

UJ becomes the first academic institution to join SA Plastics Pact

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) has become the first academic institution to sign up as a supporting member of the South African Plastics Pact.



Source: [Pxabay](#)

The UJ faculty of engineering and the built environment's Process Energy and Environmental Technology Station (UJ Peets) initiated the university's involvement with the SA Plastics Pact, resulting in UJ joining the pact.

Contributing towards a sustainable future

The pact tackles the plastic waste challenge along the value chain in South Africa to increase sustainable practices and circularity, focusing on the packaging sector. Its members aim to accelerate the translation towards a circular plastic packaging sector in South Africa, joining eight other national and two regional pacts as part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's global Plastics Pact Network.

The university says that the collaboration with the pact will build the foundation for future leaders, researchers, businesses and change makers to create a sustainable future that is socio-economically just and that conserves the country's limited natural resources.

UJ Peets project lead, Katharina Gihring, explains: “At UJ Peets, we support small and medium enterprises to grow the green and circular economy. Therefore, the SA Plastics Pact is an ideal match. The pact reflects the holistic approach of co-creation and systems thinking that we also apply in our projects.

“We believe that change has to happen at each institution, starting with our own, to contribute towards a sustainable future. We are excited to walk this journey with the pact.”



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Globally, single-use plastics negatively impact the environment, polluting land and water systems, posing a health threat to animals and humans while mainly being produced from non-renewable resources.

UJ supports objectives of the pact

The SA Plastics Pact has embarked on an integrative approach along the plastic value chain to tackle the challenges around plastic.

Gihring believes that the partnership will accelerate the scale-up of new technologies, deliver economic impact and build supply chains, jobs and growth in South Africa.

UJ said it supports the aims of the pact and its interdisciplinary approach, which will be used for campus management and educating students while exposing them to real-life challenges.

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