

2022

EPR Recycling in Our Municipalities

GUIDE TO PROMOTE EXTENDED PRODUCER
RESPONSIBILITY (EPR) OF CONTAINERS AND
PACKAGING IN COLOMBIA

Socya

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PROMAR promotes circular economy solutions in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Colombia and seeks to build the capacities of political counterparts to implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems and support their contributions to international dialogue processes. It also favors an approach based on capacity-building, good practice replication, and open dialogue.

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GUIDE PRESENTATION

Colombia has advanced and changed its vision on the comprehensive management of solid waste. It has moved from a linear economy to a circular economy. Efforts are focused, amongst other things, on recovering and reincorporating waste as raw materials into the production chain to manufacture new products.

Managing packaging waste through an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program is especially important to achieve the country's goals within the comprehensive and sustainable solid waste management framework.

This Guide targets mayors and local stakeholders, and it contains the most important and relevant elements of EPR in Colombia. It outlines the general national context, its main characteristics, players and instruments, the relationship with the public sanitation service, and the steps to support the program implementation.

Thus, the Promar Program facilitates understanding and promotes the implementation of EPR in Colombian municipalities, particularly the towns with a direct influence on river and maritime ecosystems.

GLOSSARY

- **Recovery** is the process where packaging waste is recovered through recycling, energy recovery, and/or co-processing in order to incorporate it into the economic cycle and derive health, environmental, social, or economic benefits.
- **Product life cycle** refers to consecutive and interrelated stages of a product system, starting with the acquisition or generation of raw materials from natural resources to the product final disposal.
- **Linear economy** means the traditional model where raw materials are extracted to manufacture products that are then disposed of without considering the environmental footprint and its consequences.
- **Primary packaging** is the first-level or interior packaging that is in direct contact with the product. It is the minimum packaging unit preserved from manufacturing to the last link in the marketing chain, the consumer.
- **Secondary packaging** is designed to contain a certain number of primary packages to provide additional protection to sales units, allow better handling, or for commercial purposes.
- **Multi-material packaging** refers to any packaging made with two or more layers of different materials or assembled parts of various materials that cannot be separated by hand and form a single integrated unit.
- **Reusable packaging** has been conceived, designed, and sold for multiple circuits or rotations throughout its life cycle to extend its useful life and restore the materials' ability to be used as originally under conditioning processes. Its management is financed, directly or indirectly, by the company that puts it on the market.
- **Solid waste** means any mainly solid object, material, substance, or element resulting from the consumption or use of a good in domestic, industrial, commercial, institutional, or service activities that the generator throws away for collection by the public sanitation service provider. Solid waste that does not have hazardous characteristics is divided into recoverable and non-recoverable waste.
- **Equivalent packaging collection mechanisms** refer to alternative procedures for picking up packaging waste for subsequent transfer to collection or recovery centers, such as cleaning brigades or periodic collection campaigns at the generation source.

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1 THE COMPREHENSIVE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

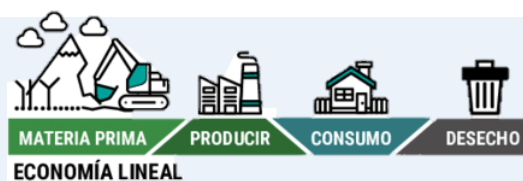
The Shift from a Linear Economy to a Circular Economy

The increase in the solid waste generated by urban population has become a challenge for society and local and national governments regarding collection, transportation, and final disposal. Colombia has made significant progress in the public sanitation service framework, where collection and adequate final disposal coverage has exceeded 98%. However, about 2 % of the country's urban waste is disposed of improperly, and it pollutes water and soil.

Traditional production and consumption patterns have degraded natural resources. The rise in waste disposed of in landfills impacts the useful life of these infrastructures and increases the generation of greenhouse gases (GHG), which pose an adverse effect on the environment and public health.

In response to Colombia's international commitments and accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the national government established a solid waste management roadmap within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 11), Green Growth Policy, and National Policy for Comprehensive Solid Waste Management to drive a change from the linear model to the "circular economy."¹

The linear economy is the traditional production, consumption, and disposal model.



The circular economy is a strategy that stimulates economic growth by optimizing resource use, increasing product useful life, and reducing pollution and negative environmental impacts.



(Source: Suárez-Espinoza, 2021)

¹ Contained in Conpes documents 3918/2018, 3934/2018, and 3874/2016 released by the National Government.

Circular economy

builds up savings by optimizing raw material management.

optimizes costs by improving waste management.

generates new income through new business models.



A circular economy model encompasses three R's, which mean **reduce, reuse, and recycle**. This model minimizes waste generation, extends the life of our products to generate less waste, reduces energy and water consumption, takes advantage of materials, and reduces CO2 emissions by preventing waste from reaching final disposal.

Regulations that Promote Recovery and Recycling in Colombia

The country has a regulatory framework issued by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Housing, City, and Territory, and the Commission for the Regulation of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation (CRA, for its acronym in Spanish). The framework promotes management, recovery, and recycling at the territorial level and seeks to strengthen informal recyclers' organizations. Thus, it encourages economic growth, environmental protection, and social development with a long-term sustainable vision: "Waste is an opportunity for our municipalities."



