

Press release for immediate release

CLEAN UP AND RECYCLE SA WEEK 2025 UNITES OVER 120 000 SOUTH AFRICANS TO REMOVE VISIBLE LITTER FROM THE ENVIRONMENT

Johannesburg, 16 October 2025. More than 120 000 volunteers across all nine provinces rolled up their sleeves to take part in this year's Clean-Up & Recycle SA Week, held from 15–20 September 2025. This annual campaign, coordinated by Plastics SA, once again brought together communities, schools, businesses, municipalities, and environmental organisations to clean up beaches, rivers, parks, and neighbourhoods throughout South Africa, ensuring that plastic waste is kept out of the environment, water sources, and the ocean.

“The Clean-Up & Recycle SA Week is about far more than just picking up litter. It’s about educating, inspiring, and empowering South Africans to take responsibility for their environment. This year alone we distributed more than 400 000 of our yellow clean-up bags nationwide through more than 75 coordinators, who worked closely with local municipalities, community groups, and non-profit organisations to make this year’s campaign one of the most far-reaching and impactful to date,” says Douw Steyn, Sustainability Director at Plastics SA. “Every bag filled represents a community that cares and is a step closer to ensuring that plastic waste never ends up where it shouldn’t.”

Nationwide effort, local impact

Major clean-ups took place across the country, from coastal areas to inland communities:

- In **KwaZulu-Natal**, hundreds of volunteers from Durban supported the Clean Surf Project, the Thekwini Municipality and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment cleaning the Amanzimtoti, Isipingo, Dakota beach and Mbokodweni river mouth. Despite light morning drizzle, volunteers persevered until the skies cleared. This is a true testament to their dedication.
- In the **Western Cape**, Plastics SA, Petco, Polyco and CleanC participated in a large-scale clean-up at Strandfontein Beach, organised by Polyoak Packaging. More than 300 Polyoak employees took part, and the collected waste was transported to CleanC’s sorting facility, where recyclable materials were separated for recovery.
- The **Theewaterskloof Municipality** clean-up in Villiersdorp, organised in collaboration with Polyco, Plastics SA, and the Western Cape Government, attracted over 150 participants. Waste was sorted and weighed, with clean plastics and glass collected by a local buy back centre for recycling.

“Across the country, the enthusiasm of especially young people who volunteered their time and energy stood out as a highlight. In KwaZulu-Natal, we saw youth ambassadors leading clean-ups along Dakota Beach, transforming the event into an engaging educational experience for learners and students,” Steyn reported.

Collaboration Makes It Possible

The success of the 2025 campaign was made possible through the ongoing support of industry partners such as Sasol, Safripol and Tuffy, Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) such as Polyco, PETCO, eWASA, SAVA, Metpac, PAMSA, Fibre Circle, The Glass Recycling Company alongside committed organisations including Packaging SA, Coca Cola, Unilever, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Department of water and Sanitation, CleanC, WESSA, SAAMBR, SST, ARMOUR and our provincial coordinators.

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Plastics SA, as the national coordinator, played a vital role in:

- Securing sponsorship for the production of the official clean-up bags;
- Managing the national distribution of bags to coordinators and partner organisations; and
- Promoting the campaign through its website and social media platforms.

“Our gratitude goes to every sponsor, coordinator, and volunteer who made this year’s campaign possible. Despite challenges such as funding constraints and high transport costs to reach rural areas, the commitment of our partners ensured that communities nationwide could participate in meaningful clean-ups,” Steyn adds.

Looking Ahead

While waste separation remains a challenge in many areas due to logistical limitations, several regions are making progress in sorting and recycling the collected materials. Plastics SA hopes that future campaigns will see even greater emphasis on waste sorting, recycling education, and public awareness.

“Our vision is simple,” concludes Steyn. “Cleaner rivers, beaches, and communities as a result of more South Africans saying, *Don’t litter, recycle!* Each year we’re seeing growth in participation and awareness, proving that when we work together, we can make a lasting difference.”

For more information, visit www.cleanupandrecycle.co.za | www.plasticssa.co.za

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Note to the editor:

Plastics SA is the umbrella body representing all sectors of the South African plastics industry, including polymer producers, converters, and recyclers. The organisation drives environmental responsibility, skills development, and sustainable growth through industry-wide initiatives such as the annual Clean-Up & Recycle SA Week.



Strandfontein beach clean-up in the Western Cape on Saturday, 20 September 2025 with Polyoak Packaging, PETCO, Polyco, and CleanC.



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