



Trucost and Green Electronics Council Debut Research On Natural Capital Costs and Circular Economy Benefits for Electronics

Unveiled at the 2015 Emerging Green Conference, the research identifies risks and opportunities linked to improving materials recovery and addressing water scarcity.

PORTLAND, Oregon USA – September 24, 2015 – The Green Electronics Council today unveiled new research carried out by Trucost that highlights the importance of advancing best circular-economy practices throughout the electronics sector. Trucost laid out their findings as part of the Green Electronics Council’s [Emerging Green Conference](#), the premiere 2015 gathering of technology leaders to discuss the advances, challenges and future of sustainable electronics.

The [Green Electronics Council](#) engaged Trucost in order to better understand the intersection of environmental stewardship and return on investment when “natural capital” considerations are included in the equation. While many individual enterprises have implemented circular-economy principles like the incorporation of recycled content in products, little research has explored the global implications of applying those principles across the entire electronics sector.

“Accounting for natural capital translates environmental benefits to the language of business – dollars and cents. Companies can finally join up the financial and environmental business case,” said Libby Bernick, [Trucost](#) Senior Vice President for North America. “Through their understanding of the industry, the Green Electronics Council has helped us to identify game changing natural capital business insights which I look forward to sharing with companies at the Emerging Green Conference.”

Trucost’s work with the Green Electronics Council analyzed industry-average data, publicly available databases, LCA studies and Trucost’s models. The research assessed natural capital (environmental resource) impacts and dependencies across the value chain where information was available. The results provided high-level insights on environmental impact “hot spots.”

Among the findings:

- The **electronics sector is more efficient than most** other industries in its use of natural capital to generate revenue. However, rapid growth in consumption of electronic devices means absolute **natural capital impacts are likely to increase** even if per-device requirements remain level or decrease in relative terms.
- **Precious metals recovery represents a significant business opportunity** in addition to holding environmental benefits. Trucost estimates that if recovery of gold, silver and platinum increased from current rates to 100%, the financial and natural capital benefits would increase by **\$10 billion**.

- **Water scarcity** issues are growing yet unevenly distributed, meaning that, by 2025, up to **\$0.82 of every \$1 in revenue is at risk** for a semiconductor company in Hiroshima, while a Beijing company risks \$0.60 of every \$1 in company revenue due to water scarcity.

“These findings confirm the importance of finding new approaches to electronics production and consumption,” said Scott Davis, Interim CEO of the Green Electronics Council. “They lend a definite urgency to conversations at the Emerging Green Conference, and to the work that GEC carries out every day to support sustainability in the electronics sector.”

The Emerging Green Conference featured more than two dozen sessions and high-level keynotes, experts and thought leaders focusing on the unique hurdles and opportunities that electronics pose to a circular economy. Among the topics discussed were material selection, supply-chain social issues, closing the loop and emerging technologies.

London-based Trucost Plc is a global authority on the economic consequences of “natural capital” dependency, providing its clients with information to manage risk from hidden and rising environmental costs. The firm began assessing the carbon risk exposures of large institutional investment portfolios in 2002 and has since expanded its analysis to address a wide range of asset classes and environmental factors, including water-related issues and stranded assets.

About the Green Electronics Council

The Green Electronics Council is a non-profit organization that works with stakeholders around the world to inspire and catalyze environmental leadership throughout the lifecycle of electronic technologies. GEC supports stakeholders to develop both a shared vision of green electronics as the cornerstone of a healthy and vibrant world, and the practical tools to realize that vision. GEC supports the development of consensus-based environmental leadership standards and operates EPEAT, the definitive global rating system for greener electronics. For more information, please visit <http://www.GreenElectronicsCouncil.org>.

About Trucost

Trucost helps companies and investors to achieve success by understanding environmental issues in business terms. Our data-driven insights enable organizations to manage risks and identify opportunities for growth. We are the world’s leading experts in quantifying and valuing the environmental impacts of operations, supply chains, products and financial assets. By putting a monetary value on pollution and resource use, we integrate natural capital into business and investment decisions. With offices in Europe, the U.S. and Asia, Trucost works with businesses worldwide to increase revenues, improve communications, meet marketplace expectations and comply with regulatory requirements.

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