

SCHEDULE

- 7:00 Breakfast
BREAKFAST ROOM - BASEMENT
- 9:00 Session 1:
Defending our rights
with dignity!
GAUDI ROOM
- 11:15 Break, Region Refunds
and Coffee Break
FOYER GAUDI ROOM
- 11:30 Session 2:
Organizing for a
Just Transition!
GAUDI ROOM
- 12:45 Lunch
PLAZA MAYOR HALL
- 14:30 Session 3:
Influencing the
International agenda!
GAUDI ROOM
- 16:30 Official closing of
the Congress
GAUDI ROOM
- 17:00 Farewell snack
PLAZA MAYOR HALL
- 19:00 Optional dinner -
fixed menu
BREAKFAST ROOM - BASEMENT



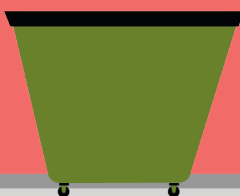
Consult the web site for the most updated version of the agenda
wastepickersinternational.org/agenda/

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- 5.1 Position on Extended
Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- 5.2 IAWP's Vision for a Just Transition
for Waste Pickers under the UN
Plastics Treaty

05

Sunday



Sunday
MAY 5, 2024

Booklet 05/05

1st Elective Congress
May 1st-5th - 2024
Buenos Aires - Argentina



INTERNATIONAL
ALLIANCE OF
WASTE PICKERS

We are waste pickers,
we are workers,
this is our organization.
UNITED FOR OUR RIGHTS!



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Position on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)



Global Alliance of Waste Pickers

OCTOBER 2021

INTRODUCTION

DECLARATION

BASIC PRINCIPLES

- A. Research and identification of stakeholders
- B. Involvement and direct participation
- C. Improved packaging and management

POSITION

1. Mandatory and government-led
2. Mandate integration
3. Full payment and risk protection
4. Transparency, Oversight and Adaptation
5. Clear communication and training on EPR systems
6. Principles of partnership and due credit

CONTRIBUTORS

INTRODUCTION

This position paper on EPR is conceptualised as a dynamic, evolving document that waste picker organisations can use to advocate for and negotiate their rightful spaces and entitlements within EPR policies and practices. It has been developed over a 3 year period that began in 2018, when organized waste pickers around the world resolved to develop a collective position in the face of increasing national interest and commitments towards developing EPR policies and proposals.

The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and WIEGO jointly established a working group to arrive at a holistic understanding and develop a nuanced response to the impact of EPR policies on waste pickers and their organizations. This iterative process involved virtual exchanges between waste pickers and technical supporters, literature review, including review of recommendations for EPR made by waste picker organisations at national and regional levels, and the development of nine case studies on the impact of EPR on waste pickers. **Workers' education materials were designed and used to facilitate discussions with over 260 waste pickers through 21 local, regional and global workshops. The workshops enabled a baseline understanding of EPR and helped solicit and distill specific, nuanced recommendations.** This culminated in a collective position on EPR that was shared with national and local waste picker organizations and modified based on their comments. The 3 basic principles and 6 position statements were organized in a hierarchy, and articulated against the backdrop of a declaration statement that was collectively articulated by members of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers advisory committee.

DECLARATION

We, the waste pickers from across the world, assert that Extended Producers Responsibility initiatives, policies and regulations (EPR) should acknowledge our historical and ongoing contribution to waste management and recycling. EPR should recognize that waste recovery generates a large number of livelihoods, and contributes to the incomes of millions of individuals. Our survival and that of our families, is therefore inextricably linked with waste. Despite being responsible for keeping our cities clean, and indispensable for efficient and high recycling rates since the dawn of the industrial revolution, we remain invisible. We pick and collect materials discarded by society, and add value to them by segregating, sorting, aggregating and selling them, thereby promoting both resource recovery and conservation and transforming recyclables for use in manufacturing whilst generating livelihoods. It is due to us, that our cities, coasts and environment are clean. Waste picker organizations demand that governments across the world recognize these significant contributions and stop the systemic repression of our work and lives, ultimately jeopardizing recycling rates and the mitigation of climate change and marine plastic pollution.

We represent over twenty million waste pickers, 8 million of whom are organized under the aegis of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers (Global Rec). In the past two decades, our strength has grown exponentially. This declaration and the demands articulated here, are testimony to the phenomenal growth in our strength and numbers over the past two decades. While waste picker leaders, organizers, technical experts, policy advisors, and academicians from all over the world were involved in its preparation, waste pickers and waste picker organizations from the five continents represented by the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America) are signatories to this declaration.

DECLARATION

We call upon manufacturers and producers of goods including plastic, governments at the local, regional and national level, intergovernmental organizations and multilateral agencies, and civil society, to unequivocally recognize that no EPR system can be just, effective or socially inclusive without the participation of waste pickers and their organizations. EPR that excludes waste pickers, is an unjust, and unfair appropriation of waste pickers knowledge and innovation—an abuse of our rights that will push us to the fringes and dispossess us of our material and intellectual wealth and property, and our basic sustenance. Further, it will disrupt vibrant recyclable material supply chains and create disorder and discontent across the recycling industry. Evidence shows that EPR works better when waste pickers, as valued and recognized actors, are involved as partners in its design and implementation. Further, material recovery processes instituted by waste picker organizations are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Our participation in EPR as legitimate actors, partners and protagonists, under conditions of dignity and recognition, is therefore crucial.

We argue that waste picker participation and partnership will imply fair remuneration for work, as well as allied costs. We seek transparency, public recognition of our work and a tripartite forum, and direct engagement between producers, waste-pickers (and other actors in the informal recycling sector), and governments. We also demand that producers phase out non-recyclables and invest in recyclable and reusable material in their production and packaging process. These fundamental principles lay the foundation for just, sound, inclusive and environmentally robust EPR, enabling a just transition for waste pickers, and the millions of workers who sustain the world's industries.

A woman wearing a dark headwrap, a purple sweater, and a dark jacket is sitting on a large, worn, light-colored sack. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a recycling yard with many similar sacks, some covered with black plastic. A barbed wire fence is visible in the distance. The text 'BASIC PRINCIPLES' is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image. Below it, three bullet points are listed: 'A. RESEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS', 'B. INVOLVEMENT AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION', and 'C. IMPROVED PACKAGING AND MANAGEMENT'. In the bottom right corner, there is a vertical credit line: 'SENEGAL RÉCUPÉRATEURS (MARTA MOREIRA, 2020)'.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

- A. RESEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS
- B. INVOLVEMENT AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION
- C. IMPROVED PACKAGING AND MANAGEMENT

SENEGAL RÉCUPÉRATEURS (MARTA MOREIRA, 2020)

BASIC PRINCIPLES

A

RESEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

- A.1** A thorough and systematic research and mapping process, including an enumeration of informal waste pickers, should be conducted prior to the establishment of an EPR system to ensure that all existing actors in the waste handling system are identified and included through the planning and implementation of the EPR system. Periodic studies should be conducted to assess equity and opportunity distribution and inform changes to the system.

B INVOLVEMENT AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION

- B.1** Involvement and direct participation of waste pickers in the formulation of the EPR public policy. It is imperative that EPR systems should be developed in collaboration with the existing and potentially impacted partners and stakeholders: waste picker organizations, scrap dealers, aggregators, recyclers and other relevant actors in the informal supply chain, along with producers and government authorities. The design of EPR systems should be an open and public process. **Waste pickers and their organizations should engage as equal partners in negotiations with government and producers to determine fees and work out implementation processes.**



IMPROVED PACKAGING AND MANAGEMENT

Through Eco-modulation and other incentives, EPR should incentivize, fund and establish goals for:

- C.1** Complete and segregated waste collection servicing all residents, including those in informal settlements.
- C.2** Minimization of packaging (and phasing out of non-recyclable and bio-based plastics that contaminate recyclable feedstock).
- C.3** Design services for reuse and repair that engage impacted waste workers.
- C.4** Mechanical recycling targets and uniform and minimum recycled content mandates.
- C.5** The phase-out of materials containing or emitting hazardous substances which may harm the health of waste pickers or recyclers; and mandated testing of new technologies and materials to ensure their safety.
- C.6** Domestic processing of materials.
- C.7** Prioritisation of the management of non-recyclable or hard-to-recycle materials over recyclable materials with pre-existing robust, economically viable markets.
- C.8** Prevent, prohibit and eliminate climate-intensive technologies like incineration and pyrolysis/chemical recycling.
- C.9** Clear, truthful labeling of materials to ensure safe handling and processing by recyclers
- C.10** New opportunities for waste pickers and other marginalized waste sector stakeholders through shifts in materials management.



