

## Waste Pickers: Guardians of the Circular Economy

Dear fellow wastepicker leaders, environmental agents, members, authorities, and the community at large

Today, March 1st, World Waste Pickers Day, is a day of remembrance and commemoration, but above all, a day of recognition and justice.

Often, society only sees "garbage." But in waste, we as waste pickers see dignity, sustainability for our families, and, above all, opportunity. We are the true environmental agents, heroes in the defense and protection of the climate, the front line of sustainability worldwide.

Without our work, tons of recyclable, reusable materials that drive the circular economy would end up in landfills, rivers, and oceans, polluting our fauna and flora. We are transformers of what would be considered a "problem" into new resources, that is, a solution.

Commemorating this day is recognizing that recycling and reuse are built on the effort of thousands of families, often women from racialized communities such as Indigenous Peoples, Black, Dalit, Roma and others who support their households. It is a job that demands dignity and respect and should be recognized worldwide.

Payment for the environmental services we provide should not be a dream; it should be a reality and a right. Valuing the waste picker is investing in a sustainable and fair future and in reducing social inequality. Reuse and recycling are a commitment to the environment, therefore to life, and we teach this daily. But the responsibility cannot be only ours, but that of the whole society. To the waste pickers, our sincere thanks. You take care of the planet, you take care of our city, and you promote life.

Congratulations!

Heroes of the CIRCULAR ECONOMY, Guardians of the Environment.



Presidente da IAWP.

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