

WASTE KHORO 2019: Asbestos and Land Remediation Summit  
18-20 September 2019

"Good Green Deeds towards a Recycling Economy and Sustainable Land Remediation"



# INTRODUCTION TO THE AHP WASTE TASK TEAM



environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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## Content

- What is AHP
- What happens to AHP waste
- Challenges with AHP waste
- AHP waste task team
- Activities of the task team
- Pilot projects
- Questions to be answered in roundtable discussions



## What is AHP?

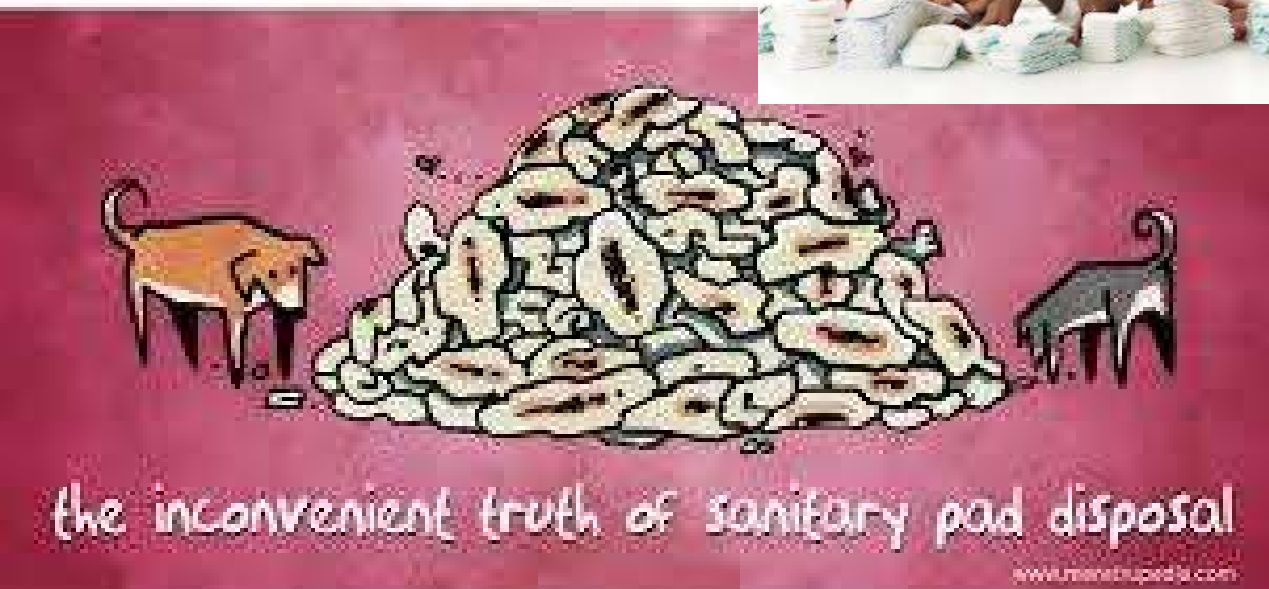
- Absorbent hygiene products including
  - nappies/diapers,
  - adult incontinence pads; and
  - feminine products (pads/tampons etc.)
- Contributes to the comfort and convenience of good hygiene of millions of people on a daily basis
- Disposable nappies have lessened the domestic chores related to this waste stream
- Feminine items have enabled females to go to school or continue to work and have resulted in reduced absenteeism
- Incontinence products have enabled the ageing population to continue to work and be active



"When do you think we'll be old enough for adult diapers?"

Grandpa, would you ever wear an adult diaper?

Depends.



the inconvenient truth of sanitary pad disposal

www.mametrusted.com

Search: 39236495



## What happens to AHP waste?

- In the majority of municipalities AHP waste is collected as part of municipal waste
- Some areas where there is limited to no collection by the municipality
- Nappies are thrown in the river
- Nappies are thrown in opens spaces



South African communities are very dirty with these the baby nappies and is a shame when international visitors see this.