POSITION

1. MANDATORY AND GOVERNMENT-LED
2. MANDATE INTEGRATION
3. FULL PAYMENT AND RISK PROTECTION
4. TRANSPARENCY, OVERSIGHT AND ADAPTATION
5. CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING ON EPR SYSTEMS
6. PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AND DUE CREDIT

1

MANDATORY AND GOVERNMENT-LED

- 1.1** **EPR regulations must be** regulated, implemented, monitored, and enforced by government bodies. Governments should recover costs towards socially inclusive municipal recycling and waste management programs from producers*. The role of government bodies should be clearly defined to avoid confusion about responsibilities. EPR should be mandatory and cover the full costs of waste management, with clear, gradual and measurable targets and consistent enforcement. Where voluntary, EPR should engage the government in some form of tripartite arrangement. **Waste picker integration provisions should not be relegated to the charity or grant-making wing of government or producer organisations but structurally funded as part of the EPR system.**

* **Waste management with social inclusion means** fairly remunerating and improving infrastructure and administrative support for waste pickers and other informal waste workers that are already organized, as well as funding pathways for unaffiliated informal waste workers to improve their work through access to infrastructure and occupational safety as well as the formation of cooperatives and other types of organizations.

2

MANDATE INTEGRATION

- 2.1** EPR should recognize the essential role of waste pickers and should maintain and expand existing infrastructure and integrate existing actors from informal waste value chains.
- 2.2** EPR should maintain or establish safe and legal entry points for all waste pickers, to collect and market materials, while also supporting low-barrier pathways to organization and more formal and decent labor conditions.
- 2.3** EPR should include enforceable mandates and targets for the integration of waste pickers and their organizations in EPR systems and on all decision-making bodies and processes.
- 2.4** EPR should facilitate the contracting of waste picker organizations, giving priority to independently-managed organizations, especially Membership-based Organizations with democratic processes that maximize employment and equitable financial distribution of profits.
- 2.5** EPR should establish mechanisms to facilitate registration for waste picker organizations, aggregators, reprocessors and others at the base of the recycling pyramid to register as system and service providers.

3

FULL PAYMENT AND RISK PROTECTION

It is producers, not vulnerable actors within the waste handling chain, who should be responsible for the economic risk of weak or failed end markets for materials. To achieve this:

- 3.1** EPR should develop and institutionalise long term projects and systems that fund full costs of systems operations including collection, transportation, sorting, processing, infrastructure, innovation, and end of life management for all materials.
- 3.2** The remuneration towards implementing organizations should include payment for all services provided, including environmental costs, as well as the costs for any training, organization, infrastructure needs, access to clean water /sanitation, innovation, administration, legal advice, visibility and outreach, compliance with labour and social protection laws, and disaster response resources for service providers.
- 3.3** All workers in the system should have access to social and labour protections which are rights-based and universal in scope, governed and delivered through the state, and financed through contribution from EPR.

3

POSITION

FULL PAYMENT AND RISK PROTECTION

- 3.4** EPR for packaging, clothing/footwear, bulky waste and any other waste that ends up as litter should cover the full cost of litter collection and management and not rely on voluntary or underpaid labor. Litter collection should be designated as an essential service, and should be carried out in all places where litter accumulates.
- 3.5** EPR should include price floor mechanisms (minimum fair price) and increases based on the inflation index to shield waste pickers and their organizations from the volatility of material pricing. These price floors should be accessible to anyone selling materials, not just contracted parties.

4

TRANSPARENCY, OVERSIGHT AND ADAPTATION

- 4.1** EPR structure should incorporate a public governance committee or forum composed of interested parties that includes informal workers and other marginalized waste actors.
- 4.2** Annual independent audits should be conducted and include a full financial and socio-economic review of any management body within an EPR system; the audit should include itemized income versus expenditure, and a demographically disaggregated accounting of the employment realities (wages, benefits, contract status) of all workers in the materials' domestic supply chains. Management bodies should also report comprehensively on disaggregated material generation, collection, and sale and recycling rates. Management bodies should also be required to report the names and demographics of who sits on leadership teams and oversight bodies. All data should be made publicly available.
- 4.3** Annual public review of the system should be mandatory
- 4.4** There should be clear and accessible grievance and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- 4.5** There should be regular public audits of the integration of waste pickers and other actors in the informal waste supply chain into EPR.

