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**From:** Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 30 April 2019 4:11 PM  
**To:** recyclinginquiry  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

Ms Elizabeth Jensen  
[REDACTED]

President  
Marine Care Ricketts Point  
[REDACTED]

**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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File1: [5cc7e6f8ddca6-Vic Govt - Submission - Plastics and Waste Management - MCRP - 22 April 2019.docx](#)

File2:

File3:



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30 April 2019

To the Chair of the Environment and Planning Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Marine Care Ricketts Point (MCRP), an environmental group concerned with protecting the health of the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary and Port Phillip Bay.

We have recently worked successfully with Bayside City Council to eliminate single-use plastics in Council premises.

Ninety-five per cent of pollutants in Port Phillip Bay come from our creeks and rivers, such as the Yarra, or through storm water drains (1).

MCRP is very concerned about the lack of consistent policies and programs to deal with pollutants and recycling in Victoria.

There has been widespread publicity and shocking vision of fires and destruction of creeks from illegal stockpiling of contaminants, and Councils being forced to dump recyclable material into landfill in Victoria. This will quickly cause the public to lose faith in any waste management or recycling systems, unless the Victorian government acts quickly and decisively. We personally have already seen evidence that these crises have caused individual members of the public to stop supporting reduction and recycling efforts.

Many other countries, and Australian States and Territories, have initiated robust policies and programs to reduce waste and increase recycling.

Currently, community and business actions remain ahead of government action.

For example, Coles and Woolworths have banned single-use plastic bags; Carlton United Brewery (CUB) have banned plastic rings for their six-pack beers; Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) have introduced their own recycling stations as part of their World Without Waste strategy. CCA now believes container deposit schemes in the NT, ACT, Queensland and South Australia have led to higher recycling rates and better, cleaner quality supply chains for recyclable PET (2).

However, the above examples are a much more ad hoc and inefficient approach than if the Victorian Government provided an overarching policy framework under which local government and business can develop efficient and cost-effective systems and sustainable businesses.

We urge the Victorian Government to take leadership in addressing this issue. Specifically, we would like the Victorian Government to:

- 1) Reinvest the "Landfill Levy" to assist local councils and the waste management industry build viable waste management industries in Victoria.

- 2) Ban single-use plastics, including bags, straws, cutlery, crockery, glassware and coffee cups. Several local councils, including Bayside Council, have already introduced this requirement. However, a State-wide ban is much more effective, easier to implement, and would have a huge effect on reducing our fast-growing and difficult-to-recycle plastics waste.
- 3) Introduce a deposit return scheme for bottles and cans, based on the successful South Australian, Northern Territory, and Queensland schemes.
- 4) Introduce a requirement for Victorian Government agencies and contractors to purchase recycled items.
- 5) Adopt the UK's 2019 policy to make packaging producers pay full recycling costs, with penalties for difficult to recycle items. (See <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/18/packaging-producers-to-pay-full-recycling-costs-under-waste-scheme>; and <https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-britain-waste/uk-plans-to-make-plastic-packaging-producers-pay-for-waste-disposal-idUKKCN1Q700J.>)
- 6) Move towards the 'Circular Economy' by a specified date, as the European Union and other countries are doing. (The European Commission launched its Circular Economy Package (CEP) in 2015. It came into legislative effect in July 2018. The CEP's EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy establishes a concrete program of action, including measures covering the whole life cycle of a product—such as production, consumption and waste management. <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/publications/research-papers/download/36-research-papers/13880-the-circular-economy-an-explainer.>)
- 7) Urge the Australian Government to also move towards a circular economy, and to adopt the UK's packaging producers costs scheme.
- 8) Urge the Australian Government to manage hazardous wastes better by:
  - a) introducing more Compulsory Product Stewardship Requirements (e.g. for lithium ion batteries – one of the fastest growing hazardous wastes in Australia) along the lines of the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme;
  - b) making current voluntary product stewardship schemes compulsory (e.g. the current tyre recycling scheme).

We are happy to provide any further information and meet with you if required.

Yours faithfully,

Elizabeth Jensen  
President, Marine Care Ricketts Point



#### References

- 1 – <https://yarraandbay.vic.gov.au/issues/litter>
- 2 – Australian Financial Review Tuesday 16 April, page 18