

*Contact*  
*Telephone*  
*Email*  
*Website*

Monya Vermaak  
(011) 314-4021  
Monya.Vermaak@plasticssa.co.za  
www.plasticsinfo.co.za

**Plastics** | SA

## Plastics industry determined to find solution to plastic pollution

PRESS STATEMENT BY ANTON HANEKOM  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: PLASTICS SA

28 February 2019

Plastics SA welcomes the Department of Environmental Affairs' acknowledgement in Parliament yesterday that government has failed to develop competent waste management facilities in the country.

It also admitted that municipalities are neither able to implement waste removal infrastructure nor exercise control over current pollution regulations.

We believe that this acknowledgement is an important step in the right direction. As an industry, we have been voicing our concerns over the lack of adequate waste management infrastructure around the country. As a direct result, we have been battling to remove and prevent escalating amounts of plastic debris from washing up on our shores and ending up in oceans and rivers.

The only way to stop plastic ending up in our oceans and rivers is to create the infrastructure for consumers to recycle used plastic and other waste material.

The Department identified five problem plastic products with a short lifespan that are the biggest culprits in our environment – cutlery, stirrers, earbuds, straws and polystyrene containers. We agree that we need to develop environmentally sound products and solutions as a matter of urgency.

We also agree with the Department that the country cannot afford a knee-jerk reaction to problematic single-use plastics. A thorough socio-economic impact assessment is underway to measure the effect that the solutions to these problem products will have on the industry, consumers and jobs.

The plastics industry provides jobs to over 60 000 South Africans and we are particularly pleased about the Department's assurance that the solutions to single-use plastic products will not lead to job losses or the closure of businesses.

We have begun working on an industry-led plan aimed to deal with problematic plastic usage. As a start, Plastics SA, the umbrella body representing the country's entire plastics industry, has joined forces with key stakeholders and other role players in the value chain to form the South African Initiative.

This initiative will work together to end plastic pollution in the environment. We invite government to become our partner so that we can collaboratively develop scalable solutions to South Africa's particular plastic pollution problem.

The plastics industry agrees with government that more citizens need to realise it is socially unacceptable to litter and the devastating impact this has on the environment. It is evident that there is not nearly enough awareness and understanding of the importance of recycling. We offer our assistance to government to expand our existing awareness programmes in schools, municipalities and communities around the country.

The problem of plastic pollution in the environment is a complex global issue that cannot be solved in isolation. We need all members of the plastics packaging value chain, government and consumers to assist us find and implement effective and environmentally friendly solutions for our specific waste problems.

Media enquiries:

Monya Vermaak

079 155 6266

For more information on Plastics|SA, visit [www.plasticsinfo.co.za](http://www.plasticsinfo.co.za)