We haven’t designed our current supply chains for circularity. We have designed them for a linear economy, consumption, throw away, consumption, throw away. That needs to change. We must redesign our supply chains to enhance and accelerate circular economy applications.

Kudoti is a data-driven digital platform which digitises waste operations, records and quantifies sustainability efforts and connects stakeholders in one centralised place. Using the platform as the digital infrastructure for a circular economy, the company foregrounds waste as a valuable resource and activates new supply chains to help industries unlock the power of circularity.

Words and photography by Chris de Beer-Procter
The only way we can achieve a fully circular economy is if we revisit all our processes and redesign them for recycling. Brands need to prioritise circularity from the start in their operations.

The capabilities of such a platform are threefold. Firstly, as brands attempt to comply with extended producer responsibility laws, data captured on the platform is crucial to quantifying their impact and efforts in reporting and allowing them to plan better for the future. Secondly, Gift says, the platform encourages brands to move away from virgin materials in favour of recycled ones. “The idea is to start making companies aware that any type of waste can be a resource,” he explains. This is helped along by the platforms third capability, which is to map out and establish new supply chains for integrating these materials in new circular applications. Gift says that Kudoti’s capabilities help us make better informed decisions like where to direct investment.

Connecting the industry players and opening up capabilities for new supply chains also creates exciting opportunities to incentivize circular activities. Take for example a recent project the company ran with Nestle in Thembisa township, where they recommended that the brand award top performing waste pickers with food parcels. In the end, this resulted in a 30% increase in recycling in the community.

Since the company became operational in 2020, it’s seen 9 million kilograms of material tracked on the platform, over 500 companies registered and around 400 waste pickers impacted in 5 different countries. It’s an impressive start for the young company who knows it is no small thing to transform an economy. Luckily, with the power of big data, Kudoti is providing the technological backbone for a new, better, way of doing business.

For society, I hope to help people see their impact on the world. Understanding that, I’d like to believe that the majority of people will start living more sustainably, especially if they have information.”