

**From:** [Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management](#)  
**To:** [recyclinginquiry](#)  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management  
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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

Ms Kim Meagher  
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## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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To the Secretary of the Environment and Planning Committee,

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry. I was shocked to discover that Australia was sending its waste offshore.

I implore the State Government to hasten all methods (via regulation, legislation, incentivisation etc) to address this waste crisis. Stockpiling, insufficient recycling and lost of waste in oceans or other natural environments must not be allowed to continue. The approach to addressing this crisis must include all the methods noted in the terms of reference (points 3 and 4). The State Government must lead this action.

The market will not prioritise the environment over profits.

I want my taxes invested in methods that reduce waste first and foremost, educate and encourage Victorians to adopt cleaner/waste preventing behaviours, incentivise innovative new ways of manufacturing essentially cleaning up this appalling state of affairs.

I recently wrote to two manufacturers after finishing their respective products because I now know that there is no system in Australia to adequately deal with waste packaging. I sought the manufacturer's advice on whether they would accept their waste product back, and if not, what their plans were in the future to consider the lifecycle of the waste from their product. One was a multinational and the other a local company. I have not received a reply nor acknowledgement from either company.

I note that another company has a campaign encouraging people to #upcycle their glass jars for vases or pen holders. Apart from being a very superficial attempt to be seen to be doing something, holding onto waste to decorate the house does not appeal to me as much as boycotting companies who are not doing what they can to reverse irreparable damage to the environment.

I want to see companies take back their waste to recycle and reuse, just as we used to

return milk bottles. I am actively seeking out products that will meet this criteria and changing to products without packaging. Locally produced products such as Vegemite, milk, pot set yoghurt could lend themselves well to a circular economy system. Shifting to a system of locally reused containers would result in my continued purchase and consumption of these products.

Changed consumer behaviour may not yet have had a noticeable impact on the market, but I do believe that the public appetite and collective momentum for meaningful action will continue to grow, and if the State Government is concerned about the economy then it must act to change the system.

History is a vast repository of how we used to live without packaging. How we lived within our means. The disposable nature and culture we've allowed ourselves to accept as normal is disgraceful. We only have 12 years to ward off significant escalation of the climate crisis. This action cannot reverse the untold disasters slated for the future, but it can start to mitigate the fall out.

Please legislate to make manufacturers and retailers responsible for the full life cycle of packaging. Ban packaging that we do not have the resources or facilities to recycle completely (including byproducts). Ensure that replacement packaging and products are also recyclable/reusable/renewable.

Victorians have a proud history of innovation. Let's continue that history into the future for our collective well being and health.

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File1:

File2:

File3: