

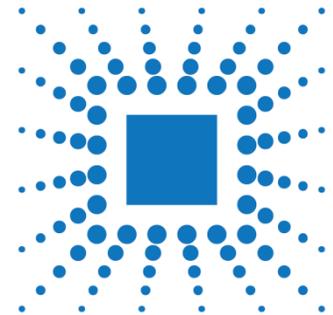
CASE STUDY

Offsetting e-waste with new TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated

TCO Development

Submitted by:

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Abstract

E-waste is a continuing, global problem. With over 50 million metric tons of e-waste generated each year and only around 20% responsibly recovered or recycled, the sustainability risks of discarded electronics are an important life cycle issue for purchasers. In 2020, TCO Development launched *TCO Certified e-waste compensated*, a new tool for IT buyers and manufacturers to combat e-waste and take the next step in producer and user responsibility.

With *TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated*, IT hardware manufacturers can apply to certify their product models to the published set of e-waste offsetting criteria, which purchasers can also refer to in their procurement specifications as a way of reducing the e-waste burden and taking important steps toward the circular economy.

For every certified product manufactured, (e.g., a computer), an equivalent amount of e-waste will be collected in a country where current legislation (e.g., WEEE) or relevant collection systems are not in place or are ineffective, especially in affected parts of Africa. The collected e-waste is then recycled in facilities that comply with stringent recycling standards and regulations. This work is carried out in collaboration with Closing the Loop, a social enterprise specialized in providing specialized in-region strategic, implementation and work opportunities in local communities affected by e-waste. TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated criteria are applicable for notebooks, tablets, smartphones.

TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated. This is how it works

Purchasers specify TCO Certified e-waste compensated

By specifying TCO Certified Edge, e-waste compensated in procurement of IT hardware, purchasers signal to product suppliers and industry to certify their product models. Product manufacturers apply to certify their products.

Product supplier partners to collect equivalent e-waste for offsetting

The manufacturer uses an approved collector to gather the same amount of e-waste in a country where safe recycling is not done in a safe and responsible manner.

Work opportunities provided in local communities

Collection activities are carried out by trained workers in local communities where e-waste is currently a human health and environmental hazard. From collecting agents to recyclers, a strict code of conduct and worker protections are in place.

Collected IT products recovered, recycled and materials reused

The e-waste is sent to a recycling facility that fulfills high environmental standards. Materials are recovered and prepared to be reused in new products.

Independent verification

Independent verification that collection and recycling are conducted in accordance with the criteria set in TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated.

Summary

Goal	Strategies	Results
Reduce e-waste and promote circular IT solutions. Provide a way to offset the environmental effects of e-waste and safer environments for local communities.	Develop new e-waste compensation criteria.	A system for purchasers to specify e-waste compensated IT products in procurement. Supporting a reduction in e-waste.
Create viable work opportunities in local communities affected by e-waste. Collection of e-waste.	Partner with in-region organizations to carry out collection and recycling efforts.	Safe, fair employment in local communities affected by e-waste. Cleanup of e-waste and reduction of human health and environmental hazards associated with discarded electronics.
Independent verification of the criterion and the collectors	Offer a system that quality checks the collectors and work methods through independent verification. Fulfilment of criteria for e-waste collection.	A trustworthy and credible system.

Goals

The goal is to create an independently verified tool for IT purchasers and suppliers that allow them to take concrete action on electronic waste through a system for e-waste compensation.

Strategies and Actions

The new *TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated* was developed to help purchasers make more responsible choices for the IT products they buy. In addition, the system provides the IT industry with a way to compensate for the IT products they supply.

We also wanted to provide purchasers and industry with a system that is transparent and credible, characteristics which had not been in place among some providers in the compensation space up to that point.

Timetable of actions

Jan-Oct, 2019 - criteria research, stakeholder consultation and criteria development

Nov, 2019 - First draft criteria published - stakeholder comment and review

Dec, 2019 - Second draft published - stakeholder comment and review

Mar 31, 2020

- Final criteria published.

- Industry can apply for TCO Certified e-waste compensated, and purchasers can ask for TCO Certified e-wasted compensated in procurements - from March 31 2020

Ongoing - Independent verification of collectors

Financial Information

Financing for TCO Development's activities is derived from licensing fees from IT brand owners that choose to certify their products.

Revenues are invested into ongoing research and development activities connected to investigating solutions to sustainability challenges and the development of next generation criteria designed to help purchasers and industry solve those challenges.

The research and development behind *TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated* is funded as part of the regular operations of TCO Certified.

Results

TCO Certified Edge e-waste compensated is public and available from 31st of March 2020.

References and Additional Resources

<https://tco certified.com/tco-certified-edge/>

About TCO Certified

TCO Certified is a sustainability certification for IT products, with comprehensive criteria proven to drive social and environmental responsibility throughout the product life cycle. Compliance with all criteria is independently verified, in accordance with ISO 17025. TCO Certified Edge is a supplemental certification for leading edge products in a specific sustainability aspect.

More information at tco certified.com.