

**THE POLOKWANE DECLARATION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT  
POLOKWANE, NORTHERN PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA  
26-28 SEPTEMBER 2001**

1. PREAMBLE

WE THE REPRESENTATIVES of government at national, provincial and local level, civil society and business community,

PARTICIPATING in the first National Waste Summit, hosted by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and held in Pieterburg, September 26-28, 2001,

RECOGNISING that Waste Management is a priority for all South Africans, and the need for urgent action to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste in order to protect the environment;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that we can achieve the vision and the goal contained in this declaration, namely,

VISION

To implement a waste management system which contributes to sustainable development and a measurable improvement in the quality of life, by harnessing the energy and commitment of all South Africans for the effective reduction of waste.

GOAL

Stabilize waste generation and reduce the waste disposal by 50% by 2012 and develop a plan for ZERO WASTE by 2022.

REAFFIRM our commitment to the Integrated Pollution and Waste Management Policy, the National Waste Management Strategy and the principles of waste minimization, reuse and recycling for sustainable development.

RECOMMIT ourselves to the objectives of the integrated pollution and waste management policy,

EMPHASIZE the essential role of efficient management of waste in sustainable development and the protection of human health and the environment.

ACKNOWLEDGE the responsibility as South Africans to work together in our shared vision for Zero Waste 2022

SHARING grave concern about environmental degradation, which has significant economic and social impact and

DETERMINED to undertake initiatives that will promote appropriate and efficient use of natural resources, and to protect the people of South Africa and the environment,

2. Do hereby declare that the government, business and civil society need to join in common efforts toward the accomplishment of the goal for reduction of waste generation and disposal by 50% and 25% respectively by 2012 and engage in the following actions:

- (1) Prioritisation of Waste Management,
- (2) Implementation of the National Waste Management Strategy,
- (3) Development and implementation of a Legislative and Regulatory Framework to promote waste avoidance, prevention, reduction, reuse and recycle,
- (4) Provision of efficient and effective collection and disposal facilities,
- (5) Establish and enforcement of targets for waste reduction and recycling,
- (6) Setting benchmarks towards achieving the 2012 target,
- (7) Disseminate information on the status, trends and waste reduction projects in the country,
- (8) Introduce mandatory waste audit processes,
- (9) Explore the use of economic instruments to support waste management initiatives,
- (10) Develop and provide the public with educative resources necessary to allow participation in the waste elimination process on an informed basis,
- (11) Develop Intergovernmental Capacity,
- (12) Develop Waste Information and Monitoring Systems,
- (13) Establish systems that ensure that physical and financial responsibility for waste is borne by the product producers,
- (14) Effective manage waste disposal/reprocessing facilities, thereby avoiding the need to establish new, or expand existing facilities,
- (15) Promote employment and economic empowerment opportunities, in particular in Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises, through increased product reuse and material recycling,
- (16) Promote clean technology and clean production.

2.1 While acknowledging the progress made so far, we the participants, agree that much still remains to be done in order to accomplish the objectives of the white paper, and to build on progress to date to meet those objectives. We therefore commit ourselves as:

#### 2.1.1 National, Provincial and Local Government

- (1) To develop and implement a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework by June 2002,
- (2) Implement the NWMS
- (3) To build capacity within all spheres of government,
- (4) Promote strong intergovernmental coordination and cooperation,
- (5) To develop an Information Management System by April 2002,
- (6) Explore and support appropriate economic instruments to support NWMS
- (7) To set up a Multi Stakeholder forum consisting of national, provincial, local government, business and civil society,
- (8) Promote and Implement sustainable poverty relief projects,
- (9) To provide comprehensive waste management services,
- (10) To explore the establishment of a National Waste Fund, and
- (11) To develop compliance monitoring mechanisms
- (12) To develop comprehensive communication strategies including awareness campaigns.

### 2.1.2 Civil Society

- (1) Build capacity including community to community empowerment and raise environmental awareness,
- (2) Develop skills in advocacy and lobbying,
- (3) Streamline administration services that deliver effective environmental waste management services,
- (4) Participate actively in regulatory mechanisms through monitoring and contributing in effective management of disposal sites,
- (5) Promote and support waste reduction, reuse and recycling
- (6) Promote and Participate in safe and healthy waste recovery methods,
- (7) Collaborate with government and relevant stakeholders,
- (8) Actively engage in Public Private Partnerships to mobilise resources to implement innovative waste management programmes,

### 2.1.3 Business Community

- (1) Representatives from business commit themselves to a process of engagement with government and civil society with a view of agreeing to a range of joint ventures, which would showcase the potential of partnerships between government and business to achieve sustainable waste management.
- (2) Utilize cleaner production technologies and methods of production,
- (3) Comply with legislation, regulation and standards,
- (4) Meet waste reduction targets and in addition make voluntary commitments to exceed the targets,
- (5) Strengthen relationship between government, business and civil society by improving and promoting transparency,
- (6) Manufacture more environmentally friendly products,
- (7) Contribute towards improved networking and information sharing,
- (8) Engage in programmes that promote responsible advertisements and labelling of products,
- (9) Promotion of sustainable Public and Private Partnership in order to improve Waste Management service delivery. The Partnerships will be based on shared responsibility, social responsibility, accountability, competence, reliable service provision and compliance with norms and standards.
- (10) Promotion of recycling opportunities, which are sustainable and engage in activities that will grow the recycling industry by 30% by 2012.

ADOPTED AT THE FIRST NATIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SUMMIT 26-28  
SEPTEMBER 2001.