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Making Australia a Recycling Nation

Australia is missing out on hundreds of millions of dollars of economic activity and thousands of jobs as governments and business allow a mountain of recyclable materials to be stockpiled or dumped, the Boomerang Alliance of 48 environment groups said today.

“What is urgently needed is Commonwealth Government policies that boost investment in a domestic recycling industry and introduce a ‘buy recycled’ program by all governments and business,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

“Australia ranks only 17th in global recycling and is losing out on new jobs as 3 times as many jobs are created through recycling than landfilling. The recycling industry in Australia is a \$15 billion industry employing over 50,000 people (according to Australian Council of Recycling) and investment in its growth would help solve a major waste and pollution problem and employ thousands more.”

“Over 90% of the community support a Recycling Action Plan (ACOR Public Survey April 2019) and we are calling for strong policies from the parties in this Federal Election.”

“The other side of the recycling coin is the creation of demand for recycled materials. The National Waste Plan identifies the need for 30% average recycled content in products by 2025 and getting to that point requires government and business to ‘buy recycled. The Commonwealth can make a start towards this goal by mandating recycled content in its procurement policies and encouraging the states and territories and business to follow suit.”

“Putting a tax on key products using only virgin materials with progressive reductions as recycled content increases; prominent labelling of recycled content products; and a \$150 million National Recycling Industry Fund are the type of detailed policies that will be required,” Mr Angel said.

“To date, The Greens have backed investment and recycled content procurement; the Labor Party have promised \$60 million investment and support changing government procurement policies. The Coalition have said very little beyond a motherhood statement (‘We are partnering with industry on actions to reduce waste and increase recycling’),” the Alliance noted.

Check out our blog https://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/federal_election_2019_blog

Authorised by Jeff Angel, Boomerang Alliance, 99 Devonshire St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010