



South African Plastics Recycling Organisation

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

From the Chairman's Desk

We start 2021 with COVID-19 still reigning havoc in South Africa. We note with sigh of relief, however, that the Government has received the first two batches of 1 million Johnson & Johnson vaccine doses from India. This comes in the wake of news that the earlier procured AstraZeneca vaccine only has a 22 % efficiency to offer protection against the so-called "South African variant", 501Y.V2 - causing the Department of Health to halt the final roll-out plan for vaccination.

The delay in obtaining the vaccines posed as serious setback for our country as it left our front-line workers exposed and despondent.

The revelation has also raised questions about the Government's ability to roll out vaccination to those targeted in the first phase. With the President announcing that lockdown regulations have been eased to Level 1, we can only hope that all South Africans will exercise restraints and continue to adhere to the instructions to avoid large gathering, continue wearing their masks, regular sanitising and maintain social distancing. Our best behaviour will help South Africa regain momentum and much-needed growth in our economy.

Johann Conradie



Let's not forget that the colder Winter months and traditional flu season are also slowly but surely approaching. We cannot afford another surge in outbreaks that would possibly lead to yet another lockdown.

Too many jobs and lives have already been lost - leaving hundreds of family members (including some of our SAPRO members and partners) in a destitute situation. South Africa also faces a serious skills shortage if the pandemic continues to claim the lives of teachers, medical staff and thousands of other skilled workers.

We trust that you will enjoy reading our newsletter. May it be a source of news to you, but also inspiration and motivation to work with your fellow plastics recyclers to get our country, our industry and our economy bigger, stronger and more resilient than ever!

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Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation (EPR) Update

Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Barbara Creecy has postponed the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulations to 5 May 2021. This follows a request from affected producers to make further inputs into the implementation process.

Stakeholders have been given the opportunity to comment on additional amendments, should these be necessary. Given the extension for implementation, all existing producers, and producer responsibility organisations, will be required to register with the department before 5 November 2021.

The regulations give effect to Sections 18 and 6g of the Waste Act and apply to the electrical and electronic equipment, lighting and paper, packaging and some single-use product sectors. It outlines a new approach to waste management in South Africa and will contribute significantly to the diversion of waste from landfill, states the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF).

The regulations are expected to contribute to an increase in the recycling, reduction, reuse and recovery rate, thus achieving one of the aims of the National Waste Management Strategy published last year. It is also an opportunity for Government to work closely with industries that produce varying amounts of waste to enhance the country's capacity to recycle, thus expanding the circular economy, DEFF says.



"Given the extension for implementation, all existing producers, and producer responsibility organisations will be required to register with the DEFF before 5 November 2021"

Taking a closer look at imports

Another key issue that will be addressed is the inclusion of imported packaged goods in the EPR schemes. The aim is to level the playing field so that imports should comply with the same rules as local goods and pay the relevant EPR fees.

Please take note of the following important dates and timeline:

End Q1 – Focus group to revise regulations for review (publication before 5 May)

5 May 2021 – Effective date of regulations

5 Nov 2021 – Revised date for final compliance with regulations.

These are some of the requirements for producers:

- Existing producers to register with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries by 5 November 2021 (as per Gazette 44708 on 15/1/2021).
- Be part of an EPR scheme that includes the entire value chain by 5 November 2021.
- Be accountable for the operation and performance of EPR scheme.
- Pay the appropriate levy to the EPR scheme – payments and contracting by end 2021.
- Fulfil monitoring and reporting obligations.
- Implement labelling of packaging to indicate disposal information.

Please don't delay. We urge you to avoid last-minute stress and unanticipated problems by starting the process as soon as possible.

SA Plastics Pact

Road Map 2025

Progress Report

The SA Plastics Pact Roadmap is a document which outlines the key activities and key outcomes to be achieved as Pact members continue the journey to achieving the four ambitious targets set by the Pact by 2025.

It shows what the members and supporters of the Pact will do to deliver the SA Plastics Pact targets, with key outcomes in two interim milestones (mid 2021 and end 2023), and finally end 2025.

The following progress has already been made in this regard by the various action groups:



Target 1: Taking action on problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging through redesign, innovation or alternative (re-use) delivery models

- The draft list of problematic and unnecessary plastics to be addressed in 2021 has been circulated and will be finalised later this year.
- **Next steps:** The action group to define the Phase 2 list as well as develop guidance for members to address the Phase 1 and proposed Phase 2 plastic items.



Target 2: 100 % of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable

- The Target 2 action group focussed on the further development of the On-Pack Recycling Labels (OPRLs), and will publish a visual guide and the current version of the OPRL guidance, developed by WWF in partnership with the Sustainable Retailers' Forum. The publications will be freely available on the SA Plastics Pact website and will be downloadable after agreement by those accessing the documents, that they will apply the OPRLs according to the guidance.