Published on October 22, 2012



DUMPING OF DISPOSAL NAPPIES EVERY VUWANI

In my community lots of people are throwing bat

## Baby, nappies dumped under a tree

by [Chelsea Karamata](#) Mon, 12 May 2014 05:00  
*Click on any image to zoom*

## Nappy-dumping mums taken to task

By Ntando Mkhomo 01/02/17 11:57 AM 01/02/2017 11:57 AM

Language mums who dump used disposable nappies in the streets have been warned that they will face the wrath of the law if they do not clean up their act.

## Disposable diapers a growing threat to African rivers

November 14, 2017 – [Leave a Comment](#)

UPDATED 07 JUNE 2017

## Dirty nappies, sanitary pads in streets a health risk, say traditional leaders

*Soiled sanitary pads and dirty nappies are creating unhygienic living conditions*

### Mothers cry out for dumped nappies

Dumped baby diapers shame continuesDumped baby diapers shame continuesDumped baby diapers shame continuesDumped baby diapers shame continuesDumped baby diapers shame continuesDumped baby diapers shame continues

February 24, 2014

## Diapers devastate landfills

posted by Liesl Frankson on July 30, 2015 in [Articles](#), [Community health and hygiene](#), [Hazardous Waste](#), [Landfills](#), [Medical waste](#), [Other infrastructure](#), [Policy and legislation](#), [Recycling](#), [Solid waste](#), [Waste](#)

By Frances Ringwood

Experts claim that disposable nappies take up to 500 years to biodegrade, making these one of the most intractable materials regularly deposited in landfill sites.

Vanishing reusables

## Dead dogs, dirty nappies, old food: rubbish piles up in Marikana

## Call for nappy ban to help save KNP wildlife

PRETORIA NEWS / 22 FEBRUARY 2018, 07:13AM / RAPULA MOATSHE

## Community urged to stop dumping

**KwaThema – Illegal dumping is still one of the most persistent problems in most townships across Ekurhuleni.**

July 13, 2016

Dumping of used nappies destroys our precious rivers-only women can stop it  
[#BeatTheDrought](#)

## Soiled diapers dumped in the river

The used diapers are either packed in plastic bags or individual wrapped up diapers are thrown into the flowing water

April 18, 2016



# Impacts associated with poorly managed AHP waste

- AHP waste poorly managed may:
  - Cause an offence due to the presence of recognizable items or body fluids
  - Contaminate ground water
  - Spread disease
  - Cause harm to aquatic life
  - Be ingested by animals and birds
  - Remain in the environment for hundreds of years due to the slow degradation process





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# Disposable nappies: Blessing or curse?



# What is DEFF doing about it

- Broad stakeholder workshop held September 2017
- Formed a task team that deals specially with AHP waste
- Members include:
  - DEFF/DoW/DWS
  - EDANA (European Disposables and Nonwovens Association)
  - Major manufacturers
  - Provincial environmental affairs
  - Municipalities
  - SALGA
  - NGOs/CBOs
  - Retailers



## Purpose of the task team

- Gather information on AHP waste generation figures
- Facilitate round table discussions on potential solutions
- Facilitate interaction between manufacturers, retailers, NGOs, municipalities, CBOs etc.
- Facilitate the development of pilot projects in rural and urban settings
- Share experiences and lessons learned



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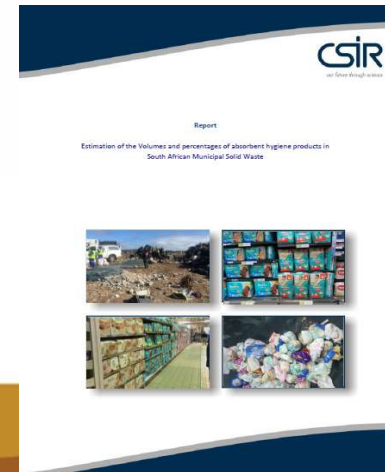
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# How big is this waste stream?



## Volume of AHP waste

- Study undertaken to provide insights into the volumes of AHP waste
- Report: *Estimation of the Volumes and Percentages of Absorbent Hygiene Products in South African Municipal Solid Waste (2018)*
- Three methods were used to estimate the volumes of AHP waste
  - Estimation based on waste characterisation studies
  - Estimation based on sales data
  - Estimation based on population statistics



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4500 – 6000 nappies



950 – 1200 kg waste



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# Volume of AHP



## METHOD

Waste characterization

Sales data<sup>2</sup>

Population statistics<sup>3</sup>

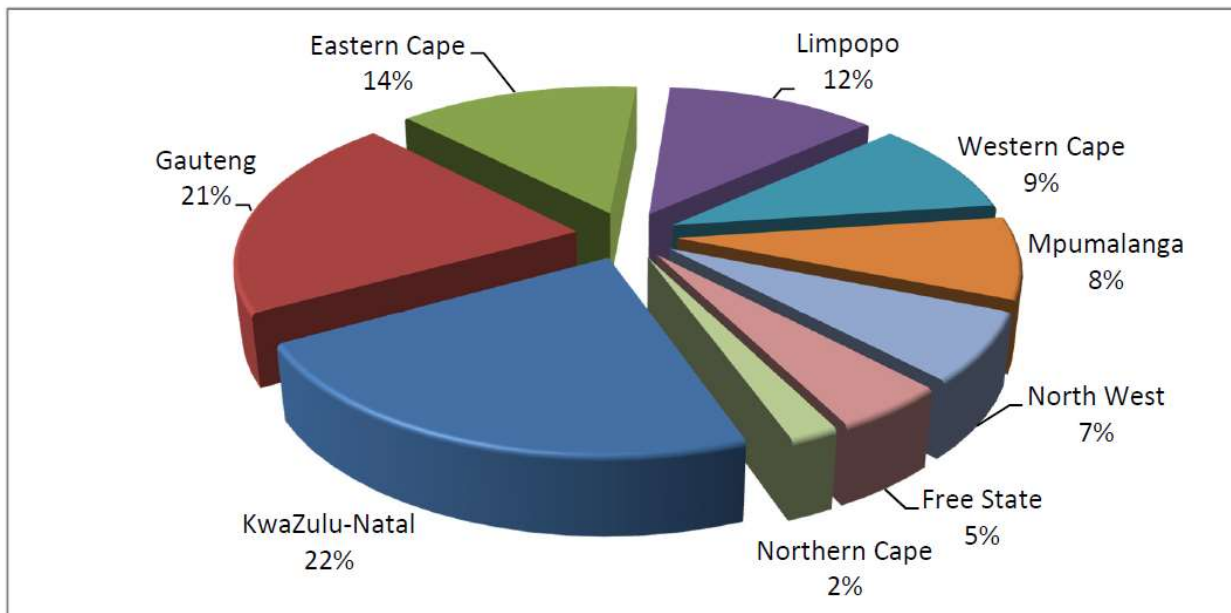


Figure 1: Location of 0-4 years old's within Provinces using modified 2016 data (StatsSA, 2016a)

692 096

Table 12: Waste composition (% by weight) at the three sampled landfills

Landfill	Municipality	Province	% Food	% Garden	% Plastic	% Paper & card	% Metal	% Glass	% C&D <sup>14</sup>	% Textiles	% AHP	% Other Wastes <sup>15</sup>
Arlington	Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan	Eastern Cape	32.9	5.8	20.3	21.3	2.6	7.4	0.7	2.9	5.5	0.7
Weltevreden	Poekwane Municipality	Limpopo	30.8	9.2	13.6	7.9	2.4	18.5	2.7	0.9	13.7	0.4
Buttelsdraal	eThekweni	KwaZulu-Natal	30.6	1.5	25.2	2.9	1.8	22.2	7.1	0.8	7.7	0.3