5

CLEAR COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING ON EPR SYSTEMS

- 5.1** EPR should finance training and inclusive engagement so that all impacted stakeholders can plan, implement and innovate within a system. The EPR model shall be described in detail but in plain language in visual, publicly-accessible documents. All actors should receive training on EPR prior to and during the design and implementation of a system, and upon any major shift in material composition in the market.

6

PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP AND DUE CREDIT

- 6.1** Principles of partnership and credit must be developed collectively and adhered to between key stakeholders, including waste picker organizations, scrap dealers and other traders, producers, government and other actors. Waste picker organizations should be made aware of and given the chance to influence or develop, and approve or disapprove of official communications and publicity related to an EPR system that involves them. EPR systems developed in collaboration with waste picker organizations should include the organization's logo in communications about the system, and should acknowledge the role of waste pickers in designing the system.

A man wearing a blue cap, a black t-shirt, and khaki pants stands in the center of a large yard filled with numerous large, colorful bags of sorted waste. The bags are piled high, creating a backdrop of various colors including orange, yellow, green, and blue. The ground is dirt, and there are some plastic crates and a blue container visible in the foreground.

CONTRIBUTORS

This position paper was developed after an inclusive, iterative, participatory process spanning 3 years, that engaged waste pickers and their organisations from around the world.

WASTE PICKER FROM DURBAN (JONATHAN TORGOVINIK, 2018)

25 Waste picker organizations that contributed to the articulation of the position on EPR:

- Organizations of the Alliance of Indian Wastepickers (AIW), including intensive inputs by SWaCH/KKPKP, SMS, and Hasiru Dala), India
- African Reclaimers Organization (ARO), South Africa
- South Africa Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA), South Africa
- Kibera Waste Pickers, Kenya
- Kwa Muhia Environmental Group (KMEG), Kenya
- Kpone Waste Pickers Association, Ghana
- National Union of Scrap and Wastepickers of Nigeria (NUSWON), Nigeria
- Movimento Nacional dos Catadores de Materiais Recicláveis (MNCR), Brazil
- Ground Score Association, USA
- Sure We Can, USA
- Bangladesh Waste Pickers Union, Bangladesh
- Federación Argentina de Cartoneros, Carreros y Recicladores (FACCyR), Argentina
- Asociación Nacional de Recicladores de Chile (ANARCH), Chile
- Asociación Nacional de Recicladores de Colombia (ANR), Colombia
- Binnars Project, Canada
- Bokk Diom, Senegal
- Amelior, France
- Ikatan Pemulung Indonesia (IPI), Indonesia
- Association des Récupératrices du Mali (AREMA), Mali
- Association des Récupératrices de Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso
- Rete ONU, Italy
- Unión de Clasificadores de Residuos Urbanos Sólidos (UCRUS), Uruguay
- Red Nacional de Recicladores del Ecuador (RENAREC), Ecuador
- La Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Recicladores (REDLACRE), Latin America

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- Vidya Naiknavare (SWaCH/KKPKP)



ABOUT GLOBALREC

The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers (Globalrec) is a networking process supported by WIEGO, among thousands of waste picker organizations with groups in more than 28 countries covering mainly Latin America, Asia and Africa. Through the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers, waste pickers have taken the world stage at international climate change conferences and events to highlight the need for global policies that help, not hinder, their work.

epr.globalrec.org



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SUPPORTED BY



<https://www.wiego.org>





IAWP's Vision for a Just Transition for Waste Pickers under the UN Plastics Treaty

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Full length version of this report at: <https://globalrec.org/jtreport>

The International Alliance of Waste Pickers is a union of waste picker groups representing more than **460,000 workers** across **34 countries**

THE IAWP FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT THE FORTHCOMING UN PLASTICS TREATY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO NOT ONLY ADDRESS GLOBAL PLASTIC POLLUTION BUT ALSO BRING ABOUT A TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN THE CONDITIONS AND RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN MATERIALS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS. TO ACHIEVE THIS, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT MEMBER STATES INCLUDE DETAILED MANDATES FOR A JUST TRANSITION THROUGHOUT THE UN PLASTICS TREATY, INCLUDING IN A DEDICATED ARTICLE ON JUST TRANSITION AND ACTIONABLE GUIDELINES IN AN ANNEX. THIS WOULD REPRESENT A CRUCIAL STEP IN RECOGNIZING WASTE PICKERS AND ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO PLASTIC POLLUTION REDUCTION.

