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**From:** Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 23 May 2019 9:25 PM  
**To:** recyclinginquiry  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

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## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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Our current waste practices are in crisis. The sheer volume of waste (hereon referred to as material), is colossal and all the issues are linked, the main issues being:

Recycling has been our focus to our materials issues for too long, ignoring other practices such as reduction and refusal.

Our recycling is kerbside collection based. Sorted by machines, the material bales at the end of the process are seriously contaminated with other materials.

There is no, or little value, to material due to the lack of a market for such product (prob mainly due to its contamination amongst other manufacturing issues)

We have exported our unwanted materials overseas, absolving responsibility of our actions.

We see waste as rubbish and not as a material.

We rely on single use plastics to maintain convenient lifestyles

As a result of the above, littering is now a major issue, with roadside, trackside, waterways, parks and other community spaces being covered in abandoned materials. Our city is turning into a landfill site.

On a personal note as an avid material saver, the items I have the biggest issue switching out are milk bottles, yoghurt pots and packaging that are mixed materials.

The problem is systematic and each can't be solved in isolation. We have to seriously and smartly rethink how we do this. The first thing is to stop focussing on recycling and start focussing on removing or reducing waste material, help set up reuse schemes and set mechanisms in place to create a value on materials. A few practices I would like to see are -

Cash deposit scheme. Installed in local schools you will instill the value of materials to local communities and provide an income stream for schools. A CDS provides a financial incentive for people to pick up material, which now has a value. This scheme would also clean up the contamination issue of material bales.

The top six single use plastic should be removed /banned where possible. If not possible to do that, then actively taxed. A good example of this is single use coffee cups. Customers should pay an extra 40cents to have one. Rather than the existing system whereby those who bring BYO cups are offered a discount. This money could be used to invest in new material ventures (see below)

Litter picking should be brought under the arm of the correction system, so people with community service

or those on light offences are made to clean up our spaces  
Government should invest in  
material innovation to help create markets for reclaimed material  
food markets, like south Melbourne, Footscray which provide a real opportunity for removing food  
packaging from over 70% of foodstuffs  
Reuse schemes such as milk bottles

On a national scale, the Victorian government should work with other states to  
Standardise bottles, cans & containers sizes to support systems above. This way these vessels can be reused  
rather than recycled. Look at Scandinavia for example  
Identify the industries who use alot of single use plastic (esp with packaging)and call them to action to  
remove and reduce.  
Work with the packaging industry to switch out mixed use packaging, focussing on paper and cardboard as  
a preferred material.

I've worked in the environmental education sector from mist of my life. I know we can educate people to  
change the way they do things, but to get it done efficiently we need the systems in place to enable that.

Today I drove along a part of the western ring road and the sights along the side of the road we're nothing  
short of abhorrent. We live in the most liveable city in the world, but I hope this isn't actually the case. The  
journey left me angry, frustrated and incredibly sad. What are we doing to our beautiful Melbourne.

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File1:

File2:

File3: