

IT Company Monitor: Background Document

1.1 Description of the monitor

The IT company monitor is an online tool that provides an overview of the performance of the largest computer brands related to social and environmental sustainability. It lists positive and negative news items related to individual companies on topics such as working conditions, human rights and environmental degradation. The news items are organised by company, giving an insight in the issues at hand for each of the large computer brands, and the strategies they use to deal with these issues.

1.2 Purpose

The IT company monitor aims to provide an overview of the developments of the sustainability of computer brands. It does not provide a base line of the current performance of these companies, nor does it rank these companies. The monitor allows visitors to get an idea of what the current issues are concerning social and environmental conditions, and to follow the developments of certain issues.

The monitor does not have the intention to judge a company as a whole. The Procure IT Fair campaign believes that it is not viable to score companies overall with the limited amount of information available on the conditions within the supply chain of computers. It has also proven to be difficult to evaluate a company's policies and statements, as there are varying degrees of implementation of such intentions in practice. Procure IT Fair feels that the information about conditions throughout the entire supply chain is merely the tip of the iceberg, and that the lack of transparency complicates the process of evaluating a company as a whole.

1.3 Target Group

The Procure IT Fair campaign targets public institutions and their professional purchasers. It logically follows that this is the main target group of this monitor. However, the monitor is also available for, and will provide relevant information to policy makers, organisations that focus on sustainability in the electronics sector and the wider public as a whole.

1.4 Methods

1.4.1 Scope

It should be noted that there are some boundaries to the scope of the monitor;



First of all, the monitor only reports about a company's activities related to the production of desktop and laptop computers. Many of these brands also have other operations, such as mobile phone and game console productions, as well as industrial equipment. Reports about conditions in the supply chains of these products are not included. Conditions at various service related subsidiaries are also not taken up.

Secondly, the monitor does not include news reports published before January 1st, 2009. As mentioned before, the aim is to map the developments, rather than a comprehensive overview of a company's performance.

Thirdly, the monitor focuses specifically on issues related to human rights, working conditions and environmental pollution throughout the supply chain. Therefore, items related to other issues, such as remuneration, corruption, corporate governance, etcetera are left out. The monitor also does not include job cuts caused by the recent financial crisis, unless stakeholders have spoken out against

such decisions. The factors involved in decisions around job cuts and factory closures are too complex to come to clear and consistent evaluations. However, related issues such as contract labour and the moving of factories to low-wage-countries are included, as the negative impacts of such strategies are widely documented.

1.4.2 Evaluating companies

The monitor evaluates the news items by marking them with a green thumbs up  for positively evaluated items, and a red thumbs down  for negatively evaluated items. The markers express Procure IT Fair's evaluation of the role of the company in question concerning the topic of the news item. These evaluations are made on the basis of international standards and codes, such as for example the core ILO conventions, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Dutch CSR Platform Frame of Reference.

It should be noted that these marks are given on the basis of how Procure IT Fair evaluates the news items. They are not the result of an extensive analysis. The reasoning behind the evaluation is not given for each of the news items, due to time constraints. However, questions for clarification, comments and suggestions are welcome.

1.5 Sources

For this monitor, information is gathered through news reports, RSS feeds of relevant websites, as well as information that reaches the campaign through GoodElectronics members and other networks. At this moment, only English language sources are used.