

**MARCH
2025**



MetPac-SA

Driving Sustainable Metal Packaging

NEWSLETTER



FROM THE CEO'S DESK

Welcome to the March e-Newsletter of MetPac-SA! As we reflect on a dynamic and eventful first quarter of the year as well MetPac-SA's 2024 performance.

We are pleased to share key highlights and achievements from the past three months.

Our commitment remains steadfast in raising awareness about the recyclability and value of metal packaging in South Africa. Through collaboration with our industry partners, including fellow PROs, waste pickers, waste management companies, and recyclers, we continue to drive initiatives that enhance collection and recycling rates, ensuring a more sustainable future for all.

Kishan Singh
Email: Kishan@metpacsa.org.za

Happy reading!



AN OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICA'S METAL PACKAGING INDUSTRY

The sector is driven by increasing demand for sustainable packaging solutions, legislative reforms, and ongoing advancements in recycling and recovery processes.

The South African metal packaging industry, comprising aluminium and tinfoil (ferrous) substrates, plays a critical role in the local economy. It includes local producers, brand owners, and importers of raw materials, as well as manufacturers of empty and filled packaging. The sector is driven by increasing demand for sustainable packaging solutions, legislative reforms, and ongoing advancements in recycling and recovery processes.

Aluminium Packaging in South Africa

The aluminium packaging industry in South Africa operates under three main scenarios:

- Aluminium as a raw material is imported into South Africa for local conversion into packaging.
- Aluminium packaging is imported into the country in the form of filled products.
- Aluminium packaging is manufactured locally from local raw material.

Tinfoil (Ferrous) Packaging in South Africa

Unlike aluminium, tinfoil (ferrous) packaging in South Africa faces a significant challenge due to the unavailability of a local source for tinfoil raw material. With ArcelorMittal South Africa no longer supplying tinfoil to the local market, the industry relies on imports for production. The tinfoil industry operates under the following conditions:

- Tinfoil (ferrous) raw material is imported and converted into packaging locally.
- Tinfoil (ferrous) packaging is imported into South Africa in the form of filled products.

Industry Trends and Challenges

Sustainability remains a major driving force in the metal packaging industry. As consumer awareness of environmental concerns grows, the demand for recyclable and durable metal packaging continues to rise. Progressive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation is also shaping the industry, ensuring that producers take responsibility for managing post-consumer waste and enhancing circular economy practices.

Technological innovations are further supporting the sector by improving the functionality and aesthetic appeal of metal packaging across various industries, including food, beverage, pharmaceutical, household, and personal care. Despite these advancements, the industry faces ongoing challenges such as fluctuating raw material prices and competition from alternative packaging materials.

However, with a strong emphasis on sustainability, supportive government policies, and an evolving regulatory landscape, the South African metal packaging industry is poised for steady growth. The continued investment in recycling infrastructure and responsible sourcing of raw materials will ensure that metal packaging remains a viable and environmentally friendly choice for both businesses and consumers alike.



EPR SUCCESS: MEETING AND EXCEEDING GOVERNMENT TARGETS IN YEAR 3



MetPac-SA has achieved considerable success in meeting the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) targets set by the DFFE for the collection and recycling of metal packaging in South Africa during year 3. Now in its 4th year of implementation, MetPac-SA has demonstrated significant progress in enhancing recycling rates, improving data management, and supporting circular economy initiatives.

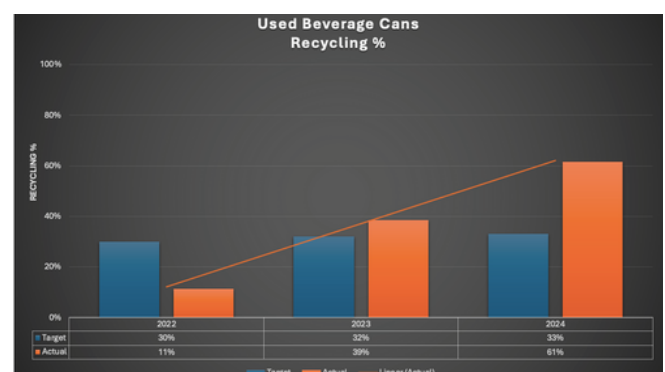
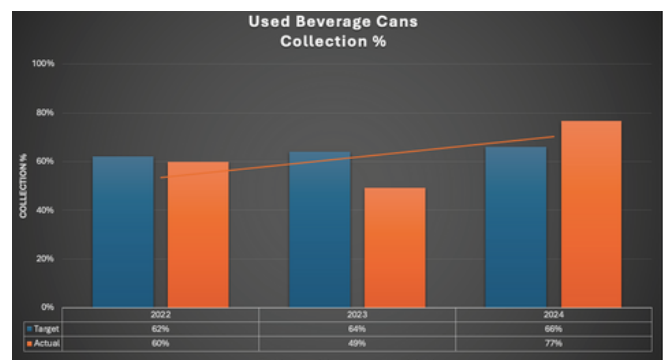
Performance Highlights: Exceeding Key Targets

MetPac-SA's internal team has developed an advanced data management tool to consolidate member declarations and post-consumer recovery data.

This system integrates historical data and employs trend analysis, providing valuable insights into material recovery patterns. For Year 3 (2024), MetPac-SA successfully met and exceeded several key EPR targets:

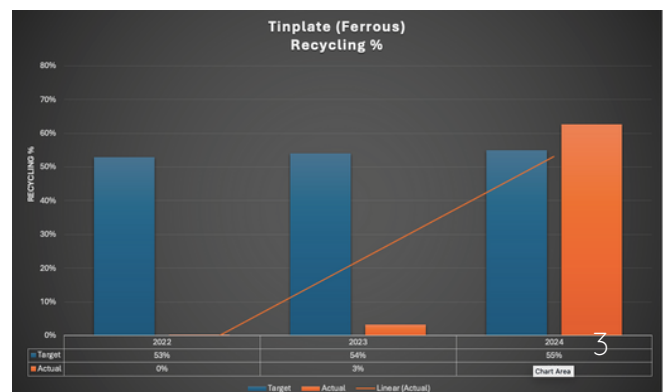
- Aluminium Used Beverage Cans (UBCs):**
Represents 54% of member declared tonnage
Represents 54% of member declared tonnage

- Recycled Content:
 - Target: 32% | Actual: 47%
- Collection Rate: Target:
 - 66% | Actual: 77%
- Recycling Rate:
 - Target: 33% | Actual: 61%
- Energy Recovery/Exports:
 - Target: 33% | Actual: 75%



- Aluminium (Other):**
Represents 3% of member declared tonnage

- Recycled Content:
 - Target: 2% | Actual: 1%
- Collection Rate: Target:
 - 26% | Actual: 2%
- Recycling Rate:
 - Target: 12% | Actual: 0%
- Energy Recovery/Exports:
 - Target: 14% | Actual: 1%



- Tinplate (Ferrous):**
Represents 43% of member declared tonnage

- Collection Rate:
 - Target: 58% | Actual: 61%
- Recycling Rate:
 - Target: 55% | Actual: 63%



While remarkable progress has been made in UBC and tinplate recycling, aluminium (other) remains a challenge. MetPac-SA is actively engaging stakeholders to implement corrective measures and improve performance in this category.

Data-Driven Decision Making for a Circular Economy

The introduction of the Dashboard has enhanced data-driven decision-making, allowing MetPac-SA to strategically plan for continuous improvements. By identifying material recovery trends, MetPac-SA can refine strategies to optimise collection and recycling rates.

Job Creation and Industry Growth

As part of its broader EPR initiative, MetPac-SA has contributed to job creation through:

- A student research campaign on consumer recycling practices, providing employment and skills development for 28 students from five universities.
- Supporting municipal waste awareness initiatives, leading to the creation of 10 temporary jobs.
- Strengthening Partnerships and Municipal Cooperation

MetPac-SA continues to collaborate with municipalities through the PRO Packaging Alliance to improve waste management. Strategic projects, such as those in Saldanha and Swellendam, have driven greater awareness and improved collection infrastructure.

Looking Ahead: Building on Success

MetPac-SA is committed to further strengthening its EPR initiatives with a focus on:

- Waste Picker Integration committee, led by Dr Kishan Singh is working at formalising waste picker registration and service fee payment through SAWPRS 2.0
- Municipal Support: Enhancing cooperation to improve collection efficiency.
- Community Development: Expanding enterprise development programs in recycling.
- Advanced Data Analytics: Enhancing reporting tools for real-time tracking and performance evaluation.

Summary

MetPac-SA's achievements in Year 3 highlight its dedication to sustainability and regulatory compliance. The organisation remains steadfast in its mission to drive a circular economy for metal packaging, ensuring continual improvements in recycling and environmental responsibility.



FEES

METPAC-SA ANNOUNCES NEW EPR FEES FOR 2025

MetPac-SA, wishes to inform our valued members of the approved Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Fee adjustments that will come into effect with the 2025 invoicing cycle.

MetPac-SA is pleased to announce an update to the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Fees for metal packaging, which will be implemented from January 2025. This marks the first fee adjustment since the initial EPR Fees were introduced in 2022.

Since the inception of the EPR Scheme, MetPac-SA has operated on a conservative fee structure to establish the groundwork for a financially viable and sustainable metal collection and recycling system. Over the past three years, we have gained significant insights into the landscape, projected the quantum of waste picker service fees payable in 2025 and 2026 and identified the need for an updated fee to ensure the long-term success of metal packaging recovery efforts.

Following an extensive review and consultation process, an updated fee request was submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) at the end of October 2024. We are pleased to report that the DFFE Minister, Dr D.T George, issued a letter of concurrence on 18 February 2025, confirming approval for the revised EPR Fees. While the letter references the implementation of the 2024 fee from January 2024, the increase cannot be applied retrospectively. As such, the revised EPR Fee structure will come into effect with the 2025 invoicing cycle and will not be backdated.

The Revised EPR Fee Structure (excluding VAT) is as follows:

	2025
	Fee per tonne
<u>Convertors</u>	<u>R</u>
Tinplate	20.00
Aluminium	15.00
<u>Brand owners</u>	
Local Tinplate + Aerosols	168.00
Local Aluminium + Aerosols	131.00
Imported Tinplate + Aerosols	188.00
Imported Aluminium + Aerosols	146.00



**** Membership fees for less than 10 tonnes: R6 250.**

**** Retailers pay the same fees as brand owners**

In addition to ensuring the financial viability of metal packaging recycling, the revised fees will also contribute to essential industry initiatives, including the Waste Picker service fee and the development of a B-BBEE transformation charter.

MetPac-SA reminds all members to submit quarterly declarations of their monthly tonnages to facilitate accurate data collection, invoicing, and regulatory reporting to the DFFE.

We appreciate the continued collaboration of our members as we work towards a more sustainable and responsible metal packaging recycling ecosystem in South Africa. For any queries regarding the revised EPR Fees, please contact MetPac-SA.

For more information, visit www.metpacsa.org.za or email Annamarie@metpacsa.org.za.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthening Metal Packaging Recycling in South Africa

MetPac-SA firmly believes that collaboration is the key to success in achieving its mission of increasing the collection and recycling of metal packaging. Without cooperation across the value chain, an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme cannot function optimally. As a result, MetPac-SA has prioritised strategic partnerships with key stakeholders across the metal packaging sector.

Building Strong Partnerships Through MOUs

Each partnership MetPac-SA enters into is formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which outlines the expectations, roles, and duration of the collaboration.

In some cases, Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) are required to protect sensitive data and business interests. However, despite efforts to secure MOUs with all strategic data partners, some buyback centres, metal reclaimers, recyclers, and re-melters have opted not to sign. This is largely due to the fact that Section 18 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (NEMWA) and its associated regulations do not mandate compliance with South Africa's EPR expectations for the post-consumer metal packaging value chain.

To address this challenge, MetPac-SA has been mapping and engaging with potential value chain partners since 2020.

Given that the secondary metal sector is well established, relationships have been built over time through continual engagement, and this network continues to grow annually. MetPac-SA supports both Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and larger industry players to ensure a robust and inclusive recycling sector. A key focus is leveraging existing infrastructure and collaborating with other Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) to optimise metal packaging recovery.

Successful Collaborations Driving Impact

One of the most successful partnerships MetPac-SA has developed is with Petco. Established in 2023, this collaboration provides annual financial support for Petco's buyback centre (BBC) field operations. The initiative has played a crucial role in expanding the adoption of BBCs and rolling out the BanQu and Lariat data management and payment systems.

By working together, Petco and MetPac-SA have achieved significant milestones:

- Increased diversion of recyclables from landfills.
- Improved livelihoods for waste pickers through fair compensation and training.
- Enhanced operational efficiency at buyback centres.
- Valuable data insights to drive continuous improvements in recycling.

The partnership also facilitates crucial data-sharing, ensuring accurate reporting and enabling payments for waste picker service fees. In 2024 alone, this collaboration supported 24 buyback centres and 8,830 waste pickers.



Other impactful initiatives supported by MetPac-SA includes Packa-Ching, the [dot]GOOD Trash 4 Treats programme, the Plant The Seed series of educational videos, Phoenix for the Planet, CL Trading and the Durban University of Technology, Miss Earth SA to name but a few.





RECYCLABLE

Ensuring Compliance with Environmental Labels: *MetPac-SA's Role in Driving Sustainability*

The implementation of environmental labels in South Africa is advancing under the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulations, requiring producers to adopt labels in line with SANS 14021 and SANS 14024 within three years.

MetPac-SA supports compliance while promoting sustainability in metal packaging.

- **SANS 14021:**

- Aligns with ISO 14021:2016
- Focuses on self-declared environmental claims (Type II)
- Claims must be accurate and verifiable but lack third-party verification, necessitating producer transparency.

- **SANS 14024:**

- Aligns with ISO 14024:2018
- Provides principles for Type I environmental labelling
- Establishes criteria for product categories and environmental performance through third-party certification.

ISO 14021 and ISO 14024 are voluntary guidelines for standardizing environmental claims, not mandatory certifications.

By aligning with international best practices and local EPR regulations, MetPac-SA continues to champion sustainability within the metal packaging industry, reinforcing its commitment to environmental responsibility and a circular economy.

Metal Packaging: A Highly Recyclable Solution

- Aluminium and tinplate are highly recyclable materials with established collection systems.
- Most metal packaging displays the Mobius loop for recyclability.
- High recyclability suggests no need for additional eco-labels.
- MetPac-SA's Commitment to Compliance and Sustainability
- MetPac-SA, a recognised Producer Responsibility Organisation, ensures members comply with EPR regulations and provides guidance on environmental claims to prevent greenwashing.
- The organisation collaborates with industry stakeholders and government to promote sustainable practices in metal packaging.

As a recognised Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO), MetPac-SA ensures that its members adhere to the EPR Regulations, including the implementation of environmental labels where applicable. The organisation provides guidance on the responsible use of environmental claims, ensuring they align with SANS 14021 and SANS 14024 while avoiding greenwashing or misleading claims.

MetPac-SA also actively collaborates with industry stakeholders, government bodies, and recyclers to advance sustainable practices in the metal packaging sector. Through ongoing education, advocacy, and support, MetPac-SA helps its members navigate regulatory requirements while maximising the recyclability and circular economy potential of metal packaging.

METPAC-SA AND AFRICAN RECLAIMERS ORGANISATION (ARO) SIGN MOU



Landmark Memorandum of Understanding to Boost Metal Packaging Recycling

MetPac-SA, representing South Africa's metal packaging sector, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO) to support waste pickers in the formal recycling economy and improve post-consumer metal packaging collection.

Key highlights of the agreement include:

- **Financial Support:** MetPac-SA will fund municipal projects to enhance metal packaging collection in line with the National Environmental Management Waste Act.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** The partnership aims to develop recycling facilities, providing essential equipment such as baling machines, forklifts, and upgraded infrastructure, along with compliance training to improve health and safety for waste pickers.
- **Social Impact and Wellbeing Programmes:** MetPac-SA will support ARO's initiatives to enhance the wellbeing of waste pickers, including:
 - **Health education and wellness workshops**
 - **Mental health support and counseling**
 - **Financial contributions to burial schemes**
 - **Daycare services for waste pickers' children**
 - **Sustainable Waste Picker Service Fee Payments:** Both organisations will establish a system for registering waste pickers to ensure fair compensation through the national waste picker integration program in line with the PRO Alliance.
- **Expansion of Buy-Back Centres:** MetPac-SA and ARO will create a national network of accessible buy-back centres offering fair pricing for recyclables, providing stable income opportunities for waste pickers.

- **Skills Development and Training:** The MoU includes workshops for skills development in:
 - Digital literacy and financial management
 - Recycling techniques and environmental awareness
 - Vocational training for alternative income sources

Furthermore, MetPac-SA and ARO are also launching initiatives to enhance recycling in South Africa, including:

- **Recycling Education and Awareness Campaigns:**
 - Community outreach and clean-up initiatives
 - Support for recycling events like ARO Day
 - Marketing and PR for awareness campaigns
- **Support for Technology and Innovation**
 - Funding mobile apps for tracking earnings and collection points
 - Training in computer skills and digital literacy
- **Increased Collection of Metal Packaging**
 - A commitment to boost aluminium and ferrous metal collection by at least 10% through targeted drives.

Kishan Singh, CEO of MetPac-SA, emphasises that this partnership enhances recycling rates and supports waste pickers in the circular economy.

For more details, visit www.metpacsa.org.za or www.africanreclaimers.org.





METPAC-SA CELEBRATES TRASH4TREATS AWARDS CEREMONY AT PALMVIEW PRIMARY

The success of the Metpac-SA Trash4Treats inter-school recycling competition was celebrated in style at a special awards ceremony held recently at Palmview Primary in KwaZulu-Natal. Hosted and sponsored by MetPac-SA in partnership with [dot]GOOD, the event recognised the remarkable efforts of learners, educators, and waste collectors in promoting sustainability through metal packaging recycling.

Palmview Primary Crowned Champions

Palmview Primary emerged as the top-performing school in the KZN region, collecting an impressive 3,197 kg of recyclable waste. Thanks to the active participation of its 562 learners, the school secured first place in the competition, earning them R10 000 in prize money for the school to be spent on upgrades and repairs. Learners and educators alike beamed with pride as they received their well-deserved recognition during the awards ceremony.

Second and third place went to Phoenix Heights Primary and Olympia Primary school respectively, both of which also attended the ceremony to celebrate their achievements. Their dedication to recycling played a crucial role in the overall success of the competition.

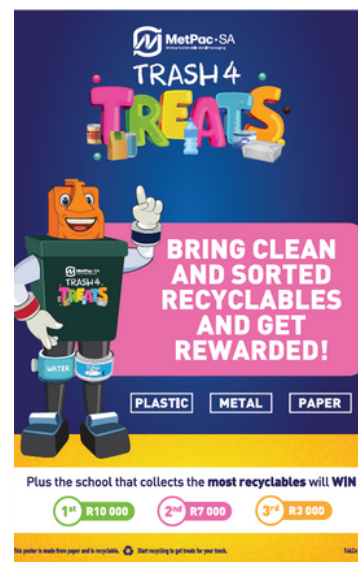
Inspiring Speeches and Interactive Learning

The awards event was more than just a celebration – it was an opportunity to educate and inspire. Dr. Kishan Singh, CEO of MetPac-SA, engaged with the learners, teaching them about the vital role of metal packaging in the circular economy and the importance of responsible waste management. He emphasised that recycling is more than just an environmental effort – it has economic and social benefits too.

The principal of Palmview Primary, Dr. D Pillay also addressed attendees, praising the learners for their dedication and hard work. "The enthusiasm of our learners and the commitment of our teachers have been instrumental in making this programme a success. This initiative has taught our children valuable lessons about sustainability that they will carry with them for years to come," Pillay said.

The Trash4Treats competition, which encourages schools to collect and recycle metal packaging waste, has seen significant growth over the past year, with 65 schools now participating nationwide. Last year's competition saw an astounding 55 513.6kg of recyclable waste collected across all 45 participating schools, showcasing the powerful impact of environmental education and community engagement.

Adding to the educational aspect of the event, Phoenix for the Planet, a local waste entrepreneur who partnered with Trash4Treats in this competition, provided a hands-on explanation of the recycling process. They demonstrated how collected materials are sorted, processed, and transformed into new products, reinforcing the idea that waste has value. The awards ceremony was also attended by Sharon Kistasamy of Durban Solid Waste, who commended the programme for its role in instilling a culture of recycling among young South Africans.





Growing Nationwide Impact

The Metpac-SA Trash4Treats competition continues to expand its footprint across South Africa, with 30 schools in Cape Town, 10 in KZN, and 25 in Johannesburg now participating. This initiative has proven to be highly effective in diverting metal packaging waste from landfill. The year-on-year impact is evident:

- **2023:** 5,482 kg of metal packaging was collected.
- **2024:** 6,319 kg of metal packaging was collected – an increase that underscores the programme's growing success.
- **52 %** of the metal packaging collected in 2024 came from Gauteng, highlighting strong participation in the region.

Increased Prize Money for 2025

To further encourage participation and reward schools for their efforts, the prize money for the 2025 competition has been increased:

- First prize: R15,000
- Second prize: R10,000
- Third prize: R5,000

These funds will be used by winning schools to invest in much-needed repairs, upgrades, and refurbishments, ensuring that the competition has a lasting impact beyond just recycling efforts.

The Role of Teachers in Driving Success

Reflecting on the programme's achievements, Shilpa Rama-Madhav, Business Unit Director at [dot]GOOD, emphasised the crucial role that teachers play: "One of the biggest learnings from this initiative is that the commitment of teachers is vital. Their enthusiasm, encouragement, and dedication drive the project forward and inspire the learners to participate actively."

As the Trash4Treats competition continues to gain momentum, MetPac-SA and [dot]GOOD remain committed to educating and empowering learners to become environmental champions. By instilling sustainable habits at a young age, the programme is shaping a greener, more responsible future for South Africa.

For more information, visit www.metpacsa.org.za and www.dotgood.co.za.

METPAC-SA ADVOCATES FOR CIRCULAR ECONOMY AT CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Left to right:
Dr Kishan
Singh,
Professor
F Netswera
(Dean, DUT)
and Dr Ravi
Nadar



Dr Kishan Singh, Managing Director of GI Business Solutions and CEO of MetPac-SA – the Producer Responsibility Organisation for metal packaging – along with Dr. Ravi Nadar, Research Analyst for MetPac-SA, participated in the DUT Business Unit Conference on Climate Change and Economic Management for a Sustainable Future on 26 February 2025. During the event, Dr. Singh presented an engaging talk based on his thesis regarding Global Best Practices in Post-Consumer Metal Packaging Recovery, stressing the urgent need to transition towards a circular economy.

“The world is at a pivotal juncture as rapid population growth and environmental degradation push us beyond the planet’s limits. Historically, industrial revolutions have spurred population growth; however, we are now witnessing alarming trends: a global population shock, deforestation, rising carbon dioxide emissions, increasing global temperatures, and higher sea levels. Our current consumption habits are unsustainable, necessitating a profound change,” Dr. Singh cautioned.

