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## **Why is recycling plastic packaging so hard in Australia?**

We buy it, use it briefly and throw plastic away into landfill or as litter with gay abandon. Only a small proportion, usually collected through kerbside collections, actually makes it to a recycler. Of the 907,000 tonnes of plastic packaging used in Australia (2017-18) only 14% was actually recycled in Australia. Plastic packaging is out of control.

“Our Product Stewardship (PS) Act could help, if it was used correctly, the Act could mandate plastic packaging to be reused, composted or recycled,” said Jeff Angel of the Boomerang Alliance. “At the moment all the pressure is on households and councils, with the packaging industry playing little or no effective role.”

“The Act should also be strengthened to require manufacturers of imported plastic packaging to design packaging so that it can be easily and economically composted or recycled in Australia.”

“The European Union introduced packaging requirements in 1994. This required all packaging to be reusable/compostable and recyclable, with targets set for the amount of packaging to be recycled. This resulted in packaging like polystyrene being removed from the market, as it is expensive to recycle, and promoted better alternatives.”

“There is a stark contrast to Australia as the same product manufactured for Australia often uses polystyrene packaging.”

Boomerang Alliance, Australian Council of Recyclers (and with backing from the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association) are calling on the next Commonwealth Government to strengthen the PS Act to require suppliers of packaged products to design packaging to minimise resources and to ensure all packaging can be reused, composted or recycled easily and economically in Australia.

‘It will be impossible to achieve the national target to have all packaging reuseable, compostable or recyclable by 2025 without strengthening the Product Stewardship Act’, Mr Angel said.’

Check out our blog [https://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/federal\\_election\\_2019\\_blog](https://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/federal_election_2019_blog)

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