

EICC and GeSI Initiate Electronics Industry Metal Mining Study

EICC and GeSI have commissioned a study, to be lead by Dr. Steven Young of GreenhouseGasMeasurement.com (GHGm), to help understand how various metals are mined, extracted, recycled, purchased and used within the electronics sector. Dr. Young has been developing environmental approaches and assisting organizations become more sustainable since the early 1990s. As President of GHGm, he directs environmental performance evaluations of novel technologies, material supply-chains and greenhouse gas projects.

The goal of the study is to understand the role the electronics industry currently plays in purchasing, using, recycling, and recovering the metals copper, tin, gold, aluminum, palladium, and cobalt. Also, to understand the Social/Environmental conditions under which these metals are mined including the role of governments. The outcome of the study will educate the EICC and GeSI member companies and help raise the overall awareness of our stakeholders (customers, shareholders, governments, NGOs, etc.) on the electronics industry metal usage and relevant mining practices. The final report is expected to be released in April 2008.

EICC and GeSI member companies plan to participate in the International Roundtable in Brussels in January 2008 for electronics companies, NGOs and Trade Unions to discuss the responsibility for environmental, human rights and labour conditions in the electronics supply chain. The Roundtable will present new research reports on the mining of metals that are used in electronic products and will facilitate discussion on the possibilities for improving the conditions in this part of the electronics companies' supply chain. The roundtable will be led by a consortium of NGOs from Europe that includes Germanwatch, Swedwatch, Finnwatch, Karat, SOMO and IRENE, as well as NGOs in developing countries in Asia and Africa.