The activities and outcomes outlined in this Roadmap aim to build upon the work and programmes already being undertaken in South Africa to maximise the benefits of plastic packaging and design out negative impacts, so as not to duplicate efforts

- **Next steps:** The group will develop or incorporate logos for home compostable packaging as well as reusable packaging, as well as adding the percentage post-consumer recycled content to the OPRL designs.



Target 4: 30% average recycled content across all plastic packaging

- A draft list of 'quick wins' for the inclusion of recycled content in packaging developed by this action group, which will be sent to members for comment before finalising for publication. These "quick wins" are a good first step towards achieving our 2025 target.
- **Next steps:** The action group will work on a strategy to achieve our 2025 targets, by defining the infrastructure, investment and other needs to hit milestones by polymer and format type on the road to 2025. The group will also draft a 'quick win' list for non-packaging plastics, to assist in growing the demand for recycled plastics, which is essential to achieve our Target 3 – 70% of plastic packaging effectively recycled.

COLLECTIONS AND RECYCLING IN SA:

Barriers and challenges under the spotlight

SAPRO has recently partnered with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and GreenCape to conduct a survey into the barriers and challenges experienced in the collecting and recycling of plastics in South Africa. The survey covers the entire value chain of the plastics circular economy and was made possible thanks to a sponsorship by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

"We trust that the outcome of the investigation and the suggestions to address and overcome these barriers, will lead to the generation of solutions that will go a long way towards driving the realisation of meeting the targets set by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries in Section 18 of the Waste Act," says SAPRO Chairman, Johann Conradie.

The study was conducted through an online questionnaire and one-on-one interviews. The results of the survey will be consolidated in a report that will be shared with partners and members.



REMINDER TO PAY MEMBERSHIP FEES 2021

The SAPRO board extended its warmest welcome to all new members. With a cloud of uncertainty still hovering around our heads we continue with our objective and mandate to grow the organization so that SAPRO can truly become a representative of all recyclers in South Africa.

In order to accomplish this, we urge all members to continue with the settlement of their outstanding membership fees as committed at the beginning of the current financial year which will close in June 2021. We understand the economic difficulties brought upon by the Pandemic. However, we cannot sustain our mandate without the financial support of our valuable members. Should you need to make payment arrangements, please contact our General Manager as soon as possible.



SAPRO APPOINTS NEW GENERAL MANAGER

Philemon Sereme



With the departure of Lisa Parkes at the end of 2020, SAPRO has appointed Phil Sereme as new General Manager. We thank Lisa for her dedication and wish her well in her new endeavours and welcome Phil to his new position. We decided to ask him a few questions in order to get to know him better.

What qualifications do you hold?

National Diploma in Packaging Management and a BTech Diploma in Purchasing Management.

Where were you employed prior to joining SAPRO?

Nestlé South Africa

Do you have any prior experience in the plastics and/or recycling industries?

I managed the packaging recycling programme at Nestlé and was a specific point of contact for all packaging recycling related issues.

What will your main area of focus and responsibilities be as GM of SAPRO?

I will be focusing on growing the SAPRO membership. The target is from a base of 54 to at least 150 by 2022 and to improve our relationship with DEFF through proactive collaboration.

How do you feel about your appointment?

It's a new role for me as I have never had to work with recyclers in my previous job. It is both exciting and challenging. I'm looking forward working with all board and general members.

In your opinion, what are some of the biggest challenges facing plastics recycling in SA?

I think a lack of cohesive collaboration amongst key stakeholders within the plastics value chain. Also, we need a clear policy that would steer to higher recycling rates in order for us to meet the 2025 targets and beyond.

Where would you like to see the plastics recycling industry in the next 5 years?

I would like to see at least achieving recycling rate of 65 % and would be happy if the local government and municipalities can start initiatives to encourage separation-at-source campaigns. We also need to start educating our communities in this regard. That is one of the key factors that will lead us towards meeting higher recycling rates in SA.

Share some personal information

I come from Springs on the East Rand and I'm married with two boys. I enjoy road running to keep fit and play golf when I find the time. I enjoy watching Formula 1.

Contact information for Phil Sereme:

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TUFFLEX BECOMES FIRST PLASTICS RECYCLER TO SIGN OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP PLEDGE



Tufflex Plastics Products has become the first plastics recycler in South Africa to sign the Operation Clean Sweep® (OCS) pledge – an international stewardship programme designed to prevent the loss of plastic resin (pellets, flakes, and powders) and ensuring that this material is kept out of the marine environment.

Over the past 25 years, Tufflex has built a reputation for being one of the country's most successful plastics recyclers. The company's raw material division supplies recycled polymers to a large section of the local plastics industry and offers a toll recycling service to converters. It also focuses on the manufacturing of products such as railway sleepers, furniture, dustbins, decking for walkways and pallets from re-cycled domestic and industrial plastics.

