

E-WASTE

Recycling Rate of E-Waste in 2010
BY THE TON

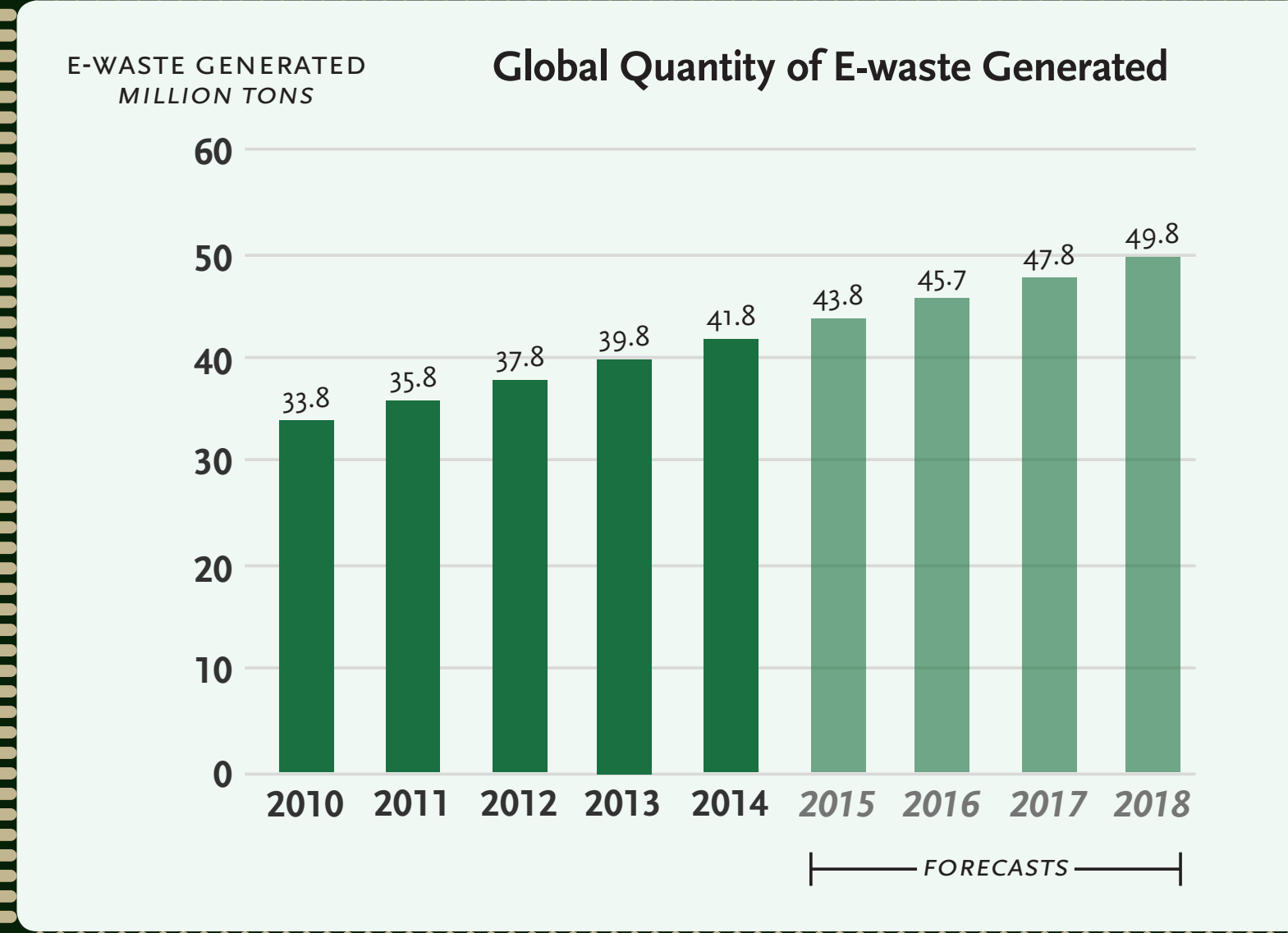
COMPUTERS
40%

MONITERS
33%

What is E-Waste?