He further emphasised the significance of the Triple Bottom Line—people, planet, and profit—encouraging industries to adopt long-term, responsible practices. “We must shift from a conventional linear economy, characterized by a ‘make, use, dispose’ model, to a circular economy that focuses on reducing, recycling, and reusing materials,” he articulated. “This strategy maximizes resource value and reintegrates materials into production cycles, thereby ensuring sustainability.”

The State of Metal Packaging Recovery in SA

In 2022, South Africa produced 3.55 million tons of packaging, with metal packaging making up 184,000 tons. The recovery rate for post-consumer metal packaging was 52.81%, below the 62% target for 2023, indicating a need for improved practices.

Aligning South Africa with Global Best Practices

A literature review analysed best practices globally, focusing on themes like the circular economy and alignment with UN SDGs. Dr. Singh stressed the importance of aligning South Africa's metal packaging industry with international standards and enhancing collection and recycling processes while refining Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation to support a cohesive recovery system.

Singh emphasised the need for key performance indicators supported by 4IR technology to improve metal packaging recovery models, highlighting the need for more research on decarbonising materials like aluminum and steel.

Dr. Nadar noted that adopting a circular economy is essential to address environmental challenges and enhance post-consumer metal packaging recovery. MetPac-SA is dedicated to promoting sustainable packaging solutions through collaboration with stakeholders to foster meaningful change.

METPAC-SA COMMITTED TO CULTIVATING SA'S FUTURE PACKAGING LEADERS

MetPac-SA is shaping the next generation of sustainability champions by actively engaging with universities and empowering students through educational initiatives.

By fostering industry-academic collaboration, MetPac-SA is equipping young professionals with essential skills, research opportunities, and real-world experience in the circular economy.



Supporting Sustainable Student Initiatives at DUT

One such initiative is the Durban University of Technology (DUT)'s Green Friday Initiative, which MetPac-SA proudly sponsored. This initiative aligns with MetPac-SA's core pillars of Education and Awareness, Community Development, and Infrastructure & Business Support.

Through this sponsorship, MetPac-SA has helped market the initiative and raise awareness on campus about the importance of recycling and sustainable habits. By promoting responsible waste management, MetPac-SA encourages youth participation in the circular economy, ensuring a greener future for South Africa.

Student Research: Exploring Metal Packaging Recycling

Another key initiative saw MetPac-SA spearheading a student research campaign and competition as part of its broader Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programme.

The project, titled *Consumer Practices and Challenges in Recycling Metal Packaging in South Africa*, provided short-term employment and skills development for 28 students from five universities. Participants received both theoretical training and practical experience, equipping them with critical insights into metal packaging recycling and encouraging them to develop industry-driven solutions.

By engaging young researchers in environmental sustainability, MetPac-SA is driving innovation in recycling, supporting professional growth, and creating job opportunities within the sector.

By investing in young professionals, we are not only developing future leaders in packaging sustainability but also transferring valuable skills that will drive innovation in the industry.

Empowering students with practical experience and research opportunities ensures that they can contribute meaningfully to the sector while shaping a more sustainable future for South Africa.

Research Assistants at PROPAK AFRICA 2025

Most recently, 15 temporary research assistants were appointed and guided at Propak Africa 2025, held at the Johannesburg Expo Centre (NASREC) from 11 – 14 March 2025.

This initiative allowed students to conduct packaging exhibition research, focusing on:

- Visitor and exhibitor expectations at packaging expos
- Innovations in packaging
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation
- Consumer behaviour and global best practices



Dr Ravi Nadar, (front) research analyst at MetPac-SA, Dr Kishan Singh and Rishant Harichunder (standing back) with the group of students conducting research and PROPAK Africa 2025



Dr Kishan Singh presents at the Institute of Packaging's National Packaging Conference on EPR Regulations held at Propak recently.



