

Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is the South African Plastics Pact?

The South African Plastics Pact (SA Plastics Pact) is a collaborative initiative that brings together key stakeholders from the local plastics value chain, including businesses, the South African government, NGOs and other organisations to tackle plastics waste and pollution at its source.

The SA Plastics Pact is a pre-competitive platform to stimulate industry led innovation, dialogue and collaboration to create new business models and generate job opportunities, and unlock barriers to move towards the circular economy for plastic, with improved economic, environmental and societal outcomes overall.

The development of the SA Plastics Pact has been led by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), The South African Plastics Recyclers Organisation (SAPRO) and is supported by WRAP - the UK based global environmental NGO . After the launch, it will be led by GreenCape with the support of WWF and WRAP.

The SA Plastics Pact works towards the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy vision and an ambitious set of joint 2025 targets to create a circular economy for plastics in South Africa.

The South African Plastics Pact is the first Plastics Pact on the African continent and joins the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's global Plastics Pact network . South Africa joins a growing number of countries around the world including the UK, France, Chile and the Netherlands in this unique platform to exchange learnings and best practices with Plastics Pacts in other countries and regions to accelerate the transition to a circular economy for plastic.

Thus, while benefiting from innovation at the global level, the SA Plastics Pact has the autonomy to fashion solutions that work specifically for our national context.

2. How does the SA Plastics Pact differ from other national/ South African plastics initiatives?

The SA Plastics Pact is focused on driving a circular economy for plastic in South Africa, delivering change by tackling plastic waste and pollution at its root. It is more ambitious and more comprehensive than any other current or previous initiative, because:

- It has bold, clear, time-bound circular economy targets for 2025 against which the members will publicly report on progress every year. The SA Plastics Pact's ambitious, timebound targets complement each other to reduce the amount of problematic and unnecessary plastic items, design all plastic items that are needed to be reusable, recyclable or

compostable, improve the recyclability of what is used and crucially create demand for more recycled plastic.

- It incorporates all stages of the plastics value chain – including design, production, retail, use, collection, sorting and recycling.
- It covers all plastic packaging - all formats, all polymers.
- It is part of a the global Plastics Pact network with national and regional initiatives around the world all working towards a common vision and exchanging learnings and best practices across country borders to accelerate progress

3. How will the SA Plastics Pact deliver its ambitious targets?

In South Africa, less than half of all plastic packaging is recycled, with the remainder being landfilled - or worst-case scenario, ending up in the environment. To achieve the targets, we need to fundamentally rethink the way we design, use and reuse plastic. Such a system rethink and redesign cannot be achieved by a single organisation working on its own. All stakeholders, including businesses, governments, NGOs and others need to collaborate. The South African Plastics Pact provides a platform for collaboration and concerted action. All stakeholders involved have signed up to a joint set of ambitious and time-bound targets, ensuring that this collaboration will drive significant change by 2025.

The SA Plastics Pact will build on the positive work started by other initiatives and help scale up and disseminate good practice more quickly. By 2025, The SA Plastics Pact will transform the country's plastic packaging sector by meeting four ambitious targets

- **Taking action** on problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging through redesign, innovation or alternative (re-use) delivery models
- **100%** of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable*
- **70%** of plastic packaging effectively recycled
- **30%** average recycled content across all plastic packaging

By meeting these targets, the SA Plastics Pact will also stimulate job creation in the South African plastics collection and recycling sector, and help to create new opportunities in product design and reuse business models.

One of the first actions after launch is the development of a high-level roadmap for delivery to outline a detailed action plan to meet the 2025 targets – from all actors in the system. WRAP has secured funding to support with this.

(*this is applicable only in closed loop and controlled systems with sufficient infrastructure available or fit for purpose applications.)

4. Who are the current members?

The South African Plastics Pact is a unique collaboration (between government, businesses, local authorities, NGOs and citizens) which brings together the entire plastics value chain in South Africa. Our members and partners are at the forefront of generating fundamental change in the way we design, use and reuse, plastics. To ensure a holistic approach, there needs to be action from everybody across the plastics value chain, from those producing plastics (brands, retailers, food service businesses, packaging suppliers and raw material producers), to those collecting it (local and city authorities), sorting it, recycling it (waste management and recycling sector) and using it (citizens and businesses), as well as the government, NGOs, and the media.

The SA Plastics Pact Founding Members (as at 30 th January 2020) are:

The SA Plastics Pact founding members are the Clicks Group, Coca-Cola Africa, Danone, Distell, HomeChoice, Massmart, Myplas, Nampak Rigids, Pick n Pay, Polyoak, Polyplank, Shoprite Group, SPAR, Spur Holdings, The Foschini Group, Tigerbrands, Tuffy, Unilever, ADDIS, Waste Plan and Woolworths. Other organisations include Fruit South Africa, SAPRO, the Polyolefin Responsibility Organisation, the Polystyrene Association of South Africa, the PET Recycling Company, the Southern African Vinyls Association, the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa, the National Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and the City of Cape Town.

Supporting members include: Fruit South Africa, SAPRO, the Polyolefin Responsibility Organisation, the Polystyrene Association of South Africa, the PET Recycling Company, the Southern African Vinyls Association, the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa, the National Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and the City of Cape Town.

5. What are the benefits of being a member?

In recent years, the failings of today's linear take-make-waste plastics system have become more visible, and a major topic on the public and regulatory agenda. As a result, the vision of a circular economy for plastic, where plastics never become waste or pollution, has generated significant global momentum. To date, we have seen plenty of examples of efforts and actions by individual organisation that helped make steps in the right direction. However, we don't need small steps but big leaps, which are only possible if everyone works together in a concerted manner. The South African Plastics Pact will enable these big leaps by having all relevant organisations in the country work towards a common vision for a circular economy for plastic.

The South African Plastics Pact brings together all key players in the country behind a clear strategy to drive solutions, with tailored action, feedback, measurement of progress, and analysis to tackle the key challenges in South Africa. Tangible benefits of becoming a member (founding or non-founding member) of the SA Plastics Pact include:

- Recognition from media and governments for participating towards collaborative action and making progress towards targets
- Access to evidence, peer group insights and collaborative projects
- Support to make progress towards targets, e.g. through indicator benchmarking and technical advice on best practice
- Support for communications to suppliers and citizens
- Access to tailored action and analysis to tackle key challenges in South Africa
- For local companies, the SA Plastics Pact bring economies of scale to drive solutions
- The Plastics Pacts are a local delivery mechanism for global targets and national strategies, aligned with the vision and targets of the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment
- As part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's Plastics Pact Network, The SA Plastics Pact will get access to the Foundation's network of leading global businesses, as well as insights and analysis
- SA Plastics Pact will benefit from ability to exchange learnings with other Plastics Pacts, and demonstrate leadership globally, through membership of the global Plastics Pact network

6. How will the SA Plastics Pact facilitate local collaboration ?

The SA Plastics Pact is a voluntary public commitment between all stakeholders in the local plastics value chain. The SA Plastics Pact is complementary to and aims to mutually reinforce the current projects running in the plastics space (PROs, Waste Management Plans, Retailers Forums, The Alliance to End Plastic Waste etc.). Additionally the SA Plastics Pact aims to complement, not replace any existing or potential legislation.

7. How is it funded?

The SAPP has been developed by WWF, SAPRO with support from WRAP and EMF to launch. This has been enabled partly by funding secured by WWF and WRAP from the UN Environment Sustainable Lifestyles & education programme.

Following launch, the multi-stakeholder cross-value chain group of members of the SA Plastics Pact will be funding the secretariat through annual fees. Additional funding will be sought for specific projects and activities.

8. What is the Plastics Pact network?

The SA Plastics Pact is part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's **Plastics Pact network**, a global network of national and regional implementation initiatives aligned behind a common vision and set of ambitious targets.

The global Plastics Pact network has been expanding since the launch of The UK Plastics Pact in 2018, followed by France, Chile, and The Netherlands. The South African Plastics Pact is joining a unique platform to exchange learnings and best practices across countries and regions to accelerate the transition to the circular economy for plastics.

9. How does being part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's Plastics Pact network benefit the South African Plastics Pact?

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation has established The New Plastics Economy, an ambitious, three-year initiative to build momentum towards a plastics system that works. Applying the principles of the circular economy, it brings together key stakeholders to rethink and redesign the future of plastics, starting with packaging. The initiative is led by The Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with a broad group of leading companies, cities, philanthropists, policymakers, academics, students, NGOs, and citizens. The Foundation's Plastics Pact is a network of initiatives that bring together all key stakeholders at the national or regional level to implement solutions towards a circular economy for plastic. Each initiative is led by a local organisation and unites governments, businesses, and citizens behind the common vision with a concrete set of ambitious local targets.

The SA Plastics Pact is the first of such national initiatives in Africa. The South African Plastics Pact will work towards the common vision, shared by all national and regional initiatives in the global Plastics Pacts network, as well as over 450 organisations that have signed the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment.

In addition the SA Plastics Pact's targets align with the New Plastic Economy's global vision. Many multinational businesses who support the New Plastics Economy, have indicated their intention to sign up to the SA Plastics Pact. This alignment of global and national action, behind a shared vision is crucial to change an entire global plastics system where current value chains do not stop at country borders.

10. How has the Plastics Pact approach been successful in the UK and what impact has the UK Plastics Pact had?

The UK Plastics Pact has been running for over 20 months and has already shown significant positive results.

- 1 billion problematic and unnecessary single use plastic items to be eliminated by the end of 2020
- Pact members are over halfway towards all their packaging being recyclable, and the UK is over half-way towards recycling 70% of plastic packaging
- Members are a third of the way towards an average of 30% recycled content in their plastic packaging

- There has been huge boost to investment in UK recycling enabling an extra 240,000 tonnes of extra recycling in the UK.

WRAP have funding to support the SA Plastics Pact for the first 6 months following launch to help ensure the SA PP delivers positive change.



CONTACT US

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