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Waste electric and electronic goods (WEEE)

Tougher EU rules a step closer after EP vote

The European Parliament environment committee today voted on a proposal to revise EU rules on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) (1). The Greens welcome the moves to increase the scope and collection targets and to tighten important loopholes with regard to shipments to non-OECD countries. After the vote, Green MEP **Michail Tremopoulos** said:

"Tougher EU rules on waste electrical goods are a step closer following today's vote. In addition to adopting ambitious targets for collection and recycling, as well as separate targets for reuse, MEPs have voted to ensure appropriate treatment of all separately collected WEEE. By 2016, at least 85% of the waste that is arising annually should be collected, and all of it properly treated. This is a resounding no to the attempt by Council to significantly lower the collection targets.

"We are happy that the committee reconfirmed that it wants retailers to be obliged to take back very small waste appliances, such as light bulbs or mobile phones, regardless of whether a new appliance is sold at the same time. Increasing the collection of these appliances and raising consumer awareness about this should reduce the amount of these small appliances ending up in the general waste stream and thereby escaping adequate treatment. "Importantly, the new rules will also clamp down on illegal exports of WEEE outside the EU: only equipment that has been certified to be fully functional and sent properly may be exported. It is long overdue that we stop making developing countries the dumping ground for our hazardous waste."

(1) Second reading vote on the Florenz report.

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