

Waste Action Group  
Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group



To Whom It May Concern:

### **Inquiry into Waste Management and Recycling**

As an active and engaged community group focussed on reducing waste and improving recycling in the Macedon Ranges, VIC, we ask that the Inquiry into Waste Management and Recycling take into account our concerns:

- **Single-Use Plastics Ban:**  
The Waste Action Group strongly recommends that the Inquiry recommend a ban on common single-use plastics to be in place by 2021, as per that of the EU. Single-use plastics are causing devastation to our environment, littering beaches, killing wildlife and toxifying ecosystems. Australia can no longer consider itself home to a pristine environment when our beaches are smothered in plastic and our wildlife is dying from plastic consumption. As an island nation with responsibilities to those smaller island nations who are our near neighbours, we have a responsibility to stop this stream of pollution from entering our waterways and oceans.
- **Domestic Recycling Industry:**  
Public trust has been severely eroded since the recycling crisis. People in the community want to recycle properly, yet have no faith in existing processes. This is the result of an “Out of sight, out of mind” attitude to waste for so many years. Shipping our waste overseas and relying on unpredictable and unregulated international markets has had disastrous consequences. We ask the Inquiry to recommend transparent and visible recycling processes in Australia, and to actively grow a domestic recycling industry so that we can appreciate the value of recycling to the economy.
- **Reward for Recycling:**  
We ask the Inquiry to incentivise better Sorting at Source by making recycling a rewarding activity through a consistent nation-wide Cash for Containers scheme. We believe that people should be encouraged to see packaging as having intrinsic and robust value as a recyclable resource.
- **Product Stewardship:**  
As consumers, we can only be responsible for managing the waste once it enters our homes and lives. We feel strongly that manufacturers and producers must be responsible for the waste they generate before it reaches consumers. We ask the Inquiry for regulated Product Stewardship to enforce responsibility for product packaging through its entire lifecycle.

- Recycled Goods on the Shelf:  
We ask for all Australian packaging to be made of compostable, recyclable or recycled materials by 2025, as per the target proposed by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation in 2018. We ask the Inquiry to put in place legislation to make this target a reality by 2025.

Should you require any further information please contact Lisa Richards, Waste Action Group, [REDACTED], or [REDACTED].

Yours truly,

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