

4 February 2019
For Immediate Release

WILL RECYCLING GROW OR GO BACKWARDS? ENVIRO MINISTERS' DAY OF TRUTH

This Friday, Australia's Environment Ministers will meet to solve or squib on the challenge of increasing our paltry plastic recycling rate of 14% and the ban on export of contaminated materials to Asia, environmentalists said today.

"This is our last chance, otherwise we will descend into more landfilling and giant incinerators as our response to this environmental crisis," warned Jeff Angel Director of the Boomerang Alliance, representing 49 green community groups campaigning on minimizing waste and plastic pollution.

Boomerang Alliance is calling for:

- Investment in domestic recycling that includes a ban on the export of contaminated mixed plastics and paper; and support for domestic recycling infrastructure and government procurement policies that encourage the use of recycled content in major projects and other products;
- A plastic bag ban and container refund scheme in every state, with a phase-out date for thick plastics bags;
- A phase out by 2021 of single use plastic takeaway products including coffee cups/lids, straws, cutlery, cups and container;
- Stronger government regulations that ensures packaging is designed and labeled so all packaging is reusable, compostable and recyclable by 2025; and 70% of all plastic packing is recycled by 2025.

"Australia has taken bold actions before with the introduction of kerbside recycling 25 years ago; then landfill waste levies; and container refund schemes and plastic bag bans which have had significant impacts on plastic waste and litter."

"However, so far the National Waste Policy (NWP) is not worth the paper it is written on, until we have strong and concrete actions and funding to support its goals".