Pollution of the Seas and Water Sources Due to Plastic Waste

According to estimates by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), plastic production has increased to the point that approximately 11 million tons of plastic waste reach the oceans every year, and this figure could triple by 2040. It will affect more than 800 marine species and coastal areas due to pollution, ingestion, entanglement, and other hazards. As of the fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 2021), actions are being promoted to face this problem and reduce plastic pollution, especially waste that ends up in seas and rivers. Thus, moving to the “circular economy.”

Consequently, Colombia has been promoting recovery within the framework of the public sanitation service and the extended producer responsibility (EPR) program. There are also other instruments, such as the **National Plan for the Sustainable Management of Single-Use Plastics** and, as of July 2022, **Law 2232**, which provides measures for the gradual reduction of the production and consumption of certain single-use plastic products. These instruments seek to protect our ecosystems, reduce soil pollution, and prevent this waste from reaching rivers and, ultimately, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

What Is the Aim of Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)?

The objective of packaging EPR is to reduce waste and the use of natural and economic resources by means of an efficient product design and the management of the product's life cycle. This ensures that the waste and surplus of these materials return to the hands of the manufacturer for recovery. This scheme achieves a significant recovery of the material used to produce a product, preventing it from ending up as waste in a landfill, but instead, it becomes raw material (Lindhqvist, Manomaivibool, & Tojo, 2008).



About 30 % of the total waste generated in the Colombia is recyclable. It includes paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, and metal, and packaging accounts for a significant portion (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Resolution 1407/2018).

2 PACKAGING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY IN COLOMBIA

The Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development regulated **packaging management under the EPR model** by means of Resolution 1407/2018, as amended by Resolution 1342/2020. This applies to primary, secondary, or single-use sales packaging, understood as containers, packages, or wrapping made of **paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, and metal**.

The regulation establishes that **municipalities and districts** will participate as **facilitators in the implementation of EPR initiatives that may arise in their territories** in three specific actions:

- a) Support the coordination between the municipality's recovery activities and producers' environmental management plans regarding packaging waste;
- b) Promote the recovery of packaging waste;
- c) Support awareness-raising programs, citizen culture, and communication mechanisms for environmental packaging management.



EPR is the principle for producers to take a degree of responsibility for all the environmental impacts caused by their products throughout the product life cycle, from the extraction of raw materials, going through production down to the final disposal of the product as waste in the post-consumer stage (ENEC, 2021).

Packaging EPR is municipalities' ally in improving the comprehensive management of the solid waste generated in their territories through a model that has its own financing scheme.

Who Is the Producer?



The producer is any individual or legal entity who meets one of the following conditions:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufactures, assembles, or remanufactures packaged goods of their own brand for sale in the Colombian territory. The activity is carried out in the ordinary course of business until it gets to the end consumer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imports packaged goods to commercialize them in the national market for the end consumer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places products on the market as the owner of the brand displayed on the packaging. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercializes packaging designed for single use. |
|---|---|---|---|

What Are the Obligations of Producers?

- Formulate, implement, and keep an updated **Environmental Management Plan for packaging** to promote recovery and submit it to the National Environmental License Authority (ANLA, for its acronym in Spanish).
- Define, develop, and lead the necessary projects, partnerships, or agreements with the other stakeholders in the chain (packaging managers, processors, etc.) to progress in the environmental management of packaging waste and accomplish the stated goals.
- Promote the incorporation of circular economy guidelines and prioritize alternatives to recover packaging waste.
- Support manufacturers in innovation and eco-design to manufacture packaging with sustainability characteristics.

What Are Environmental Management Plans for Packaging?



Environmental
Management Plans

These environmental control and management instruments make it easier for packaging producers within the EPR framework to return, manage, and recover waste.

The Environmental Management Plan for packaging may be submitted **individually** by a single producer or **collectively** by two or more producers who share the same responsibilities. Producers will be responsible for the plan's formulation, implementation, and management, and they must meet the annual collection goals and ensure the financing of the plan.

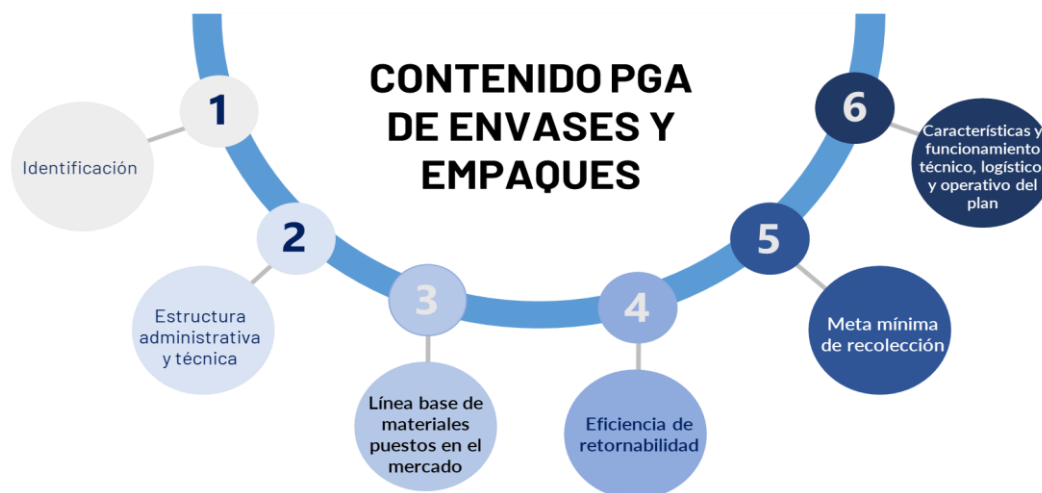


IMPORTANT:

Knowing the EPR model, the stakeholders, and the operation of the Environmental Management Plans for packaging allows municipalities to coordinate recovery activities within the framework of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (PGIRS, for its acronym in Spanish). Remember that municipal administrations are obliged to have updated PGIRSs.

What Does an Environmental Management Plan for Packaging Contain?

The Plan contains the following elements:



1

Identification of the producer and other stakeholders in the Environmental Management Plan for packaging. Based on the EPR process, the stakeholders responsible for implementing and correctly operating the Plan are determined.

THE PROCESS



The chain begins with **manufacturers or importers** supplying **producers** with the packaging needed to market produce goods.

Subsequently, the finished and packaged products are **sold** to the **end consumer**.

The end consumer generates and deposits packaging waste in the sites designated for collection.



The collection is carried out by **managers** or any equivalent mechanism the producer provides.

Preserving the waste in optimal conditions for **processors** to recover and re-include materials in the production cycle is necessary.

THE STAKEHOLDERS

Packaging importer or manufacturer: Any entity that manufactures or imports packaging, or provides raw materials needed to manufacture packaging for sale purposes.

Retailer/Wholesaler: Any individual or legal entity that sells and/or distributes packaged products or goods in any marketing phase, including distance sales or sales by electronic means.

End consumer: An individual or legal entity who consumes or uses a good or service to meet a need, and it is the last piece in the commercialization chain. The producer places a packaged good or service on the market, and the packaging may be managed as solid waste by the public sanitation service after use or consumption.

Packaging waste manager: Any individual or legal entity that collects, sorts out, and weighs packaging waste.

Processor: Any individual or legal entity that transforms recoverable material into raw material and/or a final product, returns it to the production chain, and/or conducts energy recovery.



Important: Processors must issue a recovery certificate to the environmental management plans for packaging waste submitted to ANLA.

ANEXO I
FORMATO DE CERTIFICACIÓN DE RESIDUOS DE ENVASES Y
EMPAQUES APROVECHADOS

DATOS BÁSICOS DE LA EMPRESA TRANSFORMADORA	
Nombre y Fecha	
Periodo de reporte de información	
Nombre o razón social	
Número de identificación o NIT	
Representante legal	
Número telefónico de contacto	
Dirección	
Municipio o Distrito y Departamento	
Número de Planes vinculados	
Total Residuos de envases y empaques recibidos (Ton)	
Total Residuos de envases y empaques transformados (Ton)	
Tipo de residuos aprovechados (ton)	
a. Vidrio	
b. Metales ferrosos	
c. Metales no ferrosos	
d. Plásticos Rígidos	
e. Plásticos Flexibles	
f. Papel	
g. Otros	
Tasa de aprovechamiento (%)	
Porcentaje de rechazos de los residuos de envases y empaques	

IDENTIFICACIÓN DEL PLAN DE GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL DE RESIDUOS DE ENVASES Y EMPAQUES A CERTIFICAR	
Nombre o razón social	
Número de identificación o NIT	

Annex I to Resolution 1342/2020 contains the “Recovered Packaging Waste Certification Form”

2

The **administrative and technical structure** identifies roles and responsibilities.

An organizational chart identifies the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the Environmental Management Plan for packaging. The chart should include a copy of the environmental permits, concessions, and authorizations when applicable.

The Plan identifies individuals and legal entities, the type of material, and the **municipality** where EPR management is carried out.

Informal recyclers’ organizations may be formed by packaging waste managers. The plan will take advantage of their experience, improve their living conditions, strengthen their businesses, and promote affirmative actions in favor of this type of population.



Remember that municipalities in PGIRSs must include a program to strengthen informal recyclers’ organizations.

3

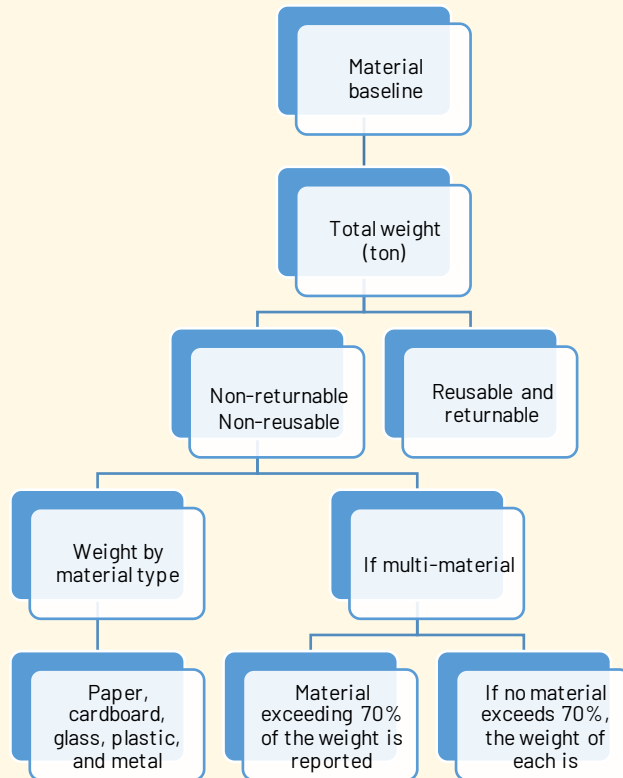
Baseline of the materials placed on the market

