



Metals recycling a cornerstone of South Africa's industrial value chain

The metals recycling industry is more than just collecting scrap; it is a cornerstone of South Africa's industrial value chain. By converting waste metal into reusable resources, recyclers supply steel mills, foundries and manufacturers with affordable raw materials, reducing reliance on imports and keeping production costs competitive.

Metals recycling adds measurable value to the economy in several ways. It supports local manufacturing by ensuring a steady flow of recycled inputs that can be used in construction, automotive and packaging sectors. Metals recycling adds measurable value to the economy in several ways. It supports local manufacturing by ensuring a steady flow of recycled inputs that can be used in the construction, automotive, and packaging sectors. Importantly, a significant portion of metal recovery occurs in the informal sector, which creates income for thousands of small collectors and traders. However, this segment often operates outside regulatory frameworks, highlighting the need for policies that improve safety, efficiency, and environmental compliance while preserving livelihoods.

Metal recycling creates employment opportunities across the value chain from collection and sorting to processing, transport and downstream industries. It also reduces environmental impact by cutting carbon emissions and diverting thousands of tonnes of waste away from landfills, helping South Africa move closer to its sustainability goals.

The industry's role in strengthening trade competitiveness cannot be overlooked. Recycled metals meet international standards, opening doors to global markets and positioning South Africa as a credible player in the worldwide circular economy.

"The recycling industry does not just manage waste; it adds measurable value to the economy by keeping resources in circulation and supporting local industry," comments **Quintin Starkey**, Metal Recyclers Association of South Africa (MRA) Committee Member.

The MRA continues to support responsible recycling practices, connecting producers and recyclers and promoting industry standards that keep South Africa competitive in the global marketplace.