

# THE WASTE MINIMISATION AND RECYCLING INTEREST GROUP



**WMRIG**

INSPIRE, DISCOVER, TOGETHER – A WORLD WITHOUT WASTE

## NARRATIVE REPORT 2014-2015

*WMRIG activities, sponsors and way forward  
for 2015-2016*

# Contents

Who We Are \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Our Vision \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Our Sponsors \_\_\_\_\_ 5

2014-2015 Events and Activities \_\_\_\_\_ 6

2015-2016 Onwards and Upwards \_\_\_\_\_ 10

Contact Information \_\_\_\_\_ 11

IWMSA Information \_\_\_\_\_ 11

## Who We Are

**WMRIG is an interest group of the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA)'s Western Cape Branch.**

WMRIG organises events and discussions in the Cape Town area on a range of topics pertinent to waste minimisation and recycling. Past events included, among others:

- *Valuing Recycling in Landfill Management,*
- *From Waste Compliance to Waste Excellence, and*
- *Organic Waste – Legislation, Policy and Practice.*

WMRIG is run by a committee of volunteers operating in the waste management and recycling industry. The committee comprises environmental and communication consultants, local and provincial government, waste collection and sorting organisations, as well as recyclers and manufacturers.

WMRIG distributes a quarterly newsletter for members with interesting articles on waste minimisation, changes in waste management legislation and other industry-related news.

For copies of our newsletters and presentations from past events, please [click here](#).



# Our Vision

WMRIG has a big vision:

**“Inspire, Discover, Together – a World Without Waste”**

In order to achieve our vision, we ask some challenging questions:

- Rethink - what is waste?
- How much of our current waste is better classified as a resource?
- In a circular economy, where waste of one process is a resource for another, how will the waste management industry change?
- What do we need to do to get there?

Our objectives are to:

- Promote all aspects of waste minimisation and waste prevention.
- Share best practice with all stakeholders within government, industry and academia, as well as the general public.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practice, as well as promoting networks within and beyond the waste industry as we transform towards a circular economy.
- Support research and community outreach in our ‘waste’/resource economy.
- Stimulate compliance with legislation and best practice standards as well as the movement of ‘wastes’ up the waste hierarchy with the ultimate result of diversion of waste from landfill.

## Our 2014-2015 Sponsors

Thank you very much to our sponsors, your input is invaluable and we are very pleased to be associated with organisations making a positive impact in our waste industry.



# 2014-2015 Events and Activities

## AUGUST 2014

Our seminar on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in South Africa attracted 109 attendees and addressed the questions:

- What does Extended Producer Responsibility look like in South Africa currently?
- What will EPR look like in line with NEM: Waste Act (2008) and amendments?
- What is the role of industry bodies in EPR and where are we heading with Industry Waste Management Plans?

Our speakers included Anben Pillay, Director: Waste Policy and Information Management, Department of Environmental Affairs; Charles Muller, chairperson of the Packaging Council of South Africa (PACSA); Hermann Erdman, CEO of the Recycling and Economic Development Initiative of South Africa (REDISA); John Westermeyer, Marketing Manager Philips Lighting Africa representing the lighting industry; Susanne Karcher, Chairperson of the South African E-Waste Alliance (SAEWA) and Tom McLaughlin, Sustainability Manager Woolworths Foods giving the retail industry's perspective.



A lively Q&A session followed thereafter, with the outcome being a useful and informative morning. Industry comments were recorded to provide feedback to DEA regarding concerns and opportunities raised, as well as to all stakeholders involved on the day. The presentations are available on the [WMRIG page](#) hosted by the IWMSA.

## OCTOBER 2015

WMRIG was well-represented, funded through personal sources, at WasteCon 2014 hosted by the IWMSA's Western Cape Branch. The team can be congratulated on a successful event which drew some 500 participants over the three days at the Lord Charles Somerset West venue to high-level presentations and a variety of exhibits and displays.



Several themes drew much discussion. One was about how to increase revenue generation at the low-income levels through recycling and waste diversion - a socio-economic issue which the opening keynote speaker from San Francisco, Parag Gupta addressed, relating experiences with food waste composting in Indian villages. Another was the increasing emphasis on waste seen as a resource not just destined for the landfill. A further theme was highlighted at the close of the conference - government's plans for financial incentives and disincentives and new structures to stimulate the waste economy, outlined by officials of the Department of Environmental Affairs.

Conference papers were presented on a wide range of topics. Those on waste minimization and recycling included: Household Recycling Incentives – Do They Work? ; Banning the Plastic Shopping Bag in South Africa – An Idea Whose Time has Come; Waste Characterisation and Recycling Potential in Stellenbosch; Best-Practice Separation-at-Source Recycling amongst some Western Cape Municipalities; All Wired for E-Waste; Changing the Way We Recycle Polystyrene in South Africa; The Impact of the Section 24G Process on Small Recycling Businesses.





## MAY 2015

WMRIG hosted a “Waste = Resource” tour which followed a waste product from cradle to grave (to cradle).

The tour started at the Cape Town Market, one of the oldest and largest fresh produce markets in South Africa. They currently produce, inter alia, organic food waste and disused wooden pallets. The Cape Town Market has established an onsite composting facility, to assist in the reduction of organic waste going to landfill. The Food Bank, was the next stop. Food Bank sources donated food items and then arranges for these products to reach those who need it most.



The third and fourth stops were the City of Cape Town Waste Management Facilities. Athlone Refuse Transfer Station (ARTS) and Vissershok Landfill. ARTS is the only City RTS that transports waste via rail to disposal and operates a Dirty Materials Recovery Facility. The Vissershok landfill receives both general and hazardous waste

(including condemned food wastes) and is the largest landfill in the Western Cape.

For media coverage of our event in Infrastructure News, please [click here](#).

## JUNE 2015

WMRIG supported a local green fair – The Anglican Green Carnival in Lansdowne.

Thank you to PETCO (PET plastic recycling South Africa), the Polystyrene Packaging Council (PSPC) and the Paper Recycling Association of South Africa (PRASA) who provided informational material for the event.



Information on recycling and waste minimization was shared with scholars and the local community. A solar cell phone charger donated by WMRIG was raffled, and the proceeds donated to [The Oasis Association](#).



## 2015-2016 Onwards and Upwards

- WMRIG is planning an event to stimulate discussion on the integration of the informal sector with the formal waste management sector.

In South Africa, the informal sector is estimated to constitute collectors 60-90 000 collectors, with most post-consumer dry recyclables waste provided to recyclers by the informal sector. According to a BMI report (2013), 90% of PET, 68% of other plastics, 80% of glass and 30-40% of metal, as well as most of the paper.

We believe this valuable contribution needs to be recognised and opportunities for growth and development offered to the informal sector. We hope this event will precipitate action in achieving these goals.

- Our next generation of waste (resource) industry professionals will need to be increasingly creative and adaptive as our industry transforms to generating value in, as well as from, waste, away from a simple ‘handle waste well and contain it’ mentality.

In 2016, we hope to partner with industry leaders in presenting cutting edge information on the waste industry and our journey in valuing wastes as resources, as well as linking students with internship positions with respected waste industry members.

2015-2016 is set to be an interesting and busy year. In addition, we expect the updated National Pricing Strategy for Waste Management Charges to be published, updates to the proposed regulations to exclude a waste stream or a portion of a waste stream from the definition of waste, as well as changes to the List of Waste Management Activities requiring licences or governed by norms and standards. We'll also be planning events and information dissemination to inform and update members on these changes.

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[www.iwmsa.co.za/site-content/waste-minimisation-ig.html](http://www.iwmsa.co.za/site-content/waste-minimisation-ig.html)