GREAT VALUE, GREAT CHALLENGES: WHY WASTE PICKERS MUST BE INCLUDED



Globally, up to 85 per cent of recycling chain workers are informal¹, and many if not most of these workers depend on the recovery and processing of plastics.² Waste pickers constitute most of the workers in informal and cooperatives settings in the waste sector. Our work feeds families, and contributes to basic sanitation and the human right to a clean environment³, while actively combating pollution and reducing greenhouse gas emissions⁴. It also protects marine life and livestock and prevents plastics from causing drain blockages and subsequent flooding. Waste pickers manage approximately 60 per cent⁵ of the world's plastic waste that is collected for recycling, contributing to a more circular economy. Furthermore, our work lowers costs to municipalities by filling gaps in waste management and extending the lifespan of dumpsites and other waste processing infrastructure.

Despite our significant contributions, waste pickers are among the most vulnerable stakeholders within plastics value chains. We are frequently excluded from formal labour markets and marginalized due to the stigmatization of waste and poverty. Most of us are self-employed without recognition as workers and, as a result, without labour rights. We typically earn meager incomes under hazardous and precarious working conditions,

and are often economically exploited – including within plastics value chains, where there is virtually no implementation of business and human rights principles. Women and children in the sector face particular challenges.

The privatization of waste management, which can be fueled by policies like Extended Producer Responsibility and other circular economy investments, diverts valuable materials away from us while also displacing municipal public workers from secure jobs. Additionally, constant disruptions caused by extreme weather events, criminalization of our work and the use of public space, and disruptive policy changes all hinder our ability to do our jobs and plan for the future.

As plastic waste and pollution grows, governments are promoting formal waste collection and management systems without properly acknowledging the role of waste pickers. Investments and policy responses often fail to safeguard our livelihoods⁶.

To address these issues, new materials management processes must be built upon two fundamental principles: **genuine integration with legal recognition of our work** and **a just transition that allows for our incorporation**.

CLEARLY DEFINING WASTE PICKERS: A CRUCIAL STEP



While others have provided definitions of waste pickers, we contend our definition is more precise because it encompasses not only waste pickers but also the ecosystems in which we operate, recognizing those who engage in solidarity economy, cooperatives, and the informal economy. These interconnected roles put waste pickers in the best position to cope with plastic pollution from a life cycle approach.



WASTE PICKER REGISTRATION IN MANGAUNG FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA. REGISTRATION RENDERS WASTE PICKERS ELIGIBLE FOR VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY PROGRAMS, INCLUDING ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICE PAYMENTS UNDER THE COUNTRY'S EPR REGULATION. PHOTO: LEFA MONONGA

The systems, modes of operation and management in which waste pickers work differ widely, as do the forms and degrees of organization. Some work autonomously, while others belong to local organizations, many of which are affiliated with IAWP. In countries like Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, India, and Kenya, waste pickers have organized into large national movements.

We argue that regardless of the systems or structures within which waste pickers work, their contributions must be recognized through a just transition.

The IAWP defines waste pickers in its Constitution⁷ as:

“people who participate (individually or collectively) in the collection, separation, sorting, transport, and sale of recyclable and reusable materials and products (paper, plastic, metal, glass, and other materials) in an informal or semi-formal capacity, as own-account workers, or in a cooperative or social and solidarity economy setting, and as workers who subsequently achieved formal work arrangements through their organizations. Our description includes itinerant waste pickers, current and former waste pickers who have new roles and engagement in waste pickers' organizations, and those who have been integrated into municipal solid waste management systems and continue to retrieve, sort, and sell recyclables.”

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: WHAT A JUST TRANSITION INVOLVES



The IAWP advocates that **just transition⁸ be both a core obligation and a cross cutting issue within the means and measures of implementation in the UN Plastics Treaty**, which should provide clear recommendations for implementing just transition in national, state and municipal action plans. More specifically, in the zero draft⁹, the IAWP asserts that the principles of a just transition for all workers be integrated throughout the treaty text. **We advocate for a dedicated Article for a just transition, and an annex with co-developed mandatory targets for the sustained integration of waste pickers.** A just transition begins with identifying and prioritizing waste pickers as workers, and with adequately defining them in the treaty.