Explaining the importance of making a public commitment to work towards achieving zero plastics resin loss during the conversion, manufacturing and transportation stages, Tufflex Managing Director Charles Muller says: "Recyclers play an integral part in the plastics value chain and therefore have the same responsibility as all other stakeholders to ensure that there is minimal leakage and spillage of granules and other unnecessary waste into the environment. Tufflex remains committed to being a responsible and environmentally conscious player within the plastics sector".

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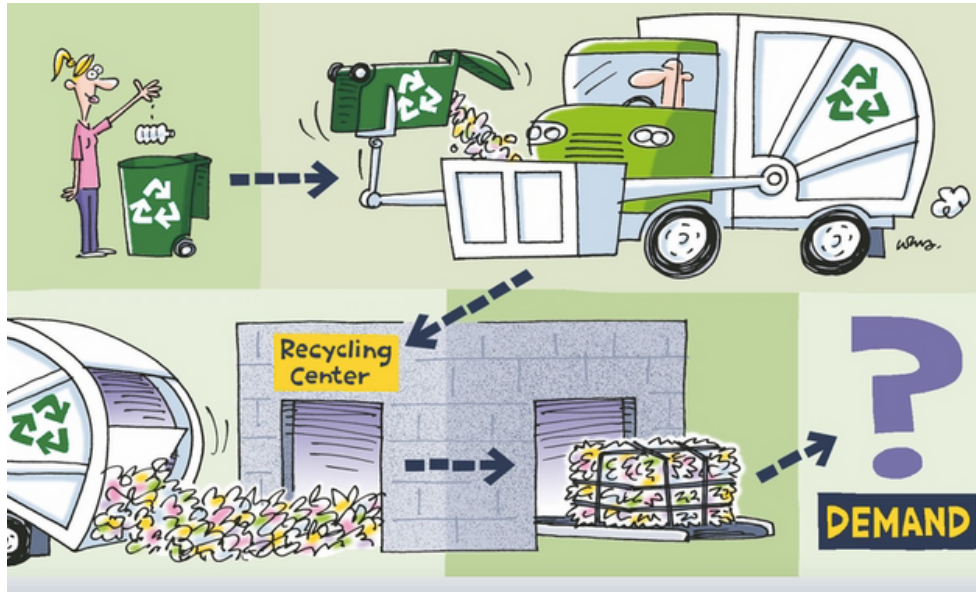
Plastics SA is the official licensee of OCS in SA and signed the Declaration of the Global Plastics Associations for Solutions on Marine Litter in March 2011. The company's Sustainability Director, Douw Steyn, applauded Tufflex for joining other global plastic leaders by making this public commitment. He officiated the signing ceremony at the company's factory in Germiston on the 9th of February 2021.

"It is encouraging to see yet another major player in our industry take such a bold step to help us prevent plastic leakage into our country's waterways, estuaries and eventually the ocean. These small pieces of plastics can easily be mistaken for food by birds or marine animals," Douw said.

As part of Plastics SA's OCS implementation plan, they provide signature companies with a manual and detailed toolkit that guides them to safe and environmentally-responsible manufacturing processes and daily operations. Other local signatories of the pledge include Polyoak Packaging, Berry Astrapak, Sasol, Safripol, as well as the various plastics Producer Responsibility Organisations, e.g. PETCO, Polyco, the Southern African Vinyls Association and Polystyrene Association of SA.

"Our management team and employees all feel equally passionate about keeping our environmental footprint as small as possible by managing the polymers we use responsibly and preventing any accidental release into the environment. However, we need as many companies as possible to join us in this charge. We challenge all other plastics recyclers to also take the OCS pledge - it quite simply is the right thing to do!" Charles concludes.

Consumers, brand owners, processors all have a part in increasing recycled content



Jim Johnson, Plasticsnews.com

Plastics recycling really does not start, or stop, with plastics recyclers. In order for the recovery and reuse of plastics to advance, it needs help from people all along the life cycle of products - including plastic processors, brand owners, consumers and recyclers themselves.

Engagement by consumer brand companies is vital to tie the entire supply chain together when it comes to finding ways to increase plastics recycling and use of recycled plastics in new products. It's all about the end markets. It's demand. Demand creates the pull. If there's no demand for that material, if there's no financing going back the other way, what are we doing? We're collecting, we're sorting, we're processing trash. Who would build a business model based on that?

It's easy to collect. It's hard to create something that has value and has an end market. There has to be a market. Something being 100 percent recyclable or 100 percent recycled is not enough. We need to have 100 percent of those materials reincorporated into new products. That's the only way we are going to achieve a circular economy.

The world is changing at a quick pace. Packaging materials are very visible. Consumers, governments, regulators, NGOs, environmental groups are placing more and more pressure on brands but also on the recycling sector to do something meaningful. We certainly want to do a lot more with some of the major commitments being made by brands to increase recycling and recycled content.

The world is changing at a really quick pace and we've definitely hit a tipping point!