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# SONY Sony

Sony had been an early leader within the sector in addressing the need to eliminate hazardous chemicals from its products, and while Sony continues to demonstrate it has the ability to create solutions to reduce its impact on the planet from its energy use and resource consumption, this year's guide found Sony repeatedly lacking in leadership, ambition, and follow through necessary to turn Sony into a leader in environmental performance. While Sony has made progress in deploying renewable energy in Japan, much greater ambition is needed from its leadership, with its 2020 target will only deliver approximately 5% renewable energy. Despite Sony's thorough reporting of its own operational footprint and the impacts of its devices, Sony also lags behind sector leaders in reporting important details on the environmental performance of its supply chain, which appear to several times larger in terms of their impact on the climate than Sony's own facilities.

## Renewable Energy & Climate Change

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**TRANSPARENCY.** Sony provides a very thorough accounting of the company's Scope 1 & 2 GHG emissions, energy use, and other details of its energy related footprint, but remains fairly light on details of its supply chain footprint. Unlike other leading brands, Sony does not make public its suppliers, or details on the distribution of its supply chain emissions, even though Sony's reported Scope 3 product goods and services emissions were nearly four times larger than its combined Scope 1 & 2 emissions in 2016.

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**COMMITMENT.** Sony recently adopted a midterm set of 2020 targets in furtherance of Sony's "Road to Zero" 2050 long term plan, including a Scope 1 & 2 GHG reduction target of 5% (from 2015 levels), and a renewable energy target expressed in terms of 300,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e,<sup>1</sup> which will apparently only increase Sony's renewable energy from 3.5% to 4.1%.<sup>2</sup> Greater ambition is needed if Sony is serious about realizing its goal "zero emissions of greenhouse gases" in 2050. Sony also said it will "request" its main suppliers to measure and reduce their greenhouse gas intensity by 1% per year, and similarly request them to utilize renewable energy.<sup>3</sup> While these new targets are positive directionally, they similarly lack adequate ambition, particularly Sony's targets for renewable energy and supply chain emissions. Sony's lack of transparency on which companies are part of their supply chain will also make it difficult to assess whether their request has been responded to.

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**PERFORMANCE.** Sony has made some progress in curbing its own emissions in absolute terms through a mixture of energy efficiency and limited deployment of renewable energy. Sony has purchased or deployed renewable energy in Japan as well as in the United States and the EU, although its total renewable energy remains less than 6% in 2016. Sony must set a stronger example in its own operations, as the company needs to work with its suppliers to increase their incentive to drive greater reductions and adoption of renewable energy, a strategy we are now seeing pay off for Apple.

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## Renewable Energy & Climate Change (continued)

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**ADVOCACY.** Sony signed a joint statement in Japan earlier this year in support of greater access to renewable energy for corporations who want to be powered with 100% renewable energy (joined by 10 corporations, including Apple and Microsoft).<sup>4</sup>

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## Sustainable Design & Resource Reduction

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**TRANSPARENCY.** Sony provides a thorough accounting of its device take back<sup>5</sup> and recycling efforts,<sup>6</sup> along with quality case study information on its efforts to develop and utilize halogen-free recycled plastics.<sup>7</sup> Building on its helpful flow reporting of material flows and resources,<sup>8</sup> Sony should provide a more detailed accounting of its material flows across its product lines, highlighting where it is prioritizing interventions to increase the amount of recycled material and decrease the amount of waste. Sony also provides clear reporting on managing resourcing of conflict minerals.<sup>9</sup>

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**COMMITMENT.** Sony has established a target to reduce amount of virgin oil-based plastics per product unit by 10% (2013 base year) as part its “2020 Green Management Targets.”<sup>10</sup> While this is a positive step, it is similar to its renewable energy goal: right direction, but but lacking in ambition. Sony should be working to expand the amount of recycled material going into its products, setting priorities for extending its use of recycled beyond plastics to other high impact materials, as Fairphone and Apple have begun to do.

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**PERFORMANCE: CIRCULAR PRODUCTION.** Sony has shown innovation in the development of its SORPLAS plastic formulation, allowing much higher percentage of recycled plastics material to be used, but needs to look beyond plastics to include secondary materials for other high impact materials.<sup>11</sup> Sony has an extensive take-back system across all of its major markets.<sup>12</sup> As Apple, Dell, and Fairphone have done, Sony needs to prioritize what additional materials will be part of its roadmap to transition to non-virgin material for its devices beyond plastics.

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**PERFORMANCE: PRODUCT LIFE EXTENSION.** Sony’s performance in slowing the rate of resource consumption through its product design and support network has been thus far been underwhelming, with only small areas of progress to point to. Sony does provide for limited upgradeability in its smartphones and tablet by continuing to offer SD card storage, and while it offers refurbished products for sale in the UK,<sup>13</sup> it does not appear to extend to other mature markets. Sony also fall short in terms of enabling repair and longer life for its devices, as it does not provide repair information or spare parts.

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**ADVOCACY.** No evidence found of positive or negative advocacy.

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# Hazardous Chemical Elimination: Products & Supply Chain

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| <p><b>TRANSPARENCY.</b> Sony publishes a product restricted substances list (PRSL),<sup>14</sup> but the company does not make public which substances, if any, it is monitoring in factory settings, nor does not publish its current list of suppliers. Sony provides only basic information on its assessment of its suppliers for adherence to its code of conduct,<sup>15</sup> and is absent any details of actual or even overall performance in each of the five compliance areas (labor, health and safety, ethics, environment, and management systems).<sup>16</sup></p> | <p>D</p> |
| <p><b>COMMITMENT.</b> Sony has yet to deliver on its earlier commitment to phase out PVC and BFRs altogether, and still does not have a timeline at this point for phasing PVC, BFRs, beryllium, antimony trioxide, and phthalates out of all products.</p>   | <p>D</p> |
| <p><b>PERFORMANCE.</b> Sony has identified a range of products that are free from PVC &amp; BFRs,<sup>17</sup> which include Xperia Smartphones and Tablets. Sony has also eliminated Beryllium from its smartphones.<sup>18</sup> Unlike HP, Microsoft, Apple and other leaders, Sony has not banned the use of known hazardous chemicals such as benzene and n-hexane from use within its supply chain.</p>   | <p>D</p> |
| <p><b>ADVOCACY.</b> No evidence found of positive or negative advocacy.</p>   | <p>—</p> |

## ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr/SonyEnvironment/ourvision/GM2020/TargetMatrix.pdf>
- 2 [https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr\\_report/environment/data/response.pdf](https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr_report/environment/data/response.pdf)
- 3 <https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr/SonyEnvironment/ourvision/GM2020/TargetMatrix.pdf>
- 4 [http://renewable-ei.org/en/images/pdf/20170422/REI\\_ProposalforPromotingRenewables\\_EN\\_170422\\_final.pdf](http://renewable-ei.org/en/images/pdf/20170422/REI_ProposalforPromotingRenewables_EN_170422_final.pdf)
- 5 [https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr\\_report/environment/data/p\\_recycle.html](https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr_report/environment/data/p_recycle.html)
- 6 [https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr\\_report/issues/CSR2016E\\_PDF\\_all\\_e.pdf](https://www.sony.net/SonyInfo/csr_report/issues/CSR2016E_PDF_all_e.pdf), p.360.
- 7 [https://www.sony.com/electronics/sorplas-recycled-plastic?short=sorplas\\_performance](https://www.sony.com/electronics/sorplas-recycled-plastic?short=sorplas_performance)
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