

POLICY PULSE

Exploring Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in Egypt

What It Means ?

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach where producers bear responsibility for the entire lifecycle of their products, including the post-consumption phase. In Egypt, EPR is outlined under the Waste Management **Law No. 202 of 2020** and its executive regulations, shifting waste management accountability to producers to reduce environmental impact.

This framework prioritizes sustainable practices, particularly in managing **packaging waste**, and aligns with global best practices while addressing Egypt's specific waste challenges. Producers must register, disclose packaging quantities, and pay fees based on the type and volume of materials they introduce to the market.

The implementation of EPR marks a significant step toward establishing a **sustainable waste management system**. By reducing waste sent to landfills and increasing recycling rates, Egypt moves closer to achieving a circular economy. The policy bridges financial gaps in the waste management sector and fosters alignment with international environmental standards.

EPR also promotes innovation in **packaging** and **waste management infrastructure**, which can positively impact public health and environmental conservation. Furthermore, the phased approach ensures a smoother transition, enabling stakeholders to adapt incrementally.

Impact on Egypt

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Opportunities

EPR presents multiple business opportunities:

- **Sustainability Innovation:** Companies can explore sustainable packaging solutions, potentially gaining a competitive advantage in eco-conscious markets.
- **Market Expansion:** Adopting sustainable practices can enhance brand reputation and unlock access to international markets prioritizing eco-friendly products.
- **Collaboration:** The inclusion of informal waste collectors and partnerships with licensed recycling firms can streamline operations and improve system efficiency.

Challenges

Despite its potential, EPR introduces several hurdles, particularly for producers unprepared for the transition:

- **Financial Burden:** SMEs may find the fee structure and compliance costs daunting.
- **Operational Complexity:** Monitoring and reporting packaging materials require resources and expertise that smaller companies may lack.
- **Infrastructure Needs:** Effective waste collection and recycling necessitate substantial investments in infrastructure and partnerships.
- **Exclusion from Consultations:** Companies not involved in the consultation process may face added difficulties in understanding and implementing EPR requirements.

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For EPR to succeed, proactive measures are essential:

- **Government Support:** The government should provide financial and technical assistance to SMEs to mitigate compliance burdens.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Companies must engage with industry associations and regulatory bodies to stay informed and compliant.
- **Capacity Building:** Training and resources should be made available to producers and waste management stakeholders to facilitate a seamless transition.
- **Public Awareness:** Awareness campaigns can foster consumer understanding of the importance of sustainable waste management and encourage recycling efforts.

Egypt's EPR system will be rolled out in three phases, starting in 2025. The transitional phase will focus on expanding obligations and establishing mandatory recycling targets. Subsequent phases will implement eco-modulation of fees and emphasize innovation. To ensure success, continuous evaluation of the system's effectiveness and adaptability is crucial.

By addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities, Egypt can position itself as a leader in sustainable waste management, driving economic, environmental, and social progress.