

The Global Action Partnership for EPR

Panel Highlights from the Launch Event on October 19th, 2023

Moderated by **Elizabeth Maloba**, five EPR experts discussed their assessments concerning EPR, and the role the GAP for EPR should play in a lively panel discussion.

The panel consisted of Prof Aliyu Jauro, Director General National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Nesrea) Nigeria; Roberto Benetello, Chief Executive Officer Malaysian Recycling Alliance (MAREA) Malaysia; Maddie Koena, Coordinating and Commission Member South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) South Africa; Roeland Bracke, EPR Policy Expert Public Waste Agency of Flanders (OVAM) Belgium and John Duncan, Initiative Lead No Plastics in Nature WWF International.

Prof Aliyu Jauro, Director General National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Nesrea) Nigeria, highlighted that EPR can contribute to addressing plastic pollution in a myriad of ways, including encouraging product redesign and innovation by producers, and enhancing recyclability of the product. However, he mentioned that Nigeria – despite having a mandatory EPR scheme in place – faces challenges in its implementation. For instance, there is resistance from producers and other stakeholders in compliance with EPR systems and a lack of understanding. According to Prof. Jauro, the GAP for EPR can play a significant role, for instance by sharing information and success stories and by fostering collaboration.

Roberto Benetello, Chief Executive Officer Malaysian Recycling Alliance (MAREA) Malaysia, described the particular challenges the organization faces in the context of a voluntary EPR scheme. As one of the beneficiaries of the GAP for EPR support, MAREA will address different challenges, including the identification of different recovery and collection methods and models suitable for the Malaysian context, the set-up of fees and financial and control mechanisms, as well as expanding membership and producer engagement. Activities will furthermore include public awareness raising and support in development of policy and regulatory framework for the Malaysian government.

Maddie Koena, Coordinating and Commission Member South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) South Africa shared insights from a waste picker's point of view. She highlighted the existing competition for raw materials for local waste pickers and insufficient support mechanisms. Support in waste management especially in South Africa is in the form of pilot projects or tenders and usually members of the waste pickers cooperative do not acquire roles in implementing these tenders and this leaves them out as key stakeholders in the initiatives and challenges their sustainability. She concluded in demanding inclusion of waste pickers in policymaking and co-designing of programs to ensure their participation, fair remuneration, improved infrastructure and administrative support which will ultimately lead to their improved livelihoods and better working conditions. In South Africa, guidelines on waste pickers' integration were developed through participatory and stakeholder engagements.

Roeland Bracke, EPR Policy Expert Public Waste Agency of Flanders (OVAM) Belgium shared insights from EU level, experienced in EPR for many years. He highlighted that many EU member states only move as far as required by EU law and that EPR uptake has been stagnating last decade. EPR schemes within the EU helped boosting separate collection and recycling rates.

However, actors within the EU today become more sensitive to what is not achieved, for example the share not being collected. He claimed that therefore EPR policies should now place greater attention to the major concerns and impacts that need to be tackled by the EPR systems, including sub optimal treatment of exported waste, social and environmental impacts of mining of critical raw materials, preventing littering and reviewing the impact of chemicals of concern.

John Duncan, Initiative Lead No Plastics in Nature WWF International, noted the increased call for EPR systems by companies in response to growing pressure from the general public and governments. He highlighted the importance of EPR schemes to help ensure that companies can meet their own voluntary commitments, as well as supporting individual governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries, in starting to hold producers accountable for the products which they place on their markets. He concluded that there is a need for partnerships to address the challenges raised by the panelists, across both voluntary and mandatory EPR schemes. He featured the GAP for EPR as the relevant platform for practitioners to connect, exchange and learn from one another.

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Hosted by



EPR
Global Action
Partnership