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Greenpeace takes on gaming giants

Greenpeace has called on gamers to persuade Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo to make their consoles greener.



Greenpeace is hoping to speak to manufacturers via gamers

According to the environmental campaign group, game console makers have so far "failed to reduce the toxic burden of their products".

It accuses Microsoft, Nintendo and Sony of lagging behind mobile phone and PC manufacturers.

The initiative is part of Greenpeace's campaign to persuade the electronics industry to be greener.

"Game console manufacturers are lagging way behind the makers of mobile phones and PCs who have been reducing the toxic load of the products over the past year," said Zenia Al Hajj, Greenpeace International's toxics campaigner.

"Game consoles contain many of the same components as PCs so manufacturers can do a lot more," she added.

Workers "at risk"

As part of its campaign, Greenpeace has launched a 90-second video featuring some of the iconic games console characters - Microsoft's Master Chief, Nintendo's Mario and Sony's Kratos - competing for the prize of a greener games console.

Gamers can compare how each console measures up on toxic materials, recycling and energy efficiency, as well as logging their support for the campaign.

The campaign is aimed at the big three game console manufacturers - Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft.

Nintendo said that it is looking to establish a dialogue with Greenpeace but that it adhered to all European standards.

It is signed up to the European WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) directive - which makes manufacturers responsible for recycling their goods.

"We make sure that all of our products comply with European standards which we understand are the highest in the world," said a spokesman.

Greenpeace is engaged in a wider campaign to persuade the whole electronics industry to eliminate hazardous chemicals across the board.

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It does not believe that current legislation goes far enough and on its hazard hit list are brominated fire retardants and PVC, the use of which it claims can lead to dangerous chemicals building up in the environment and in human and animal tissue.

It said that Chinese and Indian workers in production facilities and scrap yards where goods are dismantled could be at risk.

Nintendo's spokesman said that no PVC was used in the production of its consoles, although he couldn't confirm whether brominated fire retardants were banned.

Leading mobile phone makers, including Motorola, LG, Sony Ericsson and Philips, have all implemented eco-design aspects into their production lines, including reducing the amount of hazardous substances used in their products.

Global warming

Nokia, the world's largest mobile phone manufacturer, produces a handset every nine seconds. It has decided to implement requirements set out in the EU Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive in all 10 of its factories around the globe.



Global warming campaign launched in the virtual world

The RoHS Directive bans six substances (lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, PBB and PDBE) from products that are either made or sold in the EU.

Greenpeace has been busy garnering support for its various initiatives from the web community. Earlier this month it teamed up with teenage social networking site Habbo to find out more about youngsters attitudes to global warming.

50,000 teenagers responded to the survey, with 74% rating global warming over drugs, violence and war as the issue they were most concerned about.

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