

# The Institute of Packaging SA

Future Pack National  
Conference 2025

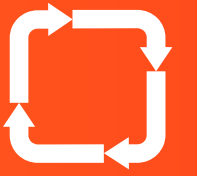


MARCH 2025

**Driving  
collaboration  
to facilitate  
a circular economy**

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# Members



PRO Alliance members are well-established organisations with common challenges in various areas of the EPR, waste and recycling sector.

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## DRIVING COLLABORATION TO FACILITATE A CIRCULAR ECONOMY



### Purpose

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The PRO Alliance exists to facilitate collaboration by PROs on matters regarding the EPR regulations and areas of mutual interest and benefit.

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# Vision

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A circular economy where paper and packaging waste is minimised, resources are maximised, and all stakeholders in the value chain collaborate towards a sustainable and inclusive waste management system.

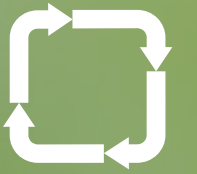
# Mission

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To drive the successful implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for paper and packaging waste by fostering collaboration among Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs), government, industry, and informal sector participants, among other stakeholders, to ensure an efficient, transparent, and inclusive waste management system that benefits both the environment and the economy.

# Values

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**Sustainability**

**Collaboration**

**Accountability**

**Integrity**

**Transparency**





# Our end goal



PRO Alliance aims to demonstrate real change in South Africa's waste landscape through the delivery of our PROs members successful paper and packaging EPR schemes performance to regulations:

- Targets
- Waste Picker Service Fees
- SA public well informed and participating in waste recovery and recycling programmes



**Close collaboration with DFFE on legislative & regulatory reform (Advocacy)**



**Common infrastructure footprint across all nine provinces**



**Functional national WP database**

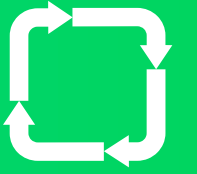


**Communications and awareness programme**



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# Work of the PRO Alliance



Member PROs are the decision makers – the PRO Alliance is the enabler and a channel for executing in areas of common interest

## Regulatory

- Treasury EPR fee concurrence
- DFFE Reg amendments

## Waste Picker Integration

- Waste picker service fee payments
- Social development
- Defining WPI
- SAWPRS hosting, reinvention

## Municipality & Infrastructure

- Feasibility study recommendations
- Collaboration and amalgamation of data from PROs leading to MOUs and execution of infrastructure projects in the future

## Governance, Compliance & Audit

- Membership certification and growth
- Self regulation best practice
- Data / POPIA
- Recycling guidelines
- Procurement
- Free-riders amalgamation

## Communication & Awareness

- Public relations
- Promotion of mutual ED support
- Promoting member performance on EPR
- Stakeholder engagement opportunities

# Notable achievements

in past 12 months



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Waste Picker  
Integration

Southfields  
S@S project

Stakeholder  
Engagement





# Proof of Concept



Modelling cashless waste picker service fee payment

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## RESULTS:

- 114 waste pickers registered and paid
- 58 864kg of packaging waste collected
- Cash back charges – R8.50 and free when using Itellcard to pay at all partnering outlets

## LESSONS LEARNED:

- Awareness for service payments by PROs and job opportunities for waste pickers/graduates as campaigners
- PRO opportunities to market on buy-back centres
- Consider intensifying drive to get buy-back centres to participate

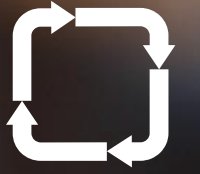


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# Separation at source model

Municipal collaboration: the Southfield project with city of Cape Town

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## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

25 people given the opportunity to work for a minimum of 5 hours per week

## SMME OPPORTUNITIES:

Curb Cycle, Clearer Conscience Environmental Services, Mike's Recycling Workshop, Recycle 1st, Micro Waste Control, HLQ Recycle & Trash Pirate

## FINANCIAL INJECTION:

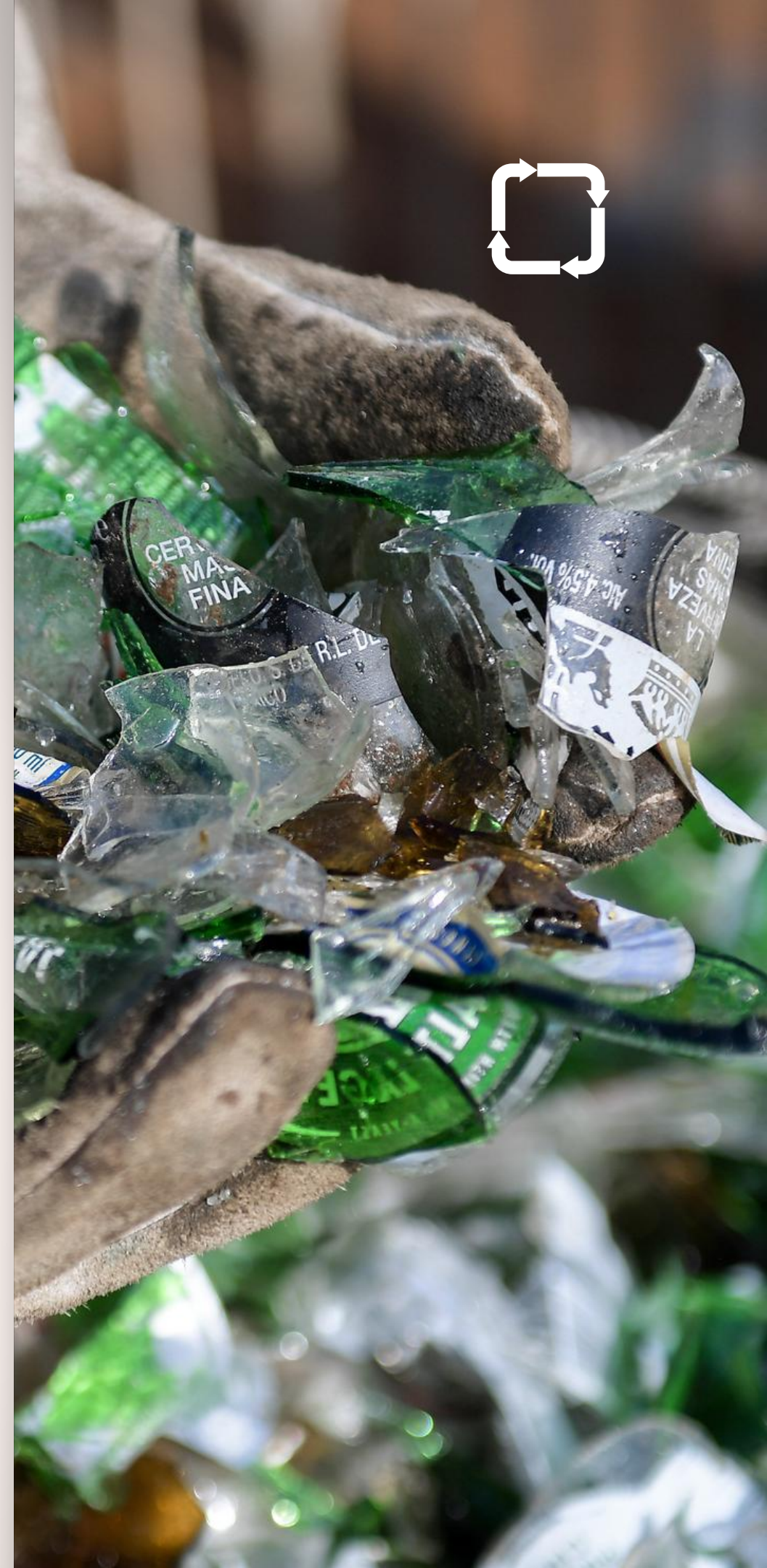
The PRO Alliance contributed R150k. The EDP and WWF secured funds for SMME integration, capacity building, waste picker integration and campaign focused on residents to help drive participation levels.

## RECYCLING COLLECTION STATISTICS:

Project collected 22 654kgs of waste in total, of which 18 344 kgs (over 80%) was recycled. Increase from month 3 to month 4 of 52%.

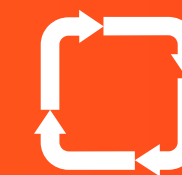
## LESSONS:

S@S projects require extensive coordination and collaboration between buy-back centres, waste pickers, SMMEs and municipalities to create opportunities, increase volumes of collected recyclables, and raise awareness in communities



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# Future joint programmes



in development or under consideration

## Regulation Advocacy

- Ensure collaborative regulation amendments with stakeholders

## Waste Picker Integration

- Develop SAWPRS 2.0
- Link buy-back centres to SAWPRS
- Create auditable cashless system for service fee payments
- Develop roadmap to formalise waste picker integration

## Municipality & Infrastructure

- Better utilise existing infrastructure
- Cooperate with municipalities for tangible infrastructure rollout

## Governance, Compliance & Audit

- Disciplined record keeping of waste recovery and recycling value chains

## Communication & Awareness

- National awareness programme
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and lobbying

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# Waste picker integration



Moving from a “charity approach” to a “partnership approach”

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## Waste picker integration

- Collaborate with municipalities to enhance registration of waste pickers
- Implement S@S projects using the model of the Southfields project

## Waste picker service fees

- PROs committed to paying service fees and individual programmes are continuing as interim measure
- Investigating manual solution while SAWPRS being redeveloped

## Data and information sharing

- Growing SAWPRS to a national database that PROs can use for:
  - Payment of service fees
  - Analysing volumes according to areas and provinces
  - Information sharing and reporting

## Municipal infrastructure

- Planning with municipalities for co-funding on infrastructure programmes
- SALGA framework on municipal cooperation, PPP programmes and involvement of COGHSTA on EPR table

## Awareness campaigns

- Awareness and education to waste pickers on registration and integration programmes





# Waste picker support programme



PRO Alliance members have formed the **Waste Picker Integration Working Committee** that considers ways to support waste pickers.

## COMBINED STATS ON WASTE PICKER INTEGRATION PROGRAMME

Number of **waste pickers paid** to date:

**8 500**



\* Figures have not been verified

**Waste picker service fees** paid to date:

**R4,6 million**

**Value of support provided** to waste pickers:

**R29,8 million**



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# Proposed changes to EPR legislation

Municipal collaboration: the Southfield project with city of Cape Town

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- **Refined definitions** to ensure consistency in interpretation and enforcement
- **DFFE** must be responsible for maintaining a national database with **municipal support** for waste picker registration, with operational support provided by PROs
- **Waste Management Bureau** function, funding and reporting to be clarified
- Implementation of **deposit refund system** (DRS) is premature and requires further research
- **Revise paper and packaging targets** to align with technical constraints, infrastructure and resource availability (municipality mandate) including separation at source
- Clearer guidelines for **revocation and reinstatement processes**, coupled with **accountability for municipalities**
- Onerous **admin burden** on PROs





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# In conclusion ...



- Slow but steady **progress** by PRO Alliance and its member PROs in the face of some challenging obstacles
- **Unwavering commitment** to the objectives and principles of the EPR
- Critical for **EPR to continue** beyond 2026 if SA is to achieve a **sustainable circular economy** - the consequences of failure are too dire to consider.

Thank you  
for your  
time and  
attention