E-waste is a popular, informal name for electronic products nearing the end of their "useful life." Computers, televisions, VCRs, stereos, copiers, and fax machines are common electronic products. Many of these products can be reused, refurbished, or recycled.

The graph to the right shows the steady increase of e-waste we have been generating globally since 2010 and shows forecasts of global e-waste for years 2015-2018.



20 million

TELEVISIONS ARE TRASHED IN THE US EVERY YEAR

87%

OF ELECTRONICS ARE NOT RECYCLED PROPERLY

Harmful Toxins

LEAD

Lead is distributed in the brain, liver, and kidneys. It is particularly harmful to children, contributing to about 600,000 new cases of intellectual disabilities every year.

BARIUM

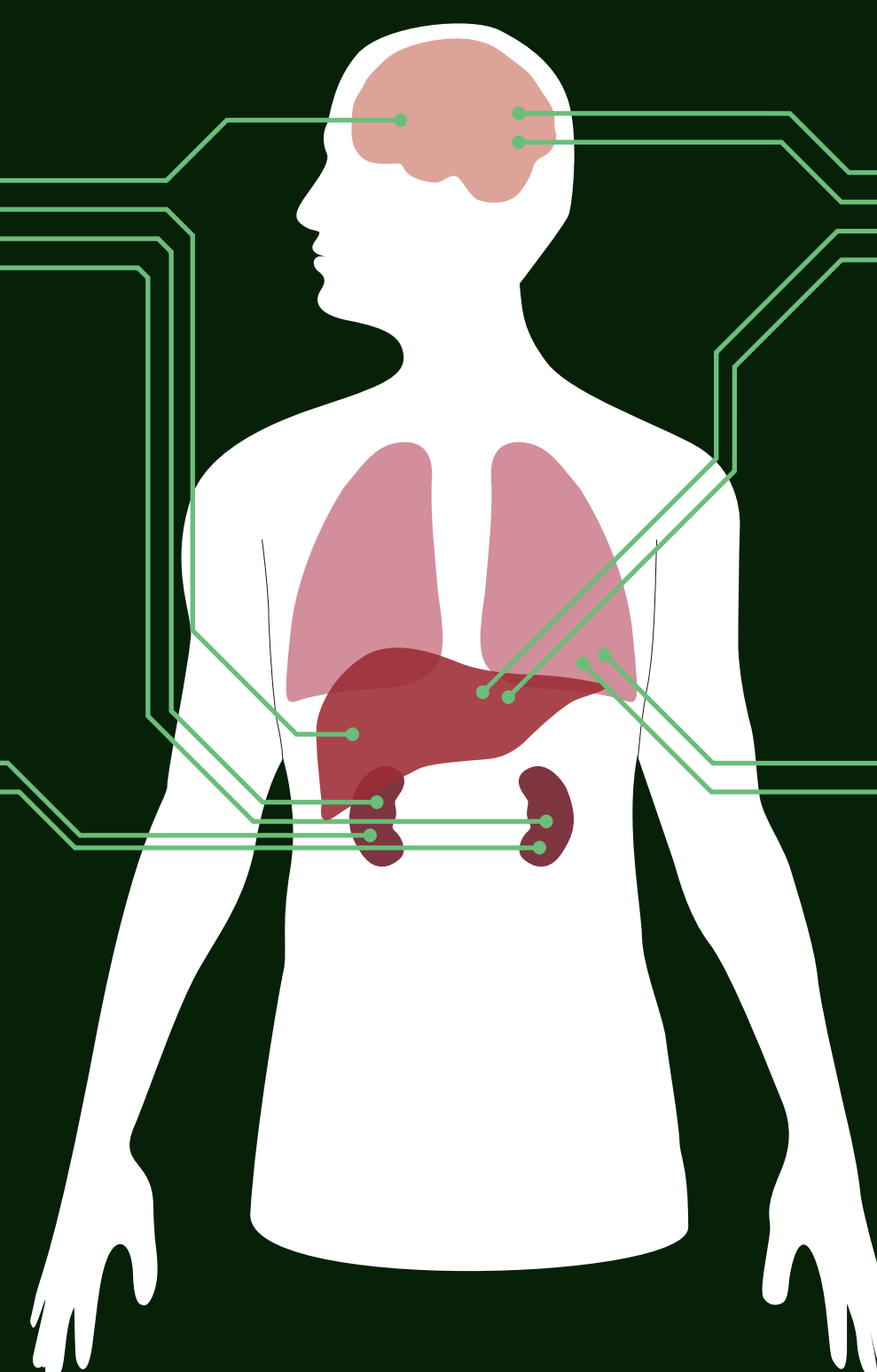
Barium produces brain swelling after a short exposure. It has also been found to potentially cause gastrointestinal disturbances and muscular weakness.

