

For Immediate Release

Thursday, 22 March 2018

World Water Day - Plastic Pollution Danger to Clean Water

World Water Day is another reminder that access to clean and sustainable supplies of water are essential but now a new danger is high concentrations of plastic pollution entering our freshwater rivers and estuarine systems, the Boomerang Alliance – a collective of 47 environment and local government organisations – said today.

Land-based pollution can reach the ocean and recent reports confirm high concentrations of plastic, particularly those waterways situated close to heavily populated urban areas.¹

“There is no escaping it!” says Jeff Angel, Director of the Boomerang Alliance. “The presence of plastics in our inland freshwater systems magnifies the effects of plastic pollution dramatically. This brings the direct impacts much closer to a significantly larger portion of the global population than previously thought.”

“Our continued love affair with virgin and single-use plastics is polluting every corner of the planet and we are yet to see the full impact of that play out.” Mr Angel added. “Despite wide-ranging obligations associated with Australia’s commitments under international law, the Turnbull Government continues to defer responsibility for Australia’s waste industry to the states, effectively wiping its hands of the problem.”

In support of World Water Day, Boomerang Alliance is calling on the Turnbull government to acknowledge the problem and to commit resources to addressing plastic pollution as a matter of priority and in accordance with our international environmental obligations. The Commonwealth Environment Minister must implement an effective *Plastic Pollution Reduction Strategy* and take the lead on closing the loop, eliminating waste and stopping plastic pollution at source.

“Humans needs access to safe, clean water for survival, but the more we pollute our oceans and waterways, the less accessible that becomes, placing potentially billions of people at risk. Can we afford to be so reckless with our water supplies?” Mr Angel concluded.

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¹ Hall, Victoria ‘Microplastics are littering river beds’, BBC News online – accessed 21 March 2018
<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-43363545>