

## Session Outcome Document

### Summary of Session: Sustainable Batteries - The building blocks of a circular economy

#### ITU and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention

Friday, 26 May 2023

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2023/Agenda/Session/494>

#### Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- The session highlighted that the Global demand for batteries is increasing, driven largely by the imperative to reduce climate change through electrification, increased connectivity and the broader energy transition.
- The session provided an overview of the importance of international standards for a circular battery value chain and the environmentally sound management of waste lead acid batteries, lithium-ion batteries and other batteries used in ICTs.
- Speakers mentioned that standards have the power to set the best environmental practices and available technologies for collection, reuse, recycling and final disposal of batteries, but require a collective effort from all stakeholders to be applied in real cases.
- Speakers highlighted international standards such as ITU-T L.1035 “Sustainable management of batteries”, and ITU-T L.1220 “Innovative energy storage technology for stationary use”, presenting criteria for the selection of batteries for the ICT infrastructure, considering the design, life-span and recyclability, among others.
- Speakers introduced that the environmentally sound management of batteries requires a complex set of regulatory and enforcement measures, Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) schemes, adoption of environment and health standards at work, but also awareness raising and communication campaigns, education and involvement of all actors, including the informal sector.

#### Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025, please share your views on the emerging trends, challenges, achievements, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date (5-8 bullets)

- **WSIS Action Line 2: Information and Communication Infrastructure**
  - Speakers highlighted that to ensure the widespread adoption of sustainable batteries, the ICT infrastructure must be in place to support such services. With the correct ICT

infrastructure in place, sustainable battery technologies can contribute to environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and the overall goal of achievement a more sustainable digital ecosystem.

- **WSIS Action Line 6: Enabling Environments**

- Speakers emphasized the need to improve the social, economic and environmental benefits of batteries.
- There is significant opportunity for the ICT sector to support the implementation of international standards to foster sustainable battery management.

**Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, and commitments (3-5 bullet points))**

- The ICT sector has agreed that in order to transition towards a digital and circular economy, there is a significant need for a sustainable management of batteries.
- There is a general consensus for the development and implementation of international standards to support the sustainable management of batteries. And to support circular economy efforts as a whole.
- The ICT Sector is dedicated to further improving battery design, prolonging their lifespan, improving their recyclability and preventing the dumping of waste batteries can lower their overall energy consumption, reduce exposure of humans and the environment to hazardous substances, as well as reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

**Actionable plan (2-5 points)**

- In order to shift towards a circular economy there is a need for a preventing approach, where the life of batteries can be prolonged and the hazardous substances are reduced or eliminated in the design, is a key objective.
- There is a need for environmentally sound batteries recycling to avoid exposure to lead as well to support a transition to a zero net carbon economy, reducing pollution and mitigating climate change.

**Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2024 (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event) (one paragraph)**

-