

## **Understanding the South African waste sector: The economic and employment opportunities it provides**

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### **Abstract**

The results of the South African Waste Sector Survey (for 2012) show that the formal waste sector employs a minimum of 29,833 people. The majority of these employees are situated within large enterprises (77.5% of private waste sector employees) and metropolitan municipalities (64.9% of public sector employees). The minimum financial value of the formal waste sector (public and private) is R15.3 billion, or 0.51% of GDP. The majority of this revenue is situated within large enterprises (88.0% of private sector revenue) and metropolitan municipalities (80.4% of public sector revenue). An estimated 62.0% of the total revenue generated from waste activities, was done so by companies which had been in the industry for more than 25 years. Young waste companies (less than five years) contributed a minimum of R188 million into the economy in 2012. This new understanding of the South African waste sector creates the opportunity for dialogue between the public and private sectors, identifies opportunities for investment in alternatives to landfilling, and creates a baseline for further investment in waste research, development and innovation