Aligning with trade unions, environmental justice movements and the ILO, we define Just Transition as: **ending plastic pollution in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.** It is based on recognizing those already working at all stages of the plastic value chain and their fundamental principles and rights at work, their human dignity, and their historic contribution. It involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities of ending plastic pollution while minimizing and carefully managing challenges – including through effective social dialogue among all groups impacted. Plans for a just transition must

build and improve upon systems that waste pickers have already established while guaranteeing better and decent working conditions, social protection, more training opportunities, appropriate technology transfer, support for infrastructure and organizing, and greater job security. Specific implementation will depend on local context and consultation.

IAWP advocates for guidelines and toolkits in the UN Plastics Treaty to support member states with implementing their obligations related to a just transition and the protection of human rights.

These essential components provide a roadmap for crafting the recommended just transition Article within the Plastics Treaty, for supplementing other Articles, and for formulating supplementary guidelines for just transition within an Annex.

1 Recognition of waste pickers within informal and cooperative settings in national, provincial, and municipal legislations and norms, policies and laws – Recognition must confer legal entitlements for livelihood and social protection. Legal frameworks should aim for wealth and opportunity distribution to impacted workers, workers in the informal economy, and specifically marginalized populations.

2 Universal registration of waste pickers and other workers in plastics value chains – This should be mandated by national laws and policies. Several steps are identified to facilitate registration and enumeration:

- A. include waste pickers as an occupational category within country level statistics and labour force surveys
- B. establish local and national databases with stringent data protection protocols that include worker demographics and roles
- C. involve trained counselors and or waste pickers themselves to facilitate registration and overcome reluctance and fear
- D. include detailed plans for research and mapping to identify all actors in materials management systems
- E. ensure registration does not criminalize unregistered waste pickers or carry burdensome registration requisites or financial or tax implications.

3 Transparency, oversight and adaptation – Member states and producers should implement mandatory processes to report plastics waste targets and engagement with waste pickers, provision of social protections, and improvements in waste picker income and working conditions. Periodic public independent audits should be mandated, including a financial and socio-economic review of any management body within a given system.

4 Direct involvement and advancement in policy making and implementation processes – IAWP recommends the establishment of public governance committees or fora that effectively include workers in the informal economy and other marginalized waste actors.

5 Social and labour protections and safeguards – These should apply to all workers in the materials management system and should be rights-based and universal in scope, governed and delivered by the state, and financed through production-oriented contributions such as EPR, product taxes and other means.

6 Fair remuneration, living wages and sustainable livelihoods – This applies to waste picker organizations, as well as to waste pickers who have not been integrated into formal employment arrangements.

The full report provides additional detail of these essential components and examples of how they have been integrated into existing programs and policies in countries like Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, India, South Africa and the United States. We have also elaborated on the conditions necessary for us to remain and advance in the materials management sector, drawing on examples from many countries.

Please find the full length version of this report at:
<https://globalrec.org/jtreport>

7 Formalization and strengthened organizing – Governments should support and provide incentives to help waste pickers build strong democratic organizations, which can help integrate workers into formal employment and develop skills important for a just transition.

8 capacity building and reskilling/upskilling and appropriate technology – Governments should track and report on labour market trends to ensure that any reskilling will be successful over the long term, and should report on the outcome of re-training efforts.

9 Improved materials management
This includes:

- A. Minimization of packaging and phasing out of non-recyclable materials.
- B. Design and funding of services for reuse and repair that engage waste pickers.
- C. Mechanical recycling targets and minimum recycled content mandates.
- D. The phase-out of potentially hazardous materials and mandated testing of new technologies/materials to ensure safety.
- E. Domestic processing of materials to prevent the flooding of markets with imported plastic scrap, which lowers prices, over-burdens local recycling systems and undermines waste picker incomes.
- F. Prioritization of the [regulated] management of non-recyclable or hard-to-recycle materials over recyclable materials with pre-existing robust, economically viable markets.
- G. The prevention, prohibition and elimination of climate-intensive, destructive technologies like incineration and pyrolysis/chemical recycling.
- H. Clear, truthful labeling of materials to ensure safe handling and processing by waste pickers and recyclers.
- I. New opportunities for waste pickers and other marginalized waste sector stakeholders through shifts in materials management.



