

[REDACTED]

From: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 24 May 2019 2:22 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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There is one immediate waste management issue that needs to be (and can be) addressed: 80% of ocean plastic pollution comes from land-based sources and it flows through drains to our oceans via urban stormwater runoff. Urban stormwater runoff also contains harmful levels of other less visible (but extremely damaging) pollutants, such as suspended solids, heavy metals, nutrients and bacteria.

The evidence is irrefutable. The technologies and legislation already exist to solve the problem. However, there is a massive divide between what we should be doing and what we are doing.

I acknowledge that our business will benefit from this initiative. However, so too will thousands of Australian businesses across multiple sectors – as will the public via more jobs and healthy oceans.

For too long, we have been using the ocean as our dumping ground. With the ocean providing over half the oxygen we breathe and being a major source of food for the world's population, there is a critical need for action and we all have the ability to make change.

THE FACTS:

- Each year, at least eight million tonnes of plastics flow into the ocean – which is equivalent to dumping the contents of one garbage truck into the ocean every minute. If no action is taken, this is expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 and four per minute by 2050
- Stormwater is recognised as the key source of pollution in our urban waterways and the vast majority of marine debris entering Australian waters is land-based and generated locally
- Every time it rains, stormwater runoff from most urban areas within Australia flows to our waterways and oceans without any stormwater treatment to remove pollutants (including plastics). Where stormwater treatment assets are present to capture pollutants, they seldom receive appropriate maintenance, meaning captured pollutants aren't removed – often making the assets completely ineffective.
- The degradation of our waterways and oceans is a public health risk and has a direct impact to our economy, with the ban on commercial fishing and cautions around consumption of fish products from

Sydney Harbour due to pollution as just one current example

- A recent national survey found that the number one concern for Australians when it comes to population growth is marine and waterway health – rated higher than traffic congestion, competition for jobs and housing density
- The solutions to mitigate the aforementioned problems are available and cost-effective. However, the future cost to rectify these problems and implement appropriate solutions will only increase unless urgent action is undertaken now.

THE SOLUTIONS:

We are calling on the Victorian Government to achieve the following key outcomes:

- Mandate the appropriate management and continued maintenance of existing and new stormwater treatment assets (on both private and publicly owned land) by 2021
- Zero discharge of litter from all urbanised areas within Victoria by 2040.

If we kill the oceans, we kill ourselves.

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File1:

File2:

File3: