

Event Report: PROMAR at ISWA World Congress 2025 Buenos Aires



Overview

The ISWA 2025 World Congress took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina from October 27-29, bringing together leading experts, practitioners, and policymakers from the global waste management community. This year's congress was held under the motto:

"Towards a Wasteless Future or a Wasteful Planet?"

The choice of Buenos Aires as the host city placed a strong thematic emphasis on **waste management challenges and opportunities in Latin America**, a region undergoing significant transformation in how it addresses solid waste, recycling infrastructure, and circular economy strategies. Ideal for PROMAR, which is active in Latin America and the Caribbean.

adelphi and the **PROMAR** project were represented at the congress by Richard Berner. Richard contributed to the programme through both a poster presentation and an oral presentation, showcasing PROMAR's work and findings to an international audience.



ISWA Opening Ceremony by ISWA President James Law

Some Key Takeaways

Marine plastic pollution is an acute challenge for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) due to isolation, limited waste systems, and reliance on imports.

PROMAR, funded by Germany's BMUV, tackles this through upstream measures centered on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). Building on Phase I (2021–2025) in the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Colombia, Phase II scales to St. Kitts and Nevis, the British Virgin Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, and Guyana, tailoring approaches to SIDS realities and aiming for systemic change in waste governance.

- **Problem context:** SIDS face heightened vulnerability from marine plastics, compounded by small markets, fragmented waste streams, and constrained infrastructure.
- **PROMAR approach:** Prioritizes upstream solutions, with EPR shifting waste management responsibility and costs from government to producers.
- **Capacity building implemented in the countries:** Six interactive modules (EPR basics, design options, complementary measures, institutional/legal implementation, case studies), enabling participants to cascade training.
- **Hands-on activities:** Stakeholder mapping, policy prototyping tailored to country context, and development of national EPR roadmaps with industry and policy makers from the countries
- **Expected outcomes:** Stronger dialogue and collaboration, practical governance and legal strategies, and actionable pathways to adapt EPR for SIDS—driving systemic change in waste governance.

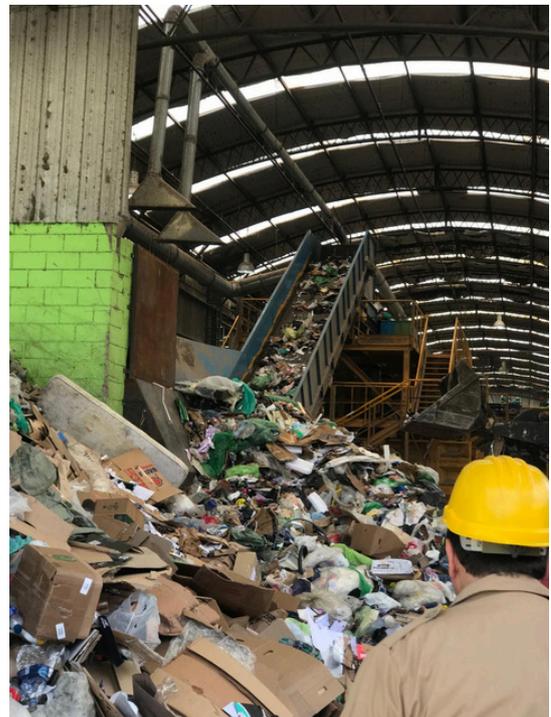
Conclusion

The ISWA 2025 Congress in Buenos Aires provided a valuable platform for adelphi and the PROMAR project to share insights, connect with international peers, and contribute to the global discourse on sustainable waste management.

The congress reaffirmed that the path towards a **"wasteless future"** requires bold policy action, inclusive approaches, and strong international cooperation - areas in which PROMAR continues to make meaningful contributions.



Richard Berner representing PROMAR at the Congress



Visit to the Buenos Aires Recycling Center as part of the Congress