

# Cobalt Conference

## CSO input on Consumer awareness and behavior with regards WEEE

06 June Brussels

# Who are we?

**EEB: the environmental voice of European citizens**

**We stand for environmental justice, sustainable development and participatory democracy.**

**Our aim is to ensure the EU secures a healthy environment and rich biodiversity for all.**

**SPEAKING ABOUT CONSUMERS,  
BUT NOT A CONSUMER ORGANISATION**

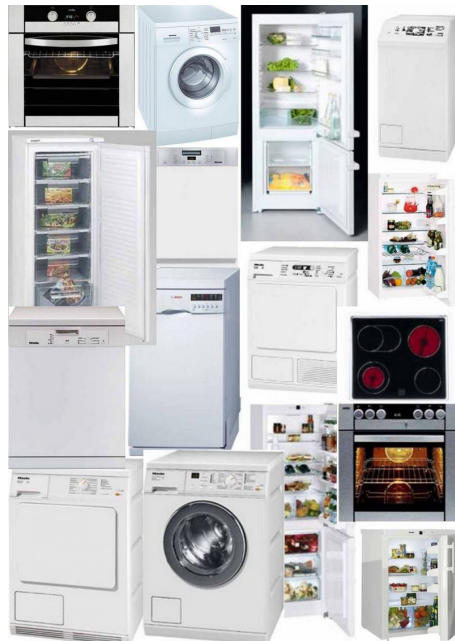
## Where are WEEE?



Vik Muniz : "*WWW (World Map), Pictures of Junk*" (2008). Photographie. Dimension :  
triptyque de 149 x 102 cm (chaque panneau). Sur le site (photo et commentaire)  
[:http://www.collectionsocietegenerale.com/](http://www.collectionsocietegenerale.com/)

# Why consumers matter?

Easy to discard properly  
(one to one scheme, too bulky  
to store, change when broken...)



lagerverkauf-cottbus.com

**CONSUMERS  
HOLD  
THE EEE & WEEE  
(B2C)**

Difficult to ensure a proper  
discard (small pieces, privacy,  
re-sell...)



## The role of consumers as expected by society?

- Buy EEE                      ✓ Pay the end of life contribution (visible fee or not)
- Use EEE
  
- DISCARD WEEE...PROPERLY                      ✓ Pay the waste management taxes
  
- Buy new EEE                      ✓ Pay the end of life contribution (visible fee or not)
- Use new EEE
  
- DISCARD NEW WEEE...PROPERLY                      ✓ Pay the waste management taxes

**In fact, the consumer is paying twice  
and asked to contribute by discarding properly  
=> Is the consumer well represented in WEEE management?**

# Instruments for consumer

- Pay as you throw scheme –  
(Data in NL shows that under PaYT, 50% less WEEE is discarded improperly)
- Deposit/Refund or voucher system  
(part of what you pay when buying is given back when bringing back)
- Communication by Municipalities/Take back schemes  
(often integrated in take back scheme tasks and fees)
- Minimum collection points density, including at retailers

## *Note:*

*Sanctions against consumers are hard to imagine, increase bring back/collection convenience...or fear cherry picking and sub-standard treatment?*

*Questioning the relevance of paying consumers for their WEEE?*

# Trends for (aware) consumer

- Durability of goods – fear planned obsolescence
- Resell rather than discard (part of replacement strategy?)
- Share items?
- Privacy issue with ICT?



## Directions for the future

- Increase life time of equipment and offer modularity/reparability/exchange service
  - Make products, material “reservoirs” limiting hard to treat chemicals
  - Make bring back convenient / rewarding (?)
  - Develop EPR in consistency with WEEE prevention & treatment: incentives for better design
  - Involve consumers more in establishing WEEE management schemes
- ⇒ *Rely on consumers as they can rely on industry and reverse logistic, not more*



Thanks for your attention

Stephane Arditì - EEB

