

[REDACTED]

From: Geoff Browne <web@greens.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 May 2019 12:21 PM
To: recyclinginquiry
Subject: Consumption tax needed

RE: INQUIRY INTO RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

The so called 'recycling crisis' is just a symptom of a bigger problem: consumption. The waste hierarchy tells us that recycling should be a low priority, yet there is inordinate investment in it. Prevention is better than cure.

What is needed is a consumption tax that internalizes the environmental and social externalities into all material products. Just as we know a carbon price, that internalises the cost of climate breakdown into all energy products is a good idea, so to is a consumption tax essential. The tax should include modelled costs of products' impacts on biodiversity, climate, soil/air/water contamination and the communities that are impacted by extractive industries. We need to start paying the full cost of this wasteful lifestyle.

At the same time, potential inequities that could result from such a tax must be addressed. We know that austerity is bad for health equity. Therefore, simultaneously, a redistribution of the wealth raised by the tax must occur. The revenue should be hypothecated into socio-environmental programs that protect the most vulnerable humans and other species. After all; a society is judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable.

There you go; all solved.

-- Geoff Browne
[REDACTED]

I'm happy for my submission and details to be made public.