Left to right: Richard Sengani (PRO Alliance), Gavin Hegter (Ward Councillor Yellowwood Park, Buyisiwe Gumede (Buyback Centre Manager) and Kishan Singh (CEO MetPac-SA)

At 17, I found myself in a situation that pushed me to start recycling. I would gather discarded boxes from the local supermarket and sell them to a truck that came by every Thursday. Back then, I felt a sense of embarrassment and shame, not realizing that my small actions were helping to create a cleaner and safer environment.

Years later, as I immersed myself deeper into my work, I discovered the importance of environmental impact assessments and their relevance in the workplace. This insight broadened my understanding of proper waste management and its significance not only for businesses but also for entire communities. That epiphany rekindled my passion for recycling. What had started as a necessity evolved into a vocation. I began to educate myself about waste management and recognised the chance to elevate recycling into something more significant: a business focused on cleaning communities, fighting illegal dumping, and fostering a healthier environment.

Revolutionising Waste Management in My Community

In my region, waste is transported to Springfield, which is quite far from home. Due to logistical challenges, many individuals resort to illegal dumping in open fields, which adversely affects the environment. Through my organization, we strive to clean these locations, separate recyclables from general waste, and ensure that non-recyclable materials are correctly collected by Durban Solid Waste (DSW). By actively engaging with the community, we aim to cultivate a culture of responsible waste disposal and environmental stewardship.

True life story

FROM SURVIVAL TO SUSTAINABILITY: A HUMBLE BEGINNING IN RECYCLING

Written by **Buyisiwe Gumede**
Back to Life Recycling



My Vision for a Sustainable Future

- Diverting a minimum of 100 tons of waste from landfills and rivers each month.
- Creating job opportunities, especially for women, youth, and the elderly.
- Offering recycling training to empower communities and raise environmental awareness.
- Partnering with industry leaders like Polyoak, Mondi, Petco, Nampak, along with glass companies and metal recycling organisations such as MetPac-SA.

By tackling waste management issues directly and fostering a culture of recycling, I aspire to help create a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future for my community and beyond.

What once seemed like a challenge has transformed into my life's mission. Recycling is about more than just managing waste; it's about paving the way for a cleaner, sustainable future for generations to come. Through education, action, and collaboration, I am confident that we can create a lasting impact, one step at a time.

Acknowledging this initiative, MetPac-SA CEO Dr. Kishan Singh, Yellowwood Park Councillor Mr. Gavin Hegter, and Mr. Richard Sengani from the Packaging and Paper Producer Responsibility Organisation Alliance visited Buyisiwe Gumede's Buyback Centre to grasp the scale, complexity, and influence of her work on local residents and businesses.

They provided support in areas such as management development, legislative guidance, and expanding her value chain. MetPac-SA also facilitated direct access to post-consumer metal packaging and metal re-melters who will purchase materials through her operations. Furthermore, MetPac-SA will assist her in enterprise development, job creation, and transformation, in line with Section 18 of the National Waste Management Act.

CONTACT US



MetPac-SA is a Non-Profit Company (NPC), as defined in Section 21 of the Companies Act No. 71 of 2008, with registration number 2017/216419/08.

As the preferred Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) for metal packaging in South Africa, it is MetPac-SA's mission is to position the metal packaging industry as a significant contributor to sustainable development. We aim to achieve this through effective investments in the collection, recovery, and re-utilisation of post-consumer metal packaging.

MetPac-SA strives to unify the metal packaging value chain in South Africa, representing the perspectives of both industry and academia to all stakeholders.

Currently, MetPac-SA is focused on several key performance areas:

- **Implementing the MetPac-SA Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) strategy**
- **Assisting members in meeting their EPR obligations while encouraging new members to join MetPac-SA**
- **Monitoring overall statistics related to members against EPR targets to:**
 - **Promote input material through "design for recycling" principles**
 - **Ensure the accuracy of post-consumer metal packaging data and reporting**
 - **Support the circular economy of metal packaging in South Africa**
- **Providing assistance to municipalities, Buyback Centres (BBCs), recyclers, and waste pickers**
- **Promoting education and awareness initiatives.**

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Driving Sustainable Metal Packaging