

From: [Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management](#)
To: [recyclinginquiry](#)
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management
Date: Thursday, 30 May 2019 11:21:44 AM

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Replying to the TOR:

1. I believe it is absolutely the responsibility of the Victorian government to establish and maintain a coherent, efficient and environmentally responsible approach to solid waste management across the state, with assistance from the council.
2. I was shocked when I learnt that we were transporting our recyclable waste to China. I find it hard to believe that this option, although I am sure it was cheaper, was the most sustainable, environmentally responsible and appropriate long term approach. Regardless it was done. Move on.
3. Short and long term solutions:
Short term-
 - a. Anything that encourages or nudges the public, businesses and industry to act on the mantra 'reduce, reuse, recycle, repurpose, repair, refurbish, compost'. Such as education programs in schools and social media, reward programs, competitions, taxes on single use plastics and non-biodegradable plastics.
 - b. Anything that encourages industry/business to reduce virgin material use and increase recycled material use. Ideas such as a scaling system like the % Australian product system but % recycled materials used instead or a tax reduction for recycled material use could be implemented.
 - c. The Swedish people clean and sort their own materials into several groupings (paper, white glass coloured glass, metal, plastics), then take these to single collection points that are usually just a short walk away from most residences. The current Victorian system is easy for the house owner, but totally inefficient as sorting is double handled. Residents can sort more detailed if the bins allowed this (at least four groups to split paper, plastic, glass, metal. Four bins collected monthly or two bins split into two sections). A public education programme should be devised to create more public ownership and civic duty to increase participation in the recycling process.
 - d. Implement a bottle refund scheme greater than that of SA and NSW. Several exist world wide. Sweden's "pant system" (footnote reference 1) and Germany's mandatory "Pfandsystem" (footnote reference 2) seem to be the more successful ones.
 - e. Create fines for people putting wrong items into residential bins (which is easy). However, a carrot is always better than a stick (positive reinforcement). So rewards for people doing the right thing would be best (but harder to implement).
 - f. Sponsor schools to generate student involvement and ideas for 'reduce, reuse, recycle, repurpose, repair, refurbish, compost'.

- g. The South Australian government promotes research in their State that investigates/researches concepts surrounding the recycling and reuse of materials.
- h. The short term priority should be recycling of products which use high levels of energy when produced from virgin materials. "The British Plastics Federation told us that it takes 75% less energy to make a plastic bottle from recycled material than virgin materials." (footnote reference 3)
- i. Encourage new ideas from the public, businesses and industry, support them in implementation and help disseminate this information to promote good practice. Ideas such as using banana or fig leaves as the wrappings for fresh foods might need government support with respect to food handling codes.

Long term-

Please look at the Swedish system for a functioning, efficient long term solution (see footnote reference 4). This country has less than half the population of Australia and only 2 million more than Victoria's population. Victoria can achieve this with government direction. The website in footnote reference 5 presents some good ideas: Tax reductions for repairing items, a small direction committee consisting of manufacturers, government, universities and waste management bodies and another body to help government change behaviors. The waste management system should not be looked at in isolation. Consideration needs to be made to influence all consumers to 'reduce, reuse, recycle, repurpose, repair, refurbish, compost'.

Consumer demand must increase for products designed and used for a cradle to cradle system, not just cradle to grave. Government implemented strategies are needed to influence this demand.

4. Strategies to reduce waste generation are: public education, product stewardship, container/bottle deposits, banning single use plastics (being implemented in Chinese Hainan government, New York city, New Zealand, and many other countries and states of countries), government procurement policies which favour goods/products made from recycled materials (such as in the procurement process these items have a 20% 'favourable' factor added for every % recycled materials used).

5. Look into the Swedish recycling system, see references 4 and 5 below.

6. No comment

References:

1. <https://www.thelocal.se/20180328/thats-pant-the-story-behind-swedens-bottle-recycling-system>
2. <http://anker-andersen.dk/deposit-laws/germany.aspx> and <https://liveworkgermany.com/2017/05/how-does-the-german-pfand-system-work-and-is-it-effective/>
3. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmenvaud/339/33908.htm#footnote-040>
4. <https://www.avfallsverige.se/in-english/>
5. <https://sweden.se/nature/the-swedish-recycling-revolution/>

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File1:

File2:

File3: