

A Challenge to the Global Electronics Industry to Adopt Safer and More Sustainable Products and Practices, and Eliminate Hazardous Chemicals, Exposures and Discharges

The Challenge

The International Campaign for Responsible Technology (ICRT), the GoodElectronics Network, and their allies, are challenging electronics brands, manufacturers, and suppliers to proactively reduce and eliminate chemical and physical hazards through the development and adoption of safer alternatives. We are addressing industry, governments and others involved in the life cycle of electronic products from material extraction and processing to product manufacturing, distribution, retail, use, and post-use recycling and disposal. ICRT and GoodElectronics embrace and emphasize the underlying principles of the Internalization of External costs and Extended Producer Responsibility.

Human Rights, Worker Rights and Environmental Protections

The overarching goal is sustainable production that is safe, healthy, environmentally sound, and just. To achieve that goal, the electronics industry must recognize the following human rights and worker rights:

- ▶ Right to safe and healthy workplace. It is the industry's responsibility to ensure effective workplace protections so that workers do not get sick or injured.
- ▶ Right to healthy communities and a safe environment, free from harm caused by materials used or disposed throughout the product lifecycle.
- ▶ Right to know what hazards are present in the workplace, all chemicals that are there, and what is discharged into the environment.
- ▶ Right to an effective remedy when harm has occurred. This includes compensation for workers made sick or injured, and liability for harming the community or the environment.
- ▶ Right of workers to organize without interference and bargain collectively.

Action and Changes Needed

Specifically, we have identified six key areas for change and action for electronics brands, manufacturers and their suppliers:

- ▶ Be transparent. Provide full materials disclosure to workers, communities, and the general public, including what chemicals are being used and discharged, and what hazards to the environment and humans (including reproductive hazards) are known to be associated with the chemicals.
- ▶ Use safer chemicals. Assess hazardous materials used in manufacturing throughout the product lifecycle and replace them with safer alternatives. Where the environmental or human health effects of a substance are unknown, its use shall be avoided; where it is inadequately or incompletely characterized, the precautionary principle shall apply until all relevant hazard testing is available.
- ▶ Protect Workers. Develop and implement, jointly with affected and other interested workers and their organizations, comprehensive hazard monitoring for all workplaces and workers throughout the product lifecycle. This includes training, capacity building, and industrial monitoring as well as monitoring to measure exposures and health surveillance to identify and prevent diseases. Workers shall be able to negotiate over hazardous working conditions and refuse hazardous work without fear of retaliation.
- ▶ Guarantee participation. Respect efforts of workers and communities to participate in the sound management of chemicals and wastes in their workplaces and communities. This includes the development of effective worker health and safety committees and training programs.
- ▶ Protect communities and the environment. Prevent harm throughout the product lifecycle. Conduct effective, transparent, independent monitoring of all discharge streams. Eliminate hazardous discharges to air, waterways, and land.
- ▶ Compensate and remediate for harm to people and environment. Develop and fund mechanisms that ensure that workers (present and former, and their families) or communities harmed by exposure to hazardous chemicals receive emergency relief and just compensation. Develop funding mechanisms to ensure environmental and workplace remediation for as long as is needed to address the harm.



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 ★ Red de Acción en Plaguicidas y sus Alternativas de Latinoamérica - Argentina ★ National Toxics Network - Australia ★ Maureen Dollard (University of South Australia*) - Australia ★
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 ★ Community Legal Education Center - Cambodia ★ IDEA - Cambodia ★ Oxfam Solidarity - Belgium ★ Community Environment Alliance - Canada ★ Maquila Solidarity Network - Canada ★ RightonCanada.ca - Canada ★
 ★ Micheal Real (Royal Roads University*) - Canada ★ Economic Rights Institute - China ★ Island Sustainability Alliance - Cook Islands ★ Law Life Culture - Bangladesh ★ Mokatil - East Timor ★ Hazrads Publications - UK ★
 ★ GreenIT.fr - France ★ FIF e.V. - Germany ★ WEED - World Economy, Ecology & Development - Germany ★ Ecological Restorations - Ghana ★ International Pops Elimination Network ★ Ecocity - Greece ★
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 ★ Labour Education and Service Network - Hong Kong ★ Labour Action China - Hong Kong ★ Globalization Monitor - Hong Kong ★ Tudatos Vásárlók Egyesülete - Hungary ★
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 ★ Occupational and Environmental Network of India - India ★ Peoples Training & Resource Centre - India ★ Vettiver Collective Chennai - India ★ Federation of Pulp and Paper Workers Union - Indonesia ★
 ★ Friends of the Earth West Java - Indonesia ★ Federation of Indonesian Metal Workers' Union - Indonesia ★ Federation of Independent Trade Unions - Indonesia ★ Sedane Labour Resource Centre - Indonesia ★ SumOfUs - USA ★
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