

22 July 2019

Council Plastic Free Event Guide Released

The Boomerang Alliance has released a comprehensive guide (*The Boomerang Alliance Plastic Free Council Event Guide*) to provide councils with advice on how to reduce plastic use as part of tackling plastic pollution.

The guide is also available to any event organisers who wish to adopt plastic-free policies.

The Guide is based on practical experience and intended to assist councils to adopt policies to manage single-use plastic phase-outs from their events. Or, for councils who have already adopted plastic free event policies, additional ideas to go further. It is endorsed by the Queensland Local Government Association and Minister for Environment.

‘Plastic coffee cups/lids, straws, bags, cups and food containers, cutlery and water bottles are routinely used at public events and are also amongst the most common litter items,’ said Toby Hutcheon, QLD Manager of the Boomerang Alliance.

‘Events are controlled spaces so by eliminating the use of these single use plastics in favour of reusable or 100% compostable items, events can reduce their plastic footprint and slash their plastic waste.’

‘Eliminating the use of these plastic products is an important way to achieve less litter to waterways and the ocean, less wasted resources and reductions in fossil fuel use.’

The Boomerang Alliance’s successful Plastic Free Places (Noosa) Project, funded by the Queensland State Government, Tourism Noosa and Noosa Council has shown what a difference going plastic-free can make. In the last 12 months, the project has eliminated over 3 million single-use plastic items in cafes and at events.

Major events, such as the Noosa Triathlon 2018 removed 180,000 plastic cups from use. The Noosa Food and Wine Festival 2019 went plastic-free and sent 1.3 tonnes of discarded food and food ware to a commercial composter, and not to landfill.

‘With the National Waste Policy establishing targets for all packaging to be reusable, compostable or recyclable by 2025, and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) seeking to have 70% of all packaging either composted or recycled by 2025, the time is right for events to demonstrate that packaging and other event items, can be reused or composted rather than landfilled,’ said Hutcheon.

‘We are grateful for the assistance of Noosa businesses, community and Council and the support of the LGAQ and Queensland Government in developing the program.’

Key Features promoted for a Plastic Free Event:

- Events are promoted as plastic free to build public awareness
- All vendors provide only reusable or 100% compostable food ware
- Events utilise a refillable cup system at bars and drink outlets
- No helium balloon releases are allowed at the event
- Event organisers are encouraged to provide water refill stations to limit plastic water bottles
- Discarded wastes are collected so they can be recycled or composted rather than landfilled
- Organisers take a continuous improvement approach to reducing plastic wastes. What they can't do this time, they will arrange next time



plastic bags



foodware



straws



takeaway
containers



coffee cups



water bottles



balloons

The guide and support information on plastic free events is available on the Boomerang Alliance website: www.plasticfreeplaces.org