



Asus

Asus sells smartphones, tablets, and PCs, and like Acer, its Taiwanese peer, the company shows room for improvement in all three impact areas. Despite setting an emissions reduction target for its own operations, the company has not paired this with any plan to source renewable energy, and as a result, its own emissions in 2016 increased compared to 2015. To lead on energy Asus must set aggressive targets to adopt RE for its own operations and its manufacturing supply chain. While Asus reports using recycled plastic, there is no transparency on the scale of this effort, nor any public target to increase the use of secondary materials to support circular production methods. Asus outperforms Acer in product detox, as the company has banned the use of antimony and beryllium outright. Next, Asus needs to be more transparent about the levels at which it restricts other chemicals in its products, while also publishing an MRSL.

Renewable Energy & Climate Change

D

TRANSPARENCY. Asus is unique among Asian manufacturers in that it publishes the names of some key component suppliers.¹ Asus reported Scope 1 and 2 GHG emission. Scope 3 emission disclosure is limited to business travel.² The company reported absolute emission data for 30 key suppliers (their scope 1 and 2 emissions) and that 70% of those suppliers have GHG reduction goals.³ Asus does not report product carbon footprint data.

D

COMMITMENT. At the corporate level, Asus has set a target of reducing GHG emissions associated with energy use by 50% by 2025, compared to 2008 levels, but few specifics are shared on how Asus will achieve this. Asus has set no targets for supply chain emissions reduction or for procuring renewable energy.⁴

D

PERFORMANCE. Asus reports that in 2016 its emissions were down 23% compared to 2008, but up slightly from last year. The company reports no use of renewable energy in its own operation or among its suppliers.⁵

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ADVOCACY. No evidence found of positive or negative advocacy.

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Sustainable Design & Resource Reduction	D
<p>TRANSPARENCY. Asus states it has used recycled plastics in products since 2015, but there is no information about how much, or which products. To improve on transparency, Asus should publish information about the material composition of its products, including what materials were from recycled sources. On the plus side, Asus reports some details on its take-back efforts,⁶ and the company also discloses its smelter list⁷ and reports on its due diligence efforts for conflict minerals.⁸</p>	D
<p>COMMITMENT. While Asus publishes considerations for its product designers that include language on lifecycle extension and design for easy recycling, there are no measurable goals or timelines.⁹ To improve, Asus must set specific targets, including targets around the use of recycled materials.</p>	D
<p>PERFORMANCE: CIRCULAR PRODUCTION. While Asus leaves room for improvement in the sourcing of recycled materials, the company is active in the management of products once they reach end of life. The company offers take-back services beyond where legally required and reports on overall take-back. In 2016 take-back covered 63% of the market, and the recycling rate was 12.21% of total product weight of global sales volume.¹⁰</p>	C
<p>PERFORMANCE: PRODUCT LIFE EXTENSION. Asus's guidelines appear to support product lifespan extension, but it's unclear to see how these guidelines are applied to new Asus products. Asus's ZenFone Max, for example, does not embody the modular design guideline Asus details, and this smartphone's battery and display cannot be easily replaced.¹¹ Spare parts and repair manuals are available only as part of repair services.</p>	D
<p>ADVOCACY. No evidence of positive or negative lobbying for circular economy or Right to Repair laws.</p>	-

Hazardous Chemical Elimination: Products & Supply Chain	D+
<p>TRANSPARENCY. Asus discloses a very basic list of its controlled substances for products (PRSL); however, without also publishing threshold information for these chemicals, it's impossible to know if they are controlled at a safe limit.¹² To improve, Asus must provide this information as well as an MRSL, as Apple, Microsoft, and Dell have done. On the plus side, Asus is unique among the Asian manufacturers to publish the names of some of its key suppliers, though the company does not go as far as to provide a full list of suppliers, complete with addresses.¹³</p>	C
<p>COMMITMENT. While Asus has already shown progress on the elimination of some hazardous product chemicals (beryllium, antimony, and some phthalates), the company has not set a deadline to complete the phase out of BFRs and PVC from all products.¹⁴</p>	D
<p>PERFORMANCE. In Asus's 2016 report the company reports on its progress to eliminate certain product chemicals, including beryllium and antimony since 2013 and certain phthalates since 2015.¹⁵ Asus also reports some progress on eliminating BFRs and PVC in some parts and products, but has made exceptions for system modules, PCBs, connectors and cables.¹⁶ The company also reports a ban on benzene and n-hexane since 2016; however, this ban does not seem to impact all workers in the supply chain, as later the company states only workers aged 16-18 should not handle benzene. The company does not provide any further details on how this is being applied in its supply chain.¹⁷</p>	D
<p>ADVOCACY. No evidence found of positive or negative advocacy.</p>	-

ENDNOTES

- 1 http://asus.todayir.com.tw/attachment/20170614180848496941490_en.pdf, p. 102.
- 2 <https://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=55>
- 3 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 3-10 and 3-11.
- 4 <https://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=54>
- 5 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 2-18.
- 6 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 2-9
- 7 https://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_Supply_Chain_Smelter_Refiner_List.pdf
- 8 <https://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=144>
- 9 <http://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=36>
- 10 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 2-9.
- 11 <https://www.rethink-it.org/>
- 12 <http://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=35>
- 13 http://asus.todayir.com.tw/attachment/20170614180848496941490_en.pdf, p. 102.
- 14 <http://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=35>
- 15 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 2-3
- 16 <http://csr.asus.com/english/article.aspx?id=35>
- 17 http://csr.asus.com/english/file/ASUS_CSR_2016_EN.pdf, p. 3-9.