

Press release for immediate release

TWO PLASTIC RECYCLING HEAVYWEIGHTS SIGN OPERATION CLEAN-SWEEP (OCS) PLEDGE SAPRO and MyPlas both commit to sustainable, safe manufacturing processes

Johannesburg, 2 July 2021. The South African Plastics Recycling Organisation (SAPRO) and MyPlas have become the latest signatories of Operation Clean Sweep® (OCS) – an international stewardship programme designed to keep plastic pellets, flakes and powders out of the marine environment.

SAPRO currently represents 42 of South Africa's leading plastic recyclers, including MyPlas, one of the largest post-consumer recyclers of polypropylene in South Africa and the only HDPE, LDPE and PP recycler in South Africa to achieve ISO 9001:2015 certification. Signing the OCS pledge were Phil Sereme, General Manager of SAPRO and Johann Conradie, Chairman of SAPRO and joint Managing Director of MyPlas.

"Recyclers form a vital part of the plastics circular economy and ensuring their buy-in is crucial to the success of this global initiative. We therefore applaud SAPRO and MyPlas for taking this bold step," comments Douw Steyn, Sustainability Director of Plastics SA – the licensee and project coordinator for OCS in South Africa's plastics industry.

According to Steyn, most of the plastics associationsⁱ in South Africa have now signed the OCS pledge and thereby joined the ranks of 77 other plastic associations around the world who are part of the Global Plastics Alliance.

"It is hugely encouraging that South Africa has such a strong representation of companies and associations who have made a public commitment to support OCS and its various projects that aim to ensure that no plastics pellets, flakes or powder are spilled during transportation or at the manufacturing plants. Spilled pellets, flakes and powders enter the environment from the manufacturing facility and eventually make their way into local waterways and ultimately estuaries and the ocean where they can be mistaken for food by birds or marine animals," Steyn explains.

SAPRO General Manager Phil Sereme stresses that SAPRO is keen to align itself with any organization that initiates and promotes the cleaning up of the environment and that they will be encouraging the rest of their members to also sign the OCS pledge in their personal capacity.

"Building a responsible, sustainable plastics recycling industry that is respected and acknowledged by government, industry and the general public is one of our key focus areas. To this end, we encourage all our members to ensure that none of their process materials leach into the environment from upstream to downstream of the value chain. Signing the pledge is a commitment from SAPRO's perspective that we are doing everything in our power to achieve that objective and to set an example for the rest of the industry to follow. We will continue our efforts to keep the environmental footprint of plastics as small as possibleⁱⁱ by encouraging recycling, reducing the amount of plastics that end up in landfill and avoiding accidental spillage in the environment by implementing the detailed OCS toolkit for improved worksite set-ups and practices," Phil concludes.

For more information, visit www.plasticrecyclingsa.co.za or www.plasticsinfo.co.za

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Notes to the editor:

ⁱ The following South African associations / companies are signatories of the OCS Pledge: PETCO, Polyco, the Polystyrene Association of SA, the Southern African Vinyls Association, SAPPMA, Plastics Converters' Association (PCA) SAPRO, Sasol and Safripol (raw material suppliers), Polyoak, the Astrapak Group and Plastics Bubbles (converters) Myplas and Tufflex (recyclers)

ⁱⁱ SAPRO sees ongoing education and communication as two important pillars for creating new end-markets and driving demand for post-consumer, recycled plastic materials. Their "Design for Recycling" guide aims to assist packaging producers with making responsible, desirable decisions during the design stage of product development, while they encourage the use of available technology as a mechanism to collect and recycle as much plastic material as possible.