

## LCDS Consulting

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**Topic Title:** Regulation of Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

**Audience:** European Union

### Sustainable Development Goal

SDG #12 : Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

### Executive Summary

The European Union faces a significant regulatory challenge concerning the management of waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) to promote sustainable consumption and production practices. The EU has already passed legislation targeting electronics companies to mitigate their e-waste output through the common charger directive, and it has seen success by forcing Apple (and other companies) to drop proprietary or old hardware and to embrace the standard USB-c charging cables. However, e-waste is still continuously generated through planned obsolescence, which is especially common among major global electronic firms like Apple, and it is a significant concern towards the mitigation of WEEE. This practice involves intentionally designing products with limited lifespans or using components prone to premature failure, exacerbating the environmental impact of electronic waste. Consequently, this contributes to the rapid filling of landfills and the introduction of toxic materials into ecosystems. Furthermore, electronic companies often manufacture components without adequate consideration of their environmental impact upon disposal by consumers.

To mitigate these consequences, regulations should be enacted to curb planned obsolescence, incentivize sustainable design, and enhance transparency in product lifecycle management. Measures like holding companies accountable for practices like "Batterygate," promoting the right to repair, and encouraging modular designs can prolong product lifespans and minimize electronic waste, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal #12 which ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. Collaboration between policymakers, industry stakeholders, and consumers is vital to enact these solutions and propel the EU towards a more sustainable future.