

From: Jennifer Lehmann <web@greens.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 May 2019 3:52 PM
To: recyclinginquiry
Subject: The Waste Issue and Recycling

RE: INQUIRY INTO RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

With the sheer volume of waste from our current lifestyle at the forefront of my mind, I wish to express my deep concerns about the impacts on land, waterways and seas. I believe it is imperative to develop the processes and mechanisms to dispose of, recycle and upcycle all of what is produced and subsequently becomes waste. There are steps that are very easy to take, as well as those which take longer to put in place. The deposit scheme that keeps South Australia's roadsides clear of plastics, glass and rubbish is an easy first step. So too is the production of compost which is already occurring in some locations and is immediately useful to home gardeners, parks and gardens and others wanting soils.

Australia needs to come into line with other countries in the world and ensure that all plastics, glass and metal are recycled and this requires a deposit arrangement. A second step is to ensure there are collections arrangements in place and that these are linked and integrated with facilities that can reuse the materials. We know that glass and plastics can be reused, or used in road surfacing, or in the manufacture of a variety of items (eg outdoor furniture). As a country that has dispensed with manufacturing and has been offloading our waste for years, it will take some time to set up these processes again, but this will create sustainable employment into the future. It will also encourage people to sort their waste carefully, knowing that it is not only worth something, but that we are responsibly dealing with our waste rather than polluting our country and poisoning our water resources. It is possible to minimise household waste and if we are able to dispense with one-use-only plastics this will help a great deal. We need accurate information and education about managing household waste with incentives to 'get it right' - such as lowering of council garbage rates in accord with lowering one's household waste volume. There also need to be high fines for people dumping waste in our rivers and bushland and elsewhere, along with rapid clean-ups rather than rubbish left for weeks to deteriorate. Again, there is the potential for sustainable employment once we place value on management of waste and regard people who deal with waste as having important roles in our health and wellbeing.

-- Jennifer Lehmann
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I'm happy for my submission and details to be made public.