In2tec welcomes call to strengthen WEEE Directive

Sustainable electronics experts In2tec welcome call to strengthen WEEE Directive

KETTERING , NORTHAMPTONSHIRE , UNITED KINGDOM, November 8, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- UK-based sustainable electronics experts In2tec Ltd welcomed an environmental coalition's calls to the European Commission to strengthen the WEEE Directive, which has not been updated since its introduction in 2012. The state of electronics recycling currently is putting future generations in the firing line of a technological and ecological disaster.

> "The requirement for tech is seen in almost every sector, and yet it is one of the most heavily polluting entities the world has ever known. We have a duty to act, for our children and our planet."
> *Emma Armstrong, Sustainable Electronics Ambassador, In2tec*

The coalition of 27 environmental organisations submitted to the European Commission, stating that the original WEEE Directive, while "pioneering", had become outdated with modern standards and increased disposal and recycling of electronics and electrical equipment.

Currently, the WEEE Directive operates as follows:

- requires separate collection and proper treatment of WEEE and sets targets for collection, recovery and recycling.
- helps European countries fight illegal waste exports more effectively by making it harder for exporters to disguise illegal shipments of WEEE.
- reduces the administrative burden by calling for the harmonisation of national WEEE registers and of the reporting format.

"The coalition's calls for strengthening the WEEE regulatory framework couldn't come at a better time," says Emma Armstrong, In2tec's Sustainable Electronics Ambassador. "The world's ongoing and increasing requirements for technology, to travel safely, keep us connected and advance medical treatment only puts more stress on the already inefficient recycling process. The need for tech causes a monumental issue not only for WEEE, but we're depleting materials and resources that are fast running out."

Annually the world produces over 58 million tonnes of waste electronics which is increasing

annually. Whilst minimal recoverable materials are stripped from printed circuit board assemblies (PCBAs), up to 97%, comprising components, metals, and substrate materials are burned, shredded and sent to landfill, where they leach toxins poisoning the earth and water table. The process and financial cost to recover soldered components simply outweighs the gain, with components often subjected to stress-levels rendering them next to useless.


Emma Armstrong, Sustainable Electronics Ambassador, In2tec

The coalition has called for 'harmonised and legally binding rules across Europe' creating an easier and more effective solution for WEEE recycling. Also, among their recommendations was: "a greater promotion of repair and reuse, more extended producer responsibility, an end to illegal exports and a ban on destroying unsold WEEE."

In2tec fully supports the introduction of the coalition's recommendations, having invested heavily in tackling the ongoing ewaste problems for over 15 years. As sustainable electronics pioneers, In2tec has developed a closed-loop solution that allows PCBAs to be "unzipped", meaning that components can be cleanly separated from substrate materials, allowing for both in-life repair and end-of-useful-life reuse.

ReUSE® is a set of conductive adhesives, inks, materials, and processes which combined with proprietary design techniques, delivers PCBAs that can be separated. ReCYCLE™ is the process for separation, and uses a combination of proprietary processes and an eco-friendly catalyst to permanently change the chemistry to unzip the PCBA.

ReUSE® and ReCYCLE™ vastly reduce CO2 emissions of electronics manufacturing and recycling as they are low-energy processes, and critically, the components undergo little-to-no stress during the unzipping. As components are manufactured for up to 25 years' life, and used on average for less than 5 years, the vast majority can be reused in second life and beyond. The entire supply chain gains due to the recoverable value of every ReUSE® PCBA.

GEC estimated that in 2021, $60Bn of valuable components were wasted which naturally rises each year. With resources depleting, many components will continually increase in price until they can no longer be manufactured! In2tec's sustainable electronics technology makes it possible to shift the paradigm and provides the ecosystem for electronics to become circular.

The full effects of waste electronics and electrical devices being sent to landfill will not truly be

felt for many years, however future generations will be forced to face vast materials shortages that will stall technological development and inevitably cost lives.

“The requirement for tech is seen in almost every sector, and yet it is one of the most heavily polluting entities the world has ever known” continues Emma. “We have a duty to act, for our children and our planet. Our technology doesn’t require significant investment by OEMs or Recyclers, yet the benefits are astounding. Let’s be honest, most things come down to cost. Our technology provides a closed-loop value chain and it’s the solution the world is calling for."

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