CADMIUM

Cadmium is primarily toxic to the kidneys. Once entered, it accumulates through life. Toxicity can cause bone demineralization and can increase chance of lung cancer.

MERCURY

Mercury is particularly harmful to the lungs. High levels of methylmercury in the bloodstream of young children may harm the developing nervous system.



Out of 423,000 tons of computers, only 168,000 tons were recycled.

Out of 595,000 tons of monitors, only 194,000 tons were recycled.

Out of 290,000 tons of hard copy devices, only 97,000 tons were recycled.

Out of 67,800 tons of keyboards and mice, only 6,460 tons were recycled.

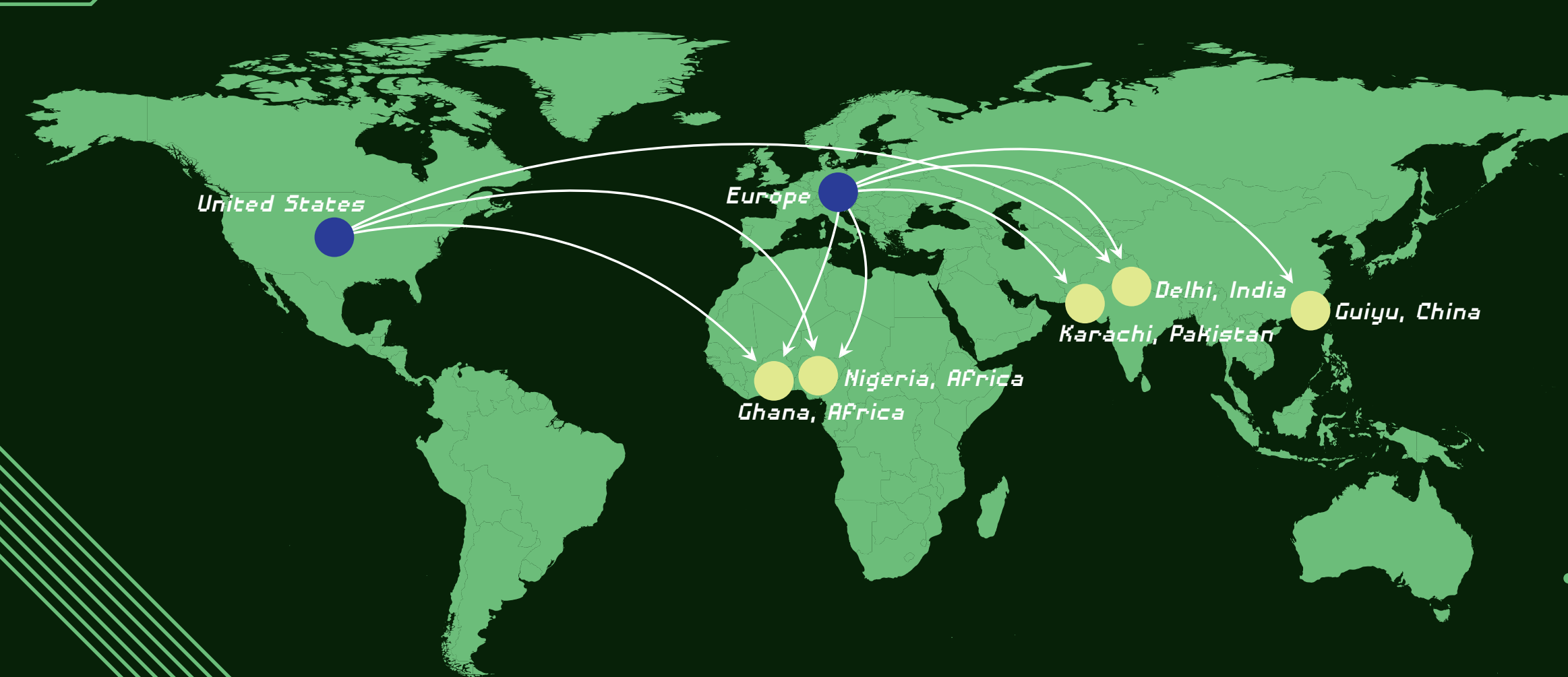
Out of 19,500 tons of mobile devices, only 2,220 tons were recycled.

