

CONCEPT NOTE

8TH EACO REGIONAL AWARENESS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE E- WASTE MANAGEMENT

**16TH–18TH MARCH 2026, KINSHASA,
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
(DRC)**

1.0 Introduction

The East African Communications Organization (EACO) has convened seven regional awareness workshops since 2015 to advance sustainable E-waste management in East Africa. These workshops were held in **Nairobi, Kenya (March 2015); Kampala, Uganda (July 2017); Kigali, Rwanda (May 2018); Bujumbura, Burundi (March 2019); Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (March 2023); Juba, South Sudan (March 2024); and most recently as the 7th Regional Awareness Conference in Nairobi, Kenya (March 2025).**

The **1st workshop** aimed to bring together key stakeholders from the EACO region to address the growing challenge of E-waste. A key outcome of this engagement was the development of an **E-waste management action plan**, alongside the establishment of **regional and national steering committees on E-waste management**. These committees were designed to include a diverse range of key stakeholders across the E-waste management ecosystem, beyond national ICT regulators, to enable a comprehensive and coordinated approach to E-waste management.

The **2nd workshop** focused on developing a roadmap towards achieving **zero negative impact of E-waste in the EACO region by 2030**, by promoting collaboration and the sharing of best practices among the Member States. The principal outcome was the **validation and endorsement of the first Regional E-waste Strategy (2017-2022)**, which provided a harmonized framework for regional action while aligning with global developments.

The **3rd workshop** emphasized the **practical implementation** of the Regional E-waste Management Strategy with particular attention to identifying **sustainable financing mechanisms** for E-waste initiatives and projects across the region.

The **4th workshop** centered on the benefits of a **regional approach** to E-waste management. It assessed progress made in implementing the Regional Strategy and identified key gaps and areas requiring further improvement.

The **5th regional workshop**, held under the theme, *“From awareness to action: Sustainable E-waste management as a priority towards achieving 2030 SDGs”*, focused among other issues, on evaluating the status of the **Reduce E-waste and E-waste Data Harmonization Projects** that were implemented between 2020-2023.

The **6th workshop** addressed the theme, *“Sustainable Strategies for E-waste Management in South Sudan and EAC Region”- A holistic approach*, highlighting country-specific challenges while reinforcing the value of regional cooperation.

The **7th EACO Regional Awareness Conference** focused on the theme, *“Advancing sustainable E-waste management in East Africa: Embracing Extended Producer Responsibility,”* marking a strategic shift towards operationalizing EPR frameworks across the region.

Building on these progressive engagements, the **8th EACO Regional Awareness Conference on Sustainable E-waste Management** is planned to take place in Kinshasa, DRC, from **16th – 18th March 2026**, under the theme: *“Building a Circular E-waste Economy in the EACO Region: Strengthening Regional Infrastructure, Innovation, and Partnerships for Sustainable Development”*.

2.0 Objectives

The 8th EACO Regional Awareness Conference on Sustainable E-waste Management will focus on the following objectives:

a) Promote Circular Economy Models:

- ✚ To explore and promote sustainable circular economy models for E-waste management through repair, refurbishment, reuse, recycling, and responsible material recovery.

b) Strengthen Regional Infrastructure and Policy Frameworks:

- ✚ To identify opportunities for investment in shared regional E-waste collection, treatment, and recycling infrastructure, and to harmonize supporting legal and policy frameworks across EACO member states.

c) Enhance Private Sector and Producer Participation:

- ✚ To foster partnerships with producers, importers, recyclers, and innovators in implementing EPR schemes and business models that support sustainable E-waste value chains.

d) Leverage Innovation and Technology:

- ✚ To showcase technological innovations in tracking, data management, and eco-design that enhance efficiency, transparency, and traceability in E-waste management.

e) Promote Capacity Building and Knowledge Exchange:

- ✚ To build capacity among national focal points, recyclers, and informal sector actors through experience sharing, skills development, and dissemination of regional best practices.

f) Strengthen Regional Collaboration and Financing Mechanisms:

- ✚ To explore regional financing models and public-private partnerships (PPPs) that can sustain E-waste programs and circular economy projects.

g) Assess Progress on E-waste Data Harmonization and Regional Strategy Implementation:

- ✚ To review the progress made since the 7th Regional Awareness Conference in operationalizing EPR frameworks, advancing E-waste data harmonization and aligning national initiatives with the forthcoming Regional E-waste Strategy 2027–2031.

3.0 Workshop Programme

The three-day workshop will feature interactive panel discussions and technical sessions focused on translating the regional E-waste management strategy into practical actions. Key themes will include best practices, implementation challenges, emerging needs, and effective awareness strategies.

Sessions will be moderated and led by selected speakers and presenters, with contributions from a panel of regional and international experts. The programme will encourage dialogue, experience sharing, and actionable recommendations.

4.0 Speakers and Presenters

Speakers and presenters will be drawn from a pool of national, regional, and international experts and stakeholders. Selection will be made based on demonstrated expertise and practical experience in specific thematic areas related to E-waste management and circular economy.

The workshop will also accept submissions from interested presenters addressing various aspects of E-waste management, policy, innovation and implementation.

5.0 Participation

The target participants for the Conference will include:

- i. National ICT Regulators, government officials and policy makers at national and regional levels;
- ii. Private sector representatives, including manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers;
- iii. Environmental protection agencies and E-waste handlers, collectors and recyclers;
- iv. Researchers and academics specializing in E-waste management, sustainability, and circular economy;
- v. Civil society organizations and advocacy groups;
- vi. International organizations and development partners;
- vii. Other stakeholders involved in the E-waste management ecosystem;
- viii. Consumers and end-users;
- ix. Lecturers and students in ICT colleges and universities.

The workshop will be held in a **hybrid format**, allowing both physical and virtual participation. The estimated total number of participants is 150.

The participation is free. However, participants will be responsible for their travel; visa and Accommodation arrangements. Country Information including Venue, Visa, list of recommended hotels in Kinshasa will be uploaded to the event' webpage by end of February 2026.

6.0 Hosting and Sponsoring Organization

The **8th Regional Awareness Conference on Sustainable E-waste Management** will be hosted by **ARPTC**, Democratic Republic of Congo, as the key institution responsible for regulating and advancing the ICT sector in the country.

The conference will be organized in collaboration with EACO and other relevant national, regional, and international E-waste stakeholders.