The following factors are needed to **obtain the baseline** and determine the recovery goal based on the global total weight of tons of packaging placed in the market.

- Establish the base year following the methodology outlined in Resolution 1407/2018. This is calculated by subtracting three years from the period for which the collection and recovery management will be conducted. For example, the base year for the 2022 management period would be 2019.

According to the base year, the recovery goal is set for each year of the Plan's duration.

- Determine the amount of packaging waste placed in the market by the producer. Differentiate each type of material – paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, and metal.



4

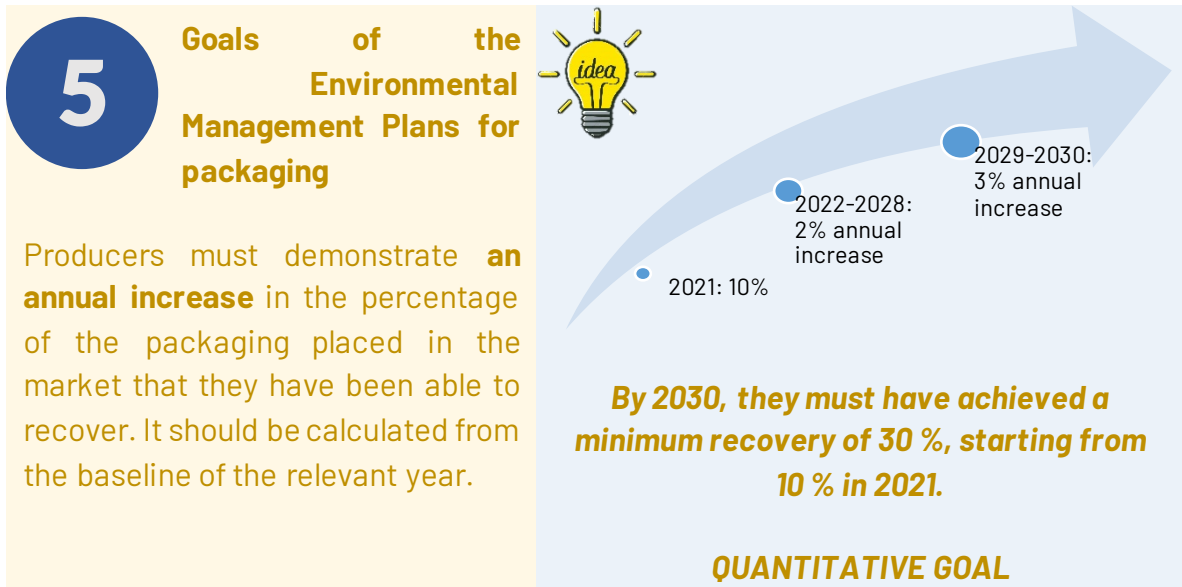
Returnability efficiency

The returnability efficiency (RE) is given by the weight of the returned packaging (RP) over the total weight of returnable packaging placed in the market (RPPM) for the base year.

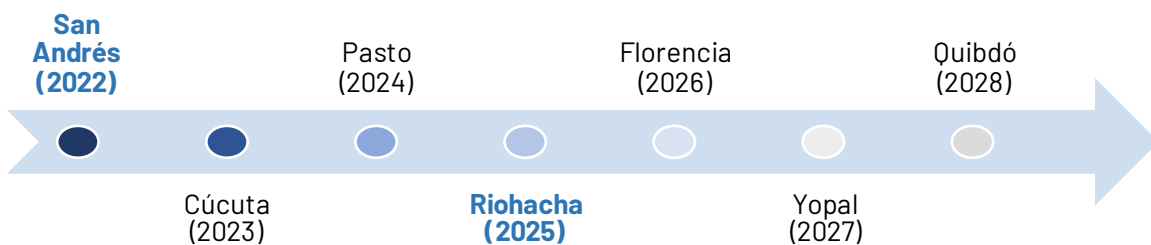


Important:

It is possible to subtract the packaging that was actually returned from the baseline, given that it did not ultimately remain in the consumer's hands.



Starting in 2022, producers with national coverage² must expand the coverage of the plans to the following cities:



6

Operating characteristics.

All the management instruments to be implemented for waste collection within EPR must be described in technical, economic, environmental, social, and administrative terms.

- The geographic coverage of the plan shows the location of the collection mechanisms.

- Installed capacity of processors and managers
- Monitoring and verification mechanisms

- Financing mechanisms and implementation costs

² A producer with national coverage is one that distributes and sells goods in at least two provinces or throughout the country.

- Strategies to achieve goals
- Investment in research, innovation, and eco-design
- Awareness-raising and citizen culture programs

Source separation and environmental education are the most efficient mechanisms to achieve better recovery results, so the regulation outlines obligations for producers and all stakeholders in the chain.

In this context, EPR may be an ally of the municipality to raise awareness among the population and promote waste recovery within the framework of PGIRs.



A necessary component is to promote source separation through awareness programs and actions, citizen culture, and communication mechanisms with consumers.

How Is the Environmental Management Plan for Packaging Monitored?

In regard to monitoring, producers ought to submit annual progress reports stating the level of compliance with the Environmental Management Plan for Packaging Waste.

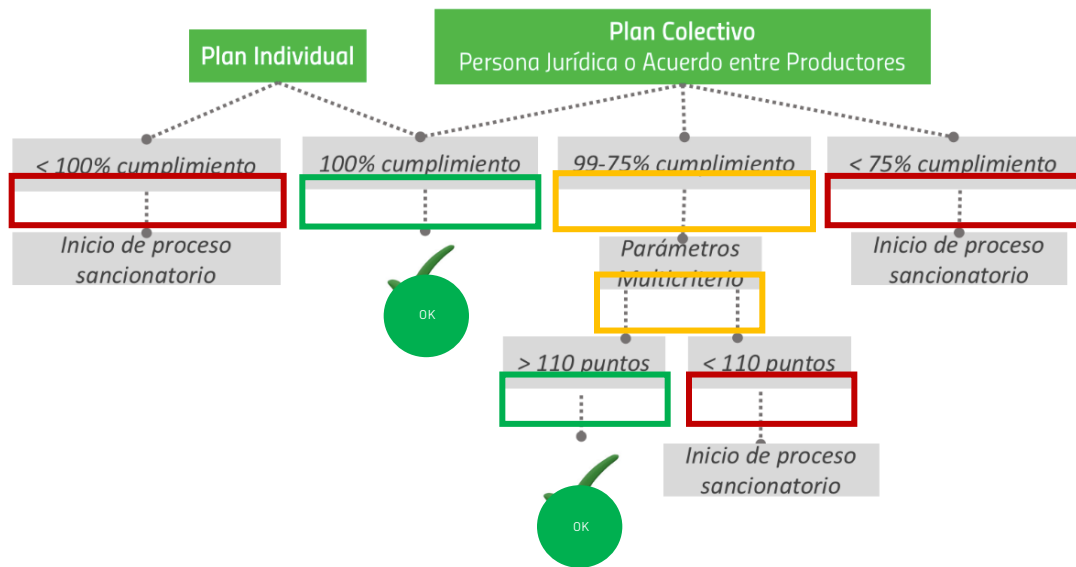
The reports will be submitted through ANLA's Comprehensive Online Environmental Permitting System (VITAL, for its acronym in Spanish).



Producers are expected to submit, together with the **annual progress report**, all the supporting documents and accounting records that prove compliance with each of the monitoring and control criteria in the regulations. The documents must be signed by the legal representative or statutory auditor.

How Is the Environmental Management Plan for Packaging Assessed?

Individual and collective plans are assessed as follows:



Collective plans may be assessed with the **multi-criteria** methodology under the following parameters:

- Fulfillment of the quantitative goal with a score of no less than 70 points
- Geographic coverage that considers the category of municipalities³
- Investment in applied research and experimental development for innovation and eco-design
- Awareness-raising programs, citizen culture, and communication mechanisms for the environmental management of packaging and sustainable consumption

Important: The Plan coverage is rated with points as follows:

³ Categories determined by the General Accounting Office of the Nation.

6 points	• Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, Cartagena, and Bucaramanga
6 points	• Municipalities in categories 1 and 2
8 points	• Municipalities in categories 3, 4, and 5
10 points	• 40% of municipalities in category 6

*

Promoting packaging EPR in municipalities contributes to fulfilling PGIRS' goals of solid waste recovery.



Expanding the geographical coverage will benefit municipalities, especially the smallest ones (Category 6), and it also ensures a higher score in the assessment of Environmental Management Plans for packaging.

This is how all players win!

3 THE CHALLENGE OF PROMOTING RECOVERY AND RECYCLING IN OUR CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES

What Are the Benefits of Recovering and Recycling Solid Waste in Our Municipalities?

- **Avoid or reduce the exploitation of natural resources.** Materials may be recovered for a new purpose without the need to extract natural resources.
- **Save energy.** Recovering materials is less expensive than making them from scratch.
- **Reduce pollution.** It provides all citizens with a cleaner and healthier environment.
- **Reduce the amount of solid waste that reaches landfills.** It extends the useful life of materials, reduces transportation costs, and reduces GHG.
- **Promote new businesses and ventures.** It promotes profits for different stakeholders in the chain.
- **Strengthen recyclers' management.** It increases the income recyclers make, and it improves their quality of life.

How Do We Promote the Recovery of Waste such as Cardboard, Paper, Plastic, Metal, and Glass?

Strengthening planning and management at the municipal and regional levels through **PGIRSS** is a necessary component of adequate solid waste management. These plans seek to **promote recovery** and **the formalization of informal recyclers** through programs, actions, and resources that must be coordinated with Development Plans and Land Use Plans.

Reminder: Resolution 0754/ 2014, issued by the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory and the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, provides the methodology to formulate, update, and assess PGIRSS.

Everyone must be committed to increasing recycling. This commitment will give an opportunity to municipalities to increase recovery in the framework of the public sanitation service and packaging EPR.



By applying these two models, municipalities will be able to meet the goals of PGIRSS, promote the circular



Public sanitation
service



Packaging EPR

economy, and encourage responsible and sustainable consumption. This will also reduce waste and increase reuse, and recycling.

Source Separation: Key to Recovery Success

Public sanitation service users must deliver their waste separately in color-coded bags for subsequent collection and transportation to Sorting and Reuse Stations (SRSs) at the hands of recovery service providers. The bags should be **white** for recoverable waste, **black** for non-recoverable waste, and **green** if the municipality has organic processing in place.

The success of recovery and recycling programs lies in separation at source, which allows for greater efficiency in collection, ensures better material quality, and cuts the cost of the activity.

MADS Resolution 2184/2019 defined the unique color code for separating and delivering waste.



The National Planning Department issued the **“National Guide for the Adequate Separation of Solid Waste”** in 2022 as a tool to guide the separation at the source of solid waste in all municipalities.

How Does Recovery Work within the Public Sanitation Service?

Recovery is a complementary activity of the public sanitation service. It includes the selective **collection** of waste generated by users, **transportation**, and the **sorting and weighing** of materials at SRSs to be sold afterwards. Decree 596/2016, issued by the Ministry of Housing, explains the operation scheme of this activity and the transitional plan for informal recyclers' organizations.

REMINDER ...

Municipalities are responsible for ensuring that public sanitation services are provided to all inhabitants, including efficient recovery. The services may be provided by utility firms, authorized organizations, or directly by a third party pursuant to the provisions of Law 142/1994 under a free competition regime, except when there are exclusive service areas.

All providers must be registered before the Superintendence of Home Utilities (SSPD, for its acronym in Spanish), the entity in charge of surveillance and control.

Recovery is remunerated via the public sanitation service rate paid by users under the methodology defined by the CRA. Subsidies and contributions apply as described in Law 142/1994.

Thus, the income the service providers make comes from the public service rate paid by users and from the commercialization and sale of materials.

Informal Recyclers as Recovery Service Providers

Recyclers have long been carrying out recycling activities in the country and contributing to protect the environment. They are key players within the comprehensive solid waste management model.

Organized informal recyclers may become recovery service providers and receive resources from the public sanitation service rate so that they may improve their income and living conditions. As outlined in Decree 596/2016, issued by the Ministry of Housing, recyclers' organizations may take a transition period to become formalized, which may be completed in up to eight years.

“Recyclers’ organizations may benefit from the **transitional plan for their formalization**. They must demonstrate that at least 80 % of the organization’s members are informal recyclers. They should also be registered in the census of recyclers of the municipality or district where the organization provides the service.” Article 12(2) of Resolution 276/2016



REMINDER...

Municipalities must implement affirmative actions for the benefit of recyclers.



IMPORTANT:

The recovery activity in the public sanitation service and packaging EPR allows municipalities to improve results and increase recovery and recycling rates.

Municipalities may have recovery service providers and EPR materials managers who recycle different materials for certificate purposes. This may increase the volume of waste recovered and turn their municipality into a leader in managing a given type of waste. The following recommendations should be considered:

Regarding the framework of the public sanitation service

- i. Identify all providers within the public sanitation service, including informal recyclers’ organizations and other providers.
- ii. Conduct frequent monitoring and keep an annual balance of the tons used in the municipality according to the report to the SSPD’s Single Information System (SUI, for its acronym in Spanish).
- iii. Fulfill the obligations as the guarantor of the provision of public sanitation services, including subsidies.

Regarding the framework of packaging EPR

- iv. Identify whether packaging waste is being managed in the municipality based on individual and collective EPR plans and the annual certified volumes.

- v. Support the development of packaging EPR programs. Bear in mind that retailers/wholesalers and producers in packaging EPR must design and implement strategies to receive consumers' packaging waste.
- vi. Manage the signing of agreements among stakeholders to strengthen EPR.

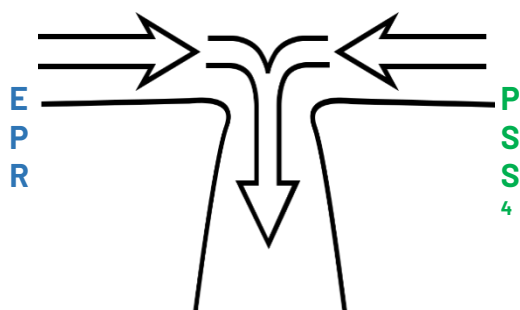
Regarding source separation:

- vii. Bring together education and awareness-raising programs for the entire population on adequate source separation within the framework of PGIRSS. However, it is necessary to have selective routes for collection and transportation.

Increasing recovery prevents waste, especially plastics, from reaching rivers and seas.



How Do We Coordinate Recovery and EPR to Make a Municipality More Circular?



When promoting circular economy policies and strategies in municipalities, it is necessary to consider that similar waste streams are being managed within packaging EPR and the public sanitation service recovery activity.

The efficient combination of both efforts may lead to the achievement of goals and objectives.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Should the municipality wish to achieve such a form of coordination, it should:

- Identify the players that carry out these activities in the municipality.

⁴ PSS: Public sanitation service

- Know its obligations, as specified in the regulations applicable to EPR and the public sanitation service.
- Learn how each scheme operates in the municipality.
- Find opportunities to promote and increase the recovery percentage and contribute to fulfilling PGIRS goals.
- Make agreements to:
 - i) Obtain information to establish the baseline and monitor compliance with the recovery goals in the municipality within the PGIRS framework;
 - ii) Develop and finance education and awareness-raising programs targeting the general population to reduce, reuse, and separate waste at source;
 - iii) Improve the working conditions of informal recyclers and promote their formalization;
 - iv) Monitor and facilitate the formulation of municipal public policies.

“By promoting the circulation of materials and reducing waste generation through circular production processes, the burden on urban solid waste management systems would also be reduced. Thus, there would be more available resources, and local governments could allocate them to providing other strategic goods and services for the development of their cities.” (BID, 2020)

4 HOW TO IMPLEMENT AN EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR) MODEL IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY?

Strengthening the municipality's recovery planning is a necessary starting point, provided that players who are interested in managing packaging materials may engage within the EPR framework. To achieve the goal, the Recovery Program must be included in the PGIRS, and it must be clearly defined whether this activity is provided within the framework of the public sanitation service.

If an Environmental Management Plan for packaging is interested in carrying out packaging EPR programs in a municipality, articulated work may be achieved for everyone's benefit, starting with the following steps:

Plan

1

Open communication spaces with packaging EPR programs that have reached the municipality to coordinate actions and achieve commitment from all stakeholders seeking to meet recovery and recycling goals.

Decide

The identified elements will allow the municipality to find EPR opportunities, determine the optimal operating scenario, and make growth projections regarding management indicators, green jobs, and contributions to achieving goals, amongst others, and foster the circular economy.

2

Implement

3

With a clear picture of the municipality's current situation and its future direction, the strategy is implemented. It should prioritize the most cost-effective scenario and how work with packaging EPR programs. The roadmap lists the actions to be implemented in the short, medium, and long term and the action owners.

Assess

After monitoring, the EPR program results are reported to the municipality regarding the volumes of packaging managed and the recyclers' organizations benefited as EPR managers.

4

How Do We Strengthen Recyclers along This Process?





...We met with the organization and talked about updating the census on recyclers carried out last year. One hundred recyclers are registered, and they are now in the process of formalizing in as part of the public sanitation service...

Hello, Nando! Since you are a member of the Reciclando-Ando Association, which has one of the selective routes that cover the municipality, REPCiclo wants to tell you about a new scheme that may interest you.

Nando, we want to **implement a packaging EPR scheme** in the municipality, and we would like to form a partnership to manage these materials.

REPCiclo, let's go to the SRS and, in the meantime, you tell me how it works.



The National Government has tasked us with meeting the goal of recovering the packaging waste we put on the market.

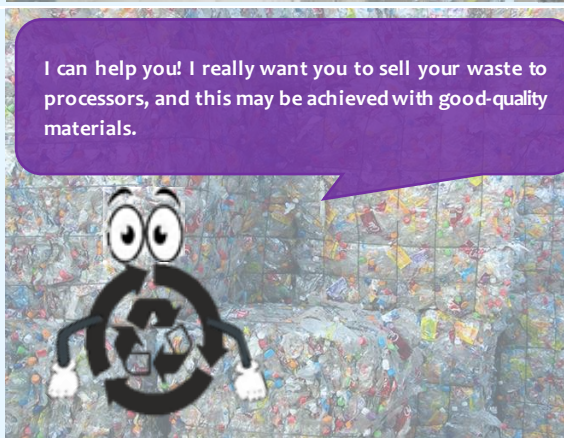
...To meet these goals, producers have several options to collect the waste. This is where **Reciclando-Ando** comes into the picture as a **packaging waste manager**...



EPR Collectivities have different ways of recognizing the work managers do to recover material and then promote loyalty to the collectivity. It could be in form of **financial or in-kind incentives to strengthen the association** (infrastructure, vehicles, etc.).



That's right, Nando! The mayor told me that despite your efforts, you have not managed to increase the levels of source separation among consumers.



The number of **tons that managers report** to the collectivity must be **supported by a sales invoice from the material processor**.

In turn, **packaging waste managers** can become **recovery service providers** in the public sanitation service.

EPR IS AN ALLY OF MUNICIPALITIES TO REDUCE THE POLLUTION IN RIVERS AND SEAS AND STRENGTHEN RECOVERY.

Success Story 1:

Rafael Lugo, 31 years old, was born in Caracas and is a public accountant in his native Venezuela. He has been in Colombia for 5 years and has had to adapt. He is now contributing proudly to the world of recycling. He is committed, tireless, and very responsible. He describes himself as a man of humble origin, of few words with high expectations for progress. He is modest, respectful, collaborative, organized, and punctual.

In 2023, he joined the team of the PROMAR circular economy project implemented by Socya in the Santa Marta District. He has stood out for his resilience, sense of belonging, and perseverance. His skills have contributed significantly to the project by reducing sea litter, and he has been able to improve his work and living conditions.

Rafa joyfully walks the streets of Santa Marta every day, ringing the recycling bell on his tricycle. It reminds users that the recycling route will collect all the recoverable materials they generate for subsequent processing to extend their useful life and reduce the amount of packaging that reaches the Caribbean Sea.

Thanks to his work, Rafael does not only protect the Manzanares River and the Caribbean Sea, but he also helps enhance the district waste management, reduce sources of pollution due to improper disposal and increase the country's recycling rates. He performs this task with the help of *Nuevo Esfuerzo* organization, which constantly strengthens his operation and buys his materials to give him an income so that he can cover his expenses.

The coordination of the recovery scheme and EPR has assisted in this process by not only engaging the residential sector in his collection route using his georeferenced tricycle but also increasing his income with the sale of materials at a little over the country's current statutory minimum wage. Rafa took ownership of the six-pillar methodology developed by the Socya Foundation within the framework of the PROMAR Project. This methodology brings together operational, economic, social, and environmental concepts that allow him and the recyclers' organization to comply with current recovery regulations and to access resources through EPR. This link contributes to the balance and sustainability of the business model. An important note is the participation of multiple waste management stakeholders in the process since the current results would not be possible without them.

Success Story 2:

Rosa Pacheco is an enterprising woman who lives up to her name; she is incredibly beautiful in every sense.

She is a committed, hard-working mother and wife. She completed her high school studies and has dedicated herself to beautifying the streets of Santa Martha. She does this not only with her magnetic presence and smile, her joy and empathy but also with her hard work. She stands out for her charm and vitality; she influences everyone around her with her spontaneity. She shares her aspirations with her husband to provide for their children.

Rosa is a beneficiary of the Promar Project. She states that she has acquired vast knowledge and received material support that has significantly improved her living conditions. The tricycle helps her make fewer trips, improve her recycling route, and put in less effort. She also mentioned that the psychosocial and emotional support provided by the Promar Project is of great value to her and her colleagues since it has helped them to change habits and thoughts, improve their interpersonal, family, and social relationships.

She joined the project from the beginning, has taken ownership of the methodologies, and contributes daily to a cleaner Santa Marta. Her work has been known in various organizations involved in the project, where she sells the material collected from different neighborhoods. She collects the materials with her husband's help. Every day, she intends to improve the recovery service provided to users and, thus, her quality of life through the sale of recovered materials. Thanks to her work, those materials will never get to sail through the beautiful waters of the Caribbean Sea.

5 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the relationship between EPR and PGIRS?

PGIRS is the planning and organizing instrument of municipalities, metropolitan areas, and regions for adequate solid waste management. The plan seeks, amongst others, to promote recovery and **the formalization of informal recyclers** through programs, actions, and resources that must be coordinated with Development Plans and Land Use Plans. EPR contributes to the recovery goal within PGIRS by having convergent objectives.

What provisions regarding land use instruments should be considered for recovery within the framework of the public sanitation service and packaging EPR?

The municipal administration must enable land use within Land Use Plans to set up the required equipment, such as SRSs.

Does the Recovery and Processing Incentive (RPI) specified in Decree 802/2022 apply to EPR?

No. This incentive aims at providers within the framework of the public sanitation service.

Can packaging EPR benefit the informal recycling population?

Yes. **Organizations may be packaging waste managers** within the EPR framework who may be interested in improving their income and strengthening their business. Thus, affirmative actions may be promoted in favor of these groups.

Which materials cannot be managed within the framework of packaging EPR?

Hazardous waste packaging, textile or natural fibers, or the primary packaging of drugs and medications cannot be included.

If I have concerns or doubts about my municipality's role or the operation of packaging EPR, can the Superintendence of Home Utilities (SSPD) resolve them?

No. You should contact the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. SSPD monitors and controls the provision of the public sanitation service.

How are the recovered tons managed by the public sanitation service and EPR certified?

The recovery activity is remunerated via the public sanitation service rate, based on the tons that were actually recovered and according to the sales invoice for the materials. A processor's certificate is required for EPR to ensure traceability.

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Supporting regulations

- Resolution 1407/2018 issued by the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, as amended by Resolution 1342/2020
- MADS Resolution 2184/2019, as amended by Resolution 668/2016 on the rational use of plastic bags and the color code for the separation of waste
- Decree 596/2016 issued by the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory (MVCT)
- CRA Resolution 720/2015. Rate framework for municipalities with more than 5,000 subscribers
- CRA Resolution 853 of 2018. Rate framework for municipalities with less than 5,000 subscribers
- MVCT Resolution 0754 on the PGIRS



PREVENTION OF MARINE LITTER IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA PROJECT - PROMAR

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