

# 'Green' Hout Bay recycling co-op members coin it on garbage

The Hout Bay Recycling Co-op, from the Imizamo Yethu informal settlement outside Cape Town, is the country's first group of small business entrepreneurs who have benefited from the government's move towards a green economy, SA-Info reports.

It is a strategy aimed at creating environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic growth. The government wants to create 300 000 jobs in this sector within a decade.

The co-op is based at the Hout Bay municipal waste drop-off site. Here co-op members sort patiently through heaps of garbage, separating cardboard, plastic, glass, paper and metal, piece by piece. The recycled piles of trash are then weighed and sold to packaging manufacturers in South Africa that reuse the materials to create new products. Previously unemployed and struggling to survive, co-op members earn an average of R2 000 a month from their work.

"The more people become aware of the benefits of recycling, the more rubbish gets dropped off at the Hout Bay waste centre. For me, that translates into more money," co-op member, 48-year-old Nokwanda Sotyantya, explains. South Africa's move towards a "green" economy has turned her life around, as her group of six formerly jobless, poverty-stricken men and women currently recycles 25 tonnes of waste each month. According to SA-Info, this number is slowly increasing.

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