciences in Latin America and the Caribbean. The study resulted in a report on “Sustainable Management of Waste of Electrical and Electronic Equipment in Latin America” which suggests ten key steps and provides guidance to countries on how to manage e-waste.

14. In light of the above, taking into consideration the many existing initiatives and active stakeholders in the area of e-waste and environmentally sound management of e-products, an Issue Management Group with a focus on coordinating delivery by the United Nations in this area of work is established under the Environment Management Group, in order to maximize system-wide coordinated action and coherence as well as effectively support the Member States in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable

Development Goals (in particular SDG Targets 3.9, 8.3, 8.8 11.6, 12.4 and 12.5) complementing and adding value to existing UN programmes, projects and initiatives by facilitating synergies and joint efforts.

C. Purpose, Composition and Responsibilities

15. The objective of the IMG is to strengthen the coordination of and promote joint programmatic and policy initiatives in the UN system in its support provided to Member States in the area of prevention of e-waste and its environmentally sound management based on the necessary holistic life-cycle approach as well as to promote cooperation and synergies among UN entities in the follow-up of the SDG targets, SAICM, the Basel Convention and the Connect 2020 Agenda, adding value to already existing programmes, mechanisms and projects including developing eco-design and life-cycle approaches.

16. The scope of the IMG's work shall encompass all aspects of and apply a life-cycle perspective to electrical and electronic equipment, including the production, usage, repair, refurbishment, waste collection, dismantling, recycling and final disposal of all types of devices that are wired or run on batteries.

17. The IMG is composed of focal points nominated by EMG members and is open to observers from non UN entities whose knowledge, activities or expertise will be relevant and useful to the work of the Group. The meetings of the IMG will be organised by the EMG Secretariat and for each meeting a chair or co- chairs will be selected among the IMG members. The IMG will meet mostly through electronic means including video-audio conference. Working groups will be set up as needed on specific life-cycle and e-waste management related themes.

18. The IMG shall organize its work to undertake the following main functions and responsibilities, taking into account relevant interagency and intergovernmental processes:

    ~~a. Map existing initiatives carried out by UN agencies and programmes~~

    ~~b. Gather information on existing standards, guidelines and best practices on sustainable production and consumption of electrical and electronic equipment and the environmentally sound management of e-waste approaches, including those carried out within the UN.~~

    ~~c. Prepare a report/glossary that clarifies the main terms and concepts related to e-waste with the objective to support a common understanding of these terms and to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders.~~

    d. Sketch modalities and prepare a work-plan/strategy incl. a financing strategy for the development of a UN system-wide coordination mechanism on sustainable production, consumption and final disposal of electrical and electronic equipment with the aim to:
        i. maximize system-wide coordinated action and coherence;
        ii. increase effectiveness of the support provided to Member States in their efforts towards achieving the time-bound goals, targets and actions related to its scope of work as agreed by the international community, particularly those items contained in the Sustainable Development Goals;

iii. provide more visibility to all engaged players;
iv. avoid the impression of non-concerted action.

e. Develop a system-wide approach and a related strategy for implementation within the UN system to address the global e-waste challenge. The implementation of the strategy will include, among others, coordinated approaches for:
    i. performing necessary research to have a better understanding of the quantification and qualification of many unknown aspects associated with e-waste and as such lay a solid basis for policy design and decision making;
    ii. raising awareness of the growing problems associated with e-waste across the globe;
    iii. developing further existing training programmes (for public and private stakeholders, academia and other interested parties) on health, societal, and environmental problems that arise due to the unsound management of e-waste and highlighting feasible frameworks for establishing a professionalized e-waste recycling system;
    iv. guiding developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the teething technological, socio-economic and policy problems associated with e-waste recycling in their formal and informal economies;
    v. promoting employment creation, transition from the informal to the formal economy and safety and health in the management of e-waste
    vi. promoting the implementation of existing international standards for the management of e-waste;
    vii. liaising with existing UN initiatives and complementing their work as required;

19. Liaise with the IMG on Environmental Sustainable Management in the UN system to consider its work on a UN internal approach to consumption and final disposal of electrical and electronic equipment.

D. Plan of Work

Tentative Workplan - IMG E-WASTE

Terms of Reference	Task	Responsible	Resources	2016				2017			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
19 a,b,c	~~First Meeting of the IMG~~	~~EMG Secretariat~~									
	~~Agreement on ToR and workplan~~										
	Mapping of existing e-waste initiatives in the UN system, including on environmentally sound management of e-waste approaches and terms used	~~EMG Secretariat supported by IMG Members~~	~~Consultant - Technical and in-kind support by IMG Members~~								
	~~Design survey~~										
	~~Collect data~~										
	~~Analysis and report writing~~										
	~~Submission of a progress report to the EMG senior officials~~	~~EMG Secretariat~~	~~EMG Secretariat~~								
	~~Second meeting of the IMG~~	~~Comments and inputs by IMG Members~~	~~EMG supported by the consultant~~								
	~~Consideration of first draft of mapping report~~										
	Finalization of report	EMG Secretariat	Consultant								
19 d,~~e~~	Third meeting of the IMG	Presentation by the EMG Secretariat	In-kind support IMG members								
	Consideration and follow-up of the recommendations of the mapping report										
	Fourth meeting of the IMG	Consideration by the IMG Members	Contribution by the EMG Secretariat								
	Addressing the e-waste challenge in the UN system going forward, incl. through a possible UN system-wide approach										
20	Liaise with the IMG on ESM to consider its work on a UN internal approach to consumption and final disposal of electrical and electronic equipment.	IMG members -EMG Secretariat	EMG Secretariat								
	Possible presentation of the IMG's work to relevant intergovernmental or interagency processes	IMG members -EMG Secretariat	EMG Secretariat								
	Submission of progress report to the EMG senior officials with recommendations for future collaboration	IMG members -EMG Secretariat	EMG Secretariat								