The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
President of COP26

26th October 2021

Dear President of COP26,

We, the undersigned organizations, and founders of the International Data Sanitization Consortium (IDSC), are writing to you to urge that e-waste be included on the agenda at this year's UN Climate Summit COP26, hosted in the UK. As president of the COP26, your role in ensuring the UK is a leader in promoting greener, more sustainable models of waste management is a critical one for tackling our climate emergency—and it's one that our technology-driven society can support with the right policies and incentives.

According to the UN Global E-waste Monitor 2020, e-waste is now the world's fastest growing domestic waste stream. In 2019, a record 53.6 million metric tonnes of electronic waste was generated worldwide. This rising tide of e-waste is only forecast to grow if society's unsustainable approach to electronic equipment and device management continues to go unchecked. As the second largest producer of e-waste per capita in the world, the UK has the opportunity to set an example on a global stage for why we must make significant improvements to reduce the impact of e-waste on the environment.

Despite the UK government's ambitions to "Build Back Greener" and lead in climate change prevention through its Net Zero strategy and Ten Point Green Plan, there has been a total disregard for e-waste. This is a missed opportunity to encourage increased engagement with the circular economy. Where current government strategies have outlined intentions to create solutions to lower emissions, opportunities to promote and incentivize more reuse and recycling of scarce materials and functional products have been overlooked. While pursuing renewable sources of energy and lowering CO2 emissions is a global imperative, the UK government's roadmap suggests this will take time. Implementing sustainable models that tackle e-waste can be done in the immediate future and must seriously be considered.

We are calling for a more comprehensive green strategy.

We ask that the UK government provides incentives for organizations that pursue sustainable e-waste management and demonstrate engagement with the circular economy. We ask that the UK government provides guidance to organizations and consumers on how to transition away from a "take, make, consume, dispose" attitude to end-of-life electronics and IT equipment. We ask that the UK government considers data sanitization policy reform, that outlines best practices in data management to prepare devices and IT equipment for reuse, refurbishment, and appropriate means of recycling.

There are significant socio-economic and environmental benefits in improving models of end-of-life electronic and IT equipment management. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Greater circular economy engagement** to keep more devices and IT equipment in circulation and out of landfill

- The **creation of sustainable jobs** in the refurbishment of electrical components

- More **affordable options for second-hand purchasers** of IT equipment and devices to close UK's digital divide

- The ability to safely **donate devices to communities, educational institutions, and individuals** that need IT equipment most

- The **reduction of needless physical destruction** of equipment preventing electronic waste entering landfill

- **Investor support** for organizations demonstrating performance against ESG targets

We, the IDSC, believe that there is a clear relationship between data protection technology, e-waste reduction and circular economy growth. Organizations are largely unsure of how they can engage with the circular economy as data regulation and public sector policy do not advocate for the reuse of data bearing assets. By this letter we ask for your support in raising awareness of the need to immediately address the e-waste issue and unlock the potential of the circular economy. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this in greater detail.

Yours sincerely,

Fredrik Forslund, Director, International Data Sanitization Consortium

Signatories

Rohini Kanduri, Director, IS Ingram Micro ITAD

Richard Stiennon, Chief Research Analyst, IT-Harvest

About the IDSC

Founded in 2017, the International Data Sanitization Consortium (IDSC) is a group composed of individuals and companies dedicated to standardizing terminology and practices across the data sanitization industry. Our mission is mission is to eliminate the ambiguity around data sanitization terms, standards and guidelines to ensure organizations are adhering to, and receive, best practices in data sanitization.

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