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## METHOD

Waste char

Sales data<sup>2</sup>

Population

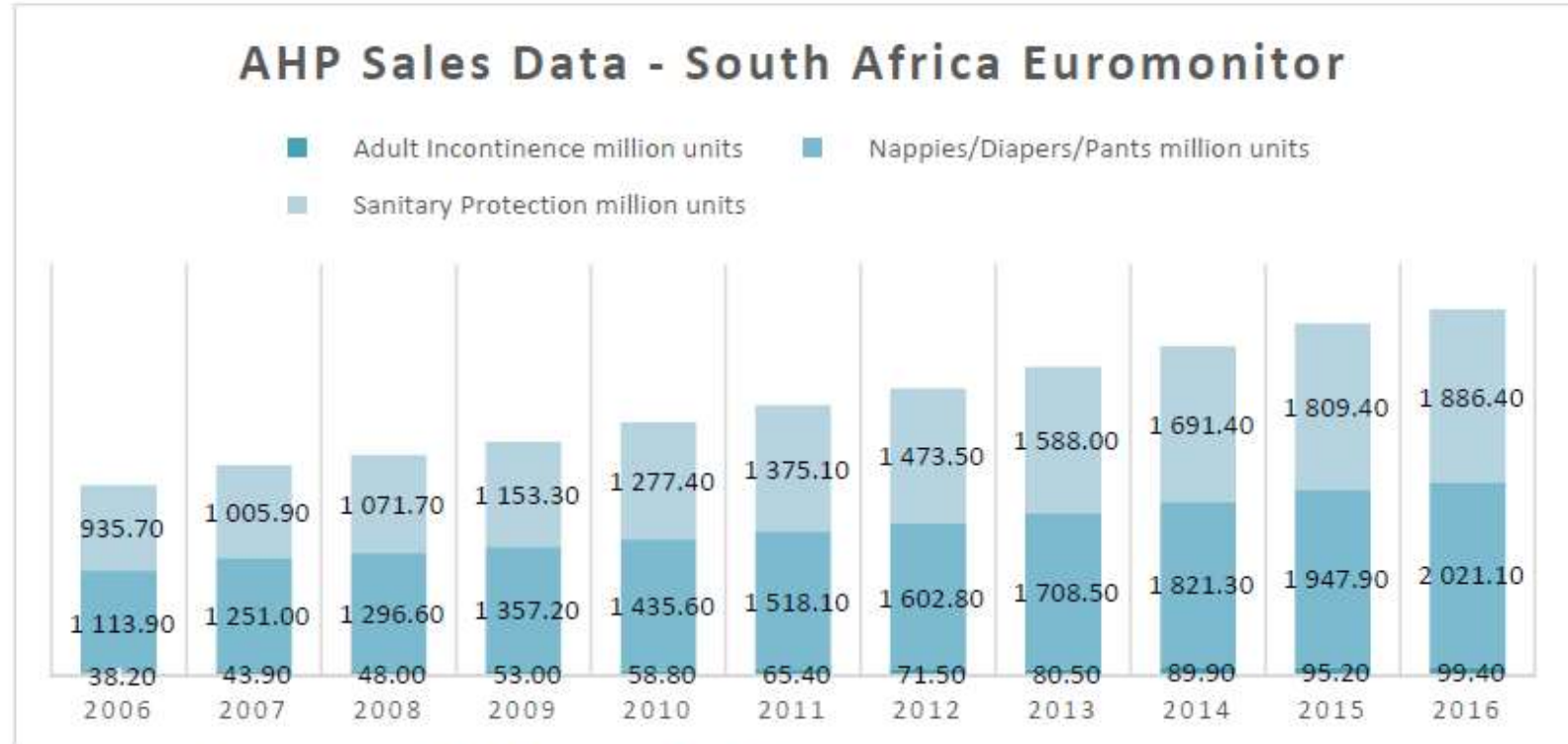


Figure 6: AHP Sales Data- South Africa Euromonitor, 2017<sup>17</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Landfill sites in Nelson Mandela; Polokwane and eThekweni
- <sup>2</sup> Sales data captured by Euromonitor
- <sup>3</sup> 2011 Census





## Volume of AHP waste

METHOD	TOTAL (tonnes)
Waste characterization studies <sup>1</sup>	805 882
Sales data <sup>2</sup>	490 543
Population statistics <sup>3</sup>	692 096

- <sup>1</sup> Landfill sites in Nelson Mandela; Polokwane and eThekweni
- <sup>2</sup> Sales data captured by Euromonitor
- <sup>3</sup> 2011 Census



## Volumes of AHP waste

- Range 490 000 – 800 000 tons
- Estimates from waste characterization may be an overestimate since the studies were located in larger towns
- Large difference between landfill and sales data could be because sales on informal market are not captured
- Need more data to give a more accurate estimation of the volume and weight of AHP waste generated in SA



## Pilot projects

- Develop a pilot for a rural/peri-urban setting and for an urban setting
- Rural/peri-urban setting – generally where waste removal services are lacking or are limited
- Urban setting – large volumes in well developed areas
- Immediate solution to remove AHP waste from land (dumping) to landfill
- Long term solution to facilitate recycling/recovery of AHP waste

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# Pilot project – urban setting



- Clermont, eThekwini
- NGO driven: Take Back Our Rivers initiative of the eThekwini Conservancies Forum with Kloof Conservancy as the implementing agency
- A pilot on the Aller River in New Germany/Clermont was initiated to seek solutions to the shocking condition of the rivers in eThekwini
- One of the issues encountered on the project – irresponsible dumping of disposable nappies (in a city environment)
  - They are being thrown in to the toilets causing blockages
  - They are being thrown into any patch of vacant land
  - They are being dumped into the Aller River



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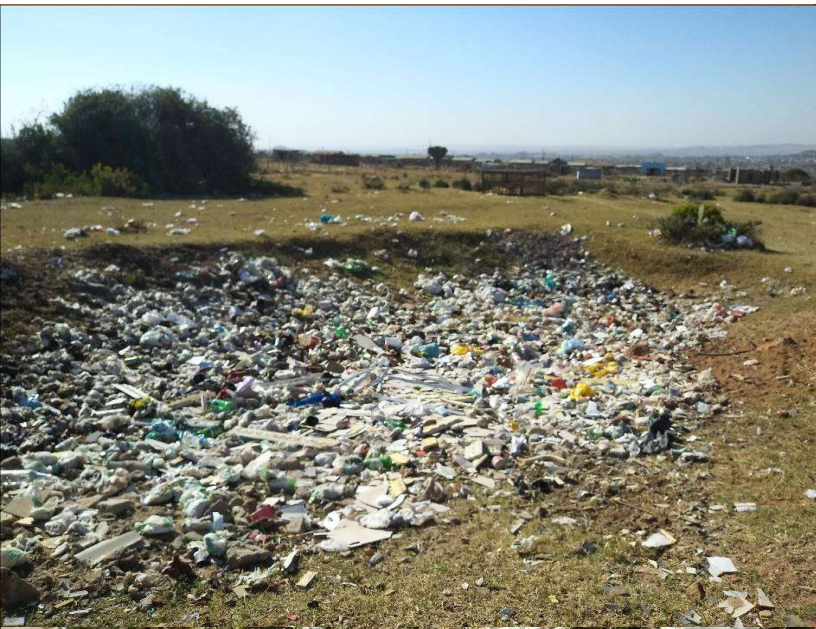
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# Pilot project – rural/peri-urban setting

- Inception meeting held on 14 May 2019 at Polokwane (PLK) Municipality
- Badimong, Polokwane
- Site visit and deep dive session was held 24 – 26 August to discuss the pilot project
- Representatives on the day of the meeting were from:
  - PLK Municipality
  - Department of Environmental Affairs
  - Proctor and Gamble (P&G)
  - Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism

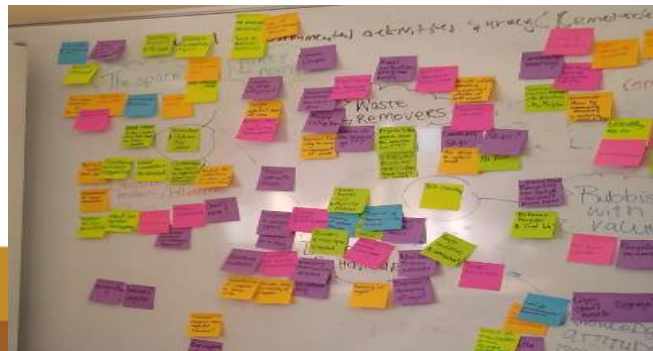
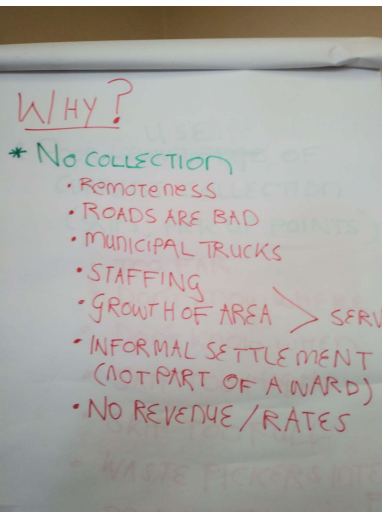






# Pilot project – rural/peri-urban setting

- Deep dive session
  - What is the problem
  - What is current behavior
  - What are potential solutions
  - Who needs to be involved



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# Outcome from the deep dive

- Proposal: Provision of skips at dedicated collection centres at schools in the area where the municipality then collects the waste on a set day of the week
- Activity plan developed
- Engagements with schools in the area; traditional leaders; ward councilors
- Will run for 3 months and evaluate progress thereafter
- Expand to other areas

### ACTIVITY PLAN FOR THE AHP PILOT STUDY

#### PHASE 1

RESOURCES REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE
1.1M waste bins	Polokwane Municipality	30 September 2019
Signage	Polokwane Municipality	30 September 2019
Truck	Polokwane Municipality	30 September 2019
Personnel	Polokwane Municipality	30 September 2019

#### PHASE 2

#### WORK BREAKDOWN



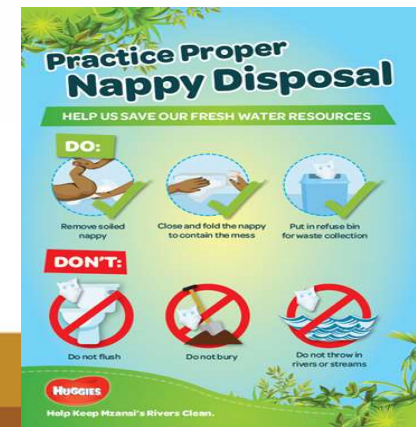
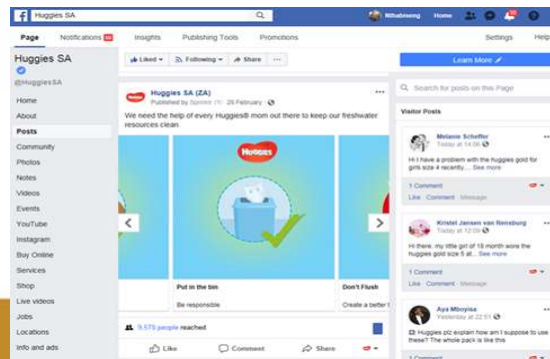
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## Activities - manufacturers

- Product redesign (decrease in weight of a nappy)
- Recycling of pre-consumer waste;
- Developed diaper disposal guidelines and posters;
- Trained brand ambassadors engage with pregnant and new moms in clinics and hospitals;
- Share information through social media such as Facebook; Twitter etc.
- Investigation into the feasibility of introducing a recycling technology into South Africa





## Lessons learnt to date

- Need an **immediate solution** that facilitates diversion from land (dumping) to landfill
- Need a **long term solution** to look at the potential for recycling of AHP waste
- South Africa is a developing country and solutions need to **suit our climate**
- Solutions will differ for urban versus rural areas
- Need to build on efforts where the community have initiated their own collection systems for waste
- Partnerships between municipalities, manufacturers, NGOs, CBOs
- Involvement of the affected community
- Awareness and communication is key to the success of any system



# What do we need to continue doing or expand on?

- Product substitution/redesign
- Place more focus on post-consumer waste
- Address waste service backlogs
- Expand awareness programmes
- Extend involvement to include retailers
- Partnerships between municipalities, manufacturers, CBOs and NGOs
- Investigating recycling/recovery opportunities



## What do we need to consider doing

- More research
- Local solutions
- Extended producer responsibility
- Priority waste
- Investment in a recycling facility



## Topics for discussion

1. What are the challenges with AHP waste in your municipality
2. What existing programmes are there in your municipality that deal with nappies
3. What immediate options are available that could be applied to manage nappies
4. What do we need to do to move nappies from land to landfill
5. The role of AHP manufacturers – what are available options for their involvement
6. Is there any significance to consider section 14 declaration or use section 18 application

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# Thank you

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Mr Kagiso Mokone; [kmokone@environment.gov.za](mailto:kmokone@environment.gov.za)



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