

For immediate Release

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## **Queensland Steps Up on Phase-out of Single-Use Plastics**

The Boomerang Alliance today welcomed the Queensland Government's Plastic Pollution Reduction Strategy which includes a proposed ban on single-use takeaway plastics. These are the takeaway plastic items commonly found littered in Queensland, including plastic straws, stirrers, plates, cutlery, coffee cups and heavyweight plastic bags.

'Queensland, once one of the most littered states in Australia and is acting with determination to address its plastic pollution problems, building on the plastic bag ban and popular container deposit scheme.' said Toby Hutcheon, QLD Manager of the Boomerang Alliance, which represents 49 community organisations concerned with waste and plastic pollution.

'Now Queensland and South Australia are preparing legislation on single-use plastic take-aways - we encourage other jurisdictions to follow suit,'

'With the national Meeting of Environment Ministers (MEM) taking place tomorrow (8 November) in Adelaide - there is a perfect opportunity for a joint attack on plastic pollution.'

The Queensland Government intends to introduce enabling legislation in 2020 (subject to a regulatory impact statement) to ban the supply of straws, stirrers, plates and cutlery and, following further analysis, coffee and other cups and heavyweight plastic bags.

'Boomerang Alliance is calling on the government to ensure that the proposed ban on all these identified products is enacted in the next 12 months to avoid more plastic waste and more littering of the environment.'

'Our Plastic Free Places program which helps cafes, markets, events and festivals transition to the preferred reusable or 100% compostable alternatives is proof these products are readily available and acceptable to consumers and business,' said Hutcheon.

Queensland Government research shows that 7 out of 10 Queenslanders are taking steps to reduce their plastic use when away from home.

‘The public dislike excessive plastic packaging and plastic litter. They are looking for solutions. This Queensland Government ban, supported by the food and hospitality sector, will make the difference the public are looking for.’

‘Single-use takeaway plastic items are the second most common litter type after cigarette butts. The latest Clean Up Australia Rubbish report for Queensland found that 36% of litter collected was takeaway packaging.’

The Plastic Free Places program, with funding support from the Queensland Government, is demonstrating that the hospitality sector wants to do the right thing and be part of the solution to plastic waste and litter.

The Plastic Free Noosa project, one of five current projects operating in Australia, has over 200 member businesses and has eliminated or replaced over 3 million single use plastic items. This includes over 1 million straws, 280,000 coffee cups, over 750,000 containers and cups and 260,000 pieces of plastic cutlery. All this in one place in under 18 months.

The Plastic Free Places program will be expanded into Townsville and Cairns in 2020.

The Boomerang Alliance, in partnership with the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) plans to expand the program across Australia and make it accessible to all interested communities.