Out of 1,040,000 tons of televisions, only 181,000 tons were recycled.

EXPORTS

E-waste is routinely exported by developed countries to developing ones, often in violation of the international law. Inspections of 18 European seaports in 2005 found as much as 47 percent of waste destined for export, including e-waste, was illegal. In the UK alone, at least 23,000 metric tonnes of undeclared or 'grey' market electronic waste was illegally shipped in 2003 to the Far East, India, Africa and China. In the US, it is estimated that 50-80 percent of the waste collected for recycling is being exported in this way. This practice is legal because the US has not ratified the Basel Convention.

Where Does E-Waste Go?



Nowhere is the environmental impact of e-waste as apparent as in Guiyu, Guangdong province. Here the water is black and acidic, children have lead poisoning and the fumes of chemicals hang heavy in the air. Guiyu's soil, water, air and people are paying a high price. Over 80% of children are suffering from lead poisoning. The highest concentrations of lead were found in the children of parents whose workshop dealt with circuit boards.

There is a thriving grey market in the outskirts of Delhi where kabbadiwallahs burn E-Waste for the metals and it poses a danger not only for the environment but also the persons themselves indulging in it. With some corporate organisations corporates and others - who pass on the work of disposing E-Waste to their administration departments who are willing to dispose off their E-Waste in the grey market where it fetches more money - the dangers it poses are much higher.

E-waste is being exported, often illegally, to Ghana from Europe and the US. In the e-waste yards, unprotected workers, many of them children, dismantle, computers and TVs with little more than stones in search of metals that can be sold. The remaining plastic, cables and casing is either burnt or simply dumped.

In an undercover operation, Green Peace exposed how electronic waste intended for recycling is being illegally exported from the UK to Nigeria disguised as second-hand goods, one of many destinations for the developed world's toxic e-waste.

E-waste in Pakistan is yet another major health concern to individuals and the environment. In the Karachi district of Lyari, hundreds of workers, including teenage children, earn their livelihoods by dismantling the electronic scrap and extracting valuable components such as copper to sell.

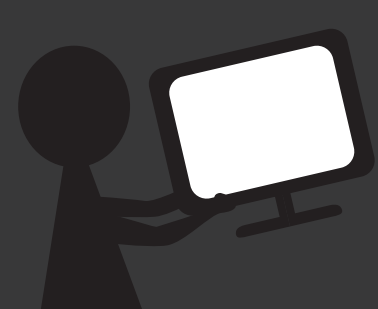
How to Help



Buy durable electronics that will last you a long time.



Take good care of the electronics you already own so they can last as long as possible.



Donate what you don't use or need to charities.



Recycle broken or obsolete electronics responsibly to companies in your area.

HARD COPY DEVICES
33%

KEYBOARDS AND MICE
10%

11%
MOBILE DEVICES

17%
TELEVISIONS