

## waste not want not



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**REGENERATIVE**  
By Sherrell Dorsey

Your front row seat to the future  
of sustainable innovation.

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**One person's trash is another founder's treasure.**

Like you, I'm no stranger to consumption. My home, like yours, holds onto things — useful, sentimental, or simply forgotten — that will eventually find their way to an overburdened landfill. No matter how many biodegradable trash bags I buy or how often I swap single-use plastics for silicone covers and snack bags, the reality is much of what we discard still adds to one of the biggest challenges of our time: how we manage the things we no longer want or need.

And as business leaders, founders, and investors, we're not passive bystanders in this crisis. We're active participants — and more importantly, potential architects of the solution.

If we get this right, we're not just addressing a waste problem; we're standing on the edge of a monumental market transformation. The inefficiencies in our current waste systems aren't just environmental hazards — they're untapped, trillion-dollar opportunities for innovation and wealth creation. Across sectors, bold new companies are rising to meet this moment: recovering resources from what we discard, from batteries and textiles to ocean plastic and even **synthetic braiding hair**.

In this week's issue, we're diving into the innovators and movements tackling what I like to call the "deep trash problem," and how they're reshaping industries to build a more resilient, sustainable, and profitable future.

Let's dive in.

Stay sharp,

**P.S.**

*I have just one more open slot for private coaching spots for startup founders this month. If you're navigating growth, fundraising, or need support pivoting in this current climate, let's chat. Reply to this email and I'll share the details.*

**COMPANY TO CLOCK: rePurpose Global**

rePurpose Global is tackling the escalating crisis of plastic pollution by pioneering a Plastic Action Platform that enables brands to measure, reduce, and offset their plastic footprints.

**repurpose.global****Headquarters**

New York, NY

**Why it matters**

By integrating outcomes-based financing models, rePurpose Global not only mitigates environmental harm but also fosters social equity by empowering waste workers and underserved communities.

- **Innovative Approach:** Utilizes outcomes-based financing to fund plastic waste recovery and infrastructure development, ensuring measurable environmental impact.
- **Social Impact:** Supports marginalized waste workers, enhancing

livelihoods and promoting equitable access to waste reduction solutions.

- **Global Reach:** Operates across multiple continents, addressing plastic pollution in diverse socio-economic contexts.

### The scale of the industry

The demand for sustainable waste management solutions is intensifying due to:

- **Plastic Pollution Crisis:** With over 8 million tons of plastic entering oceans annually, innovative solutions are imperative.
- **Regulatory Pressures:** Governments worldwide are enacting stricter regulations on plastic usage and waste management.  
**Corporate Responsibility:** Brands are increasingly accountable for their environmental footprints, necessitating effective mitigation strategies.
- **Consumer Awareness:** Growing consumer demand for sustainable products is driving companies to adopt eco-friendly practices

### Traction

- **Funding:** Raised approximately \$24.32 million over 8 funding rounds, with the latest being a \$19.98 million Series A round on May 3, 2023.
- **Impact:** Recovered over 30 million kilograms of plastic waste from the environment, positively affecting thousands of waste workers and community members.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborated with over 500 companies across 26 countries, including major brands like Clorox, AB InBev, Johnson & Johnson, Google, and Colgate.
- **Initiatives:** Launched the \$1 million Reuse Outcomes Fund to scale reuse and refill solutions, particularly in low and middle-income communities.

### Major investors

- 10X Capital
- Gaingels
- Left Lane Capital
- Penny Jar Capital
- Emerson Collective
- Plug and Play Tech Center
- MassChallenge

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## BIG BILLS, BIG DEALS

- **Epoch Biodesign (UK)**  
Secured \$18.3 million in Series A funding to scale its AI-designed enzymes capable of breaking down polyester and nylon waste. Investors include Inditex (Zara's parent company) and Extantia Capital. [EU-Startups](#)
- **Eeden (Germany)**  
Raised €18 million in Series A funding to advance its chemical textile recycling technology. The round was led by Forbion, with participation from Henkel Ventures and others. [Axios](#)
- **Glacier (USA)**  
An AI-enabled robotics company focused on recycling, Glacier secured \$16 million in Series A funding to expand its technology deployment in material recovery facilities (MRFs) across the U.S.
- **DePoly (Switzerland)**

Raised \$23 million in seed funding to launch a 500-tonne-per-year PET recycling plant in Monthey, Switzerland. Investors include MassMutual Ventures and BASF Venture Capital. [Tech.eu](#)

- **MacroCycle Technologies (USA)**

Closed a \$6.5 million seed round to commercialize its low-energy PET and polyester textile waste upcycling technology. The funding will help scale operations and pilot plant facilities.

## POLICY PLAYS

- **California's Plastic Waste Reduction Program Advances**

CalRecycle Director Zoe Heller has committed to finalizing California's revamped plastic waste reduction program by the end of the year, following a Senate committee's approval. [E&E News](#)

- **New York's Packaging Reduction Bill Could Save \$1.3 Billion**

A report by Beyond Plastics supports New York's proposed Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act, highlighting potential savings of \$1.3 billion over the next decade by reducing plastic packaging by 30%. [Times Union](#)

- **Global Plastic Recycling Rates Remain Below 10%**

A recent study indicates that global plastic recycling rates have stagnated at under 10%, emphasizing the need for improved recycling infrastructure and policies worldwide. [Phys.org](#)

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## INDUSTRY EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **[ClimaTech 2025](#)** (May 13–14, Boston, MA): A must-attend gathering of global leaders and climate tech innovators focused on sustainable solutions and profitable ventures.
- **[HackSummit 2025](#)**: (May 15-16, Lausanne, Switzerland) A premier event spotlighting **climate deep tech**, bringing together cutting-edge startups, investors, and industry leaders at the forefront of innovation.
- **[ReFed Food Waste Solutions Summit: \(June 23-25, Seattle, WA\)](#)**: The nation's premier gathering of the food waste movement.
- **[Feedstocks for Plastics Recycling Conference](#)**: Set for June 24, 2025, in Brussels, this event will explore the latest developments in feedstocks for plastics recycling.
- **[Plastics Recycling Conference 2025](#)**: Scheduled for February 23-25, 2026, in Chula Vista, California, this conference will bring together industry leaders to discuss innovations and challenges in plastics recycling.

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