WASTE PICKER MEMBERS OF MUMBAI'S RAMAI COOPERATIVE PROVIDE DOORSTEP WASTE AND RECYCLABLES COLLECTION IN THE WORLI KOLIWADA FISHERMEN'S COMMUNITY. PHOTO: UMESH JADHAV



WASTE PICKERS SORT AND PROCESS RECYCLABLE MATERIALS AT THE PARQUE PATRICIOS GREEN CENTER (CENTRO VERDE) IN BUENOS AIRES, WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT. PHOTO: MOVIMENTO NACIONAL DOS CATADORES DE MATERIAIS RECICLÁVEIS (MNCR)

EXISTING PRECEDENTS PROVIDE GUIDANCE



The UNEA 5/14 resolution¹⁰ recognizes the “significant contributions” of and urges learning lessons from “workers in informal and cooperative settings to the collecting, sorting and recycling of plastics in many countries.” The Basel Convention includes recommendations on how to address the environmentally sound management of waste in the informal sector¹¹. However, the Basel Convention’s “Guidance on how to address the environmentally sound management of waste in the informal sector” does not specifically address and protect human and workers’ rights¹². **IAWP advocates for guidelines and toolkits in the UN Plastics Treaty to support member states with implementing their obligations related to a just transition and human rights.**

The Plastics Treaty can also draw on how the Minamata Convention on Mercury¹³ addresses the informal Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector, which includes a dedicated Article (Article 7) and an annex (Annex C) providing guidance for the integration of the sector, listing targets and strategies to facilitate formalization, baselines, stakeholder involvement and financial assistance.

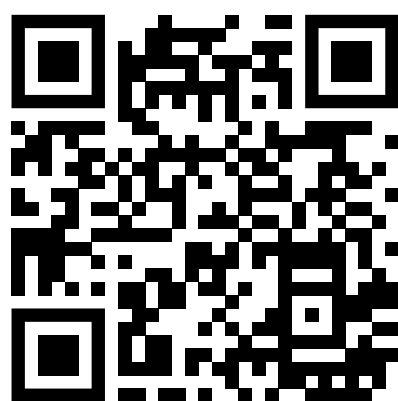
Furthermore, many waste picker movements around the world have facilitated a just transition for workers as clearly stated in our position on just transition¹⁴, which should be learned from in the crafting of just transition policy and practice.

- 1 ILO. 2013. “Sustainable Development, Decent Work and Green Jobs.” International Labour Conference, 102nd Session. Geneva. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_207370.pdf
- 2 Singh, Richa. 2021. Integration of Informal Sector in Solid Waste Management: Strategies and Approaches. Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi. <https://www.cseindia.org/integration-of-the-informal-sector-10894>.
- 3 UN. General Assembly (76th session) 2021-2022. UNGA Resolution 76/300. The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- 4 See WIEGO’s Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Inclusive Recycling: Methodology & Calculator Tool at <https://www.wiego.org/ghg>.
- 5 Pew and SYSTEMIQ. 2022. Breaking the Plastic Wave: A Comprehensive Assessment of Pathways Towards Stopping Ocean Plastic Pollution. https://www.systemiq.earth/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BreakingThePlasticWave_MainReport.pdf
- 6 Cass Talbott, Taylor, Pinky Chandran, Cecilia Allen, Lakshmi Narayan and Owusu Boampong. 2022. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Waste Pickers. WIEGO Technical Brief No. 15. Manchester, UK: WIEGO. <https://www.wiego.org/publications/extended-producer-responsibility-ep-and-waste-pickers>
- 7 See <https://globalrec.org/constitution>
- 8 The ILO defines just transition as greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind. See (ILO): Frequently asked question on just transition.
- 9 UNEP/PP/INC.
- 10 UNEA Resolution 5/14 entitled “End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument”. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39812/OEWG_PP_1_INF_1_UNEA%20resolution.pdf
- 11 Tsakona, M., Ruceska, I., Dias, S. Khaled, D. 2022. A Seat at a Table: The Role of the Informal Recycling Sector in Plastic Pollution Reduction, and Recommended Policy Changes. GRID-Arendal. Available at <https://www.grida.no/publications/863>
- 12 UN Habitat and NIVA. 2023. Leave no one behind. https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/04/en_2503_leaving_no_one_behind.pdf
- 13 UNEP. 2021. Minamata Convention on Mercury. UNEP/MC/COP.4/6. https://minamataconvention.org/sites/default/files/documents/working_document/4_6_ASGM_Guidance.English.pdf
- 14 See: full length JT report <https://globalrec.org/jtreport>

Sunday
May 05, 2024

DAY 05

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Buenos Aires - Argentina



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