

Plastic Pact – don't get too excited Plan B released

The launch of the Plastic Pact is not the major step in tackling the plastic waste crisis, the Boomerang Alliance of 53 NGOs said today.

“With only 13% of plastic packaging being actually recycled and just 4% with recycled content – there are some very big challenges ahead. We don't believe the voluntary arrangements of the Plastic Pact and Packaging Covenant are sufficient and today we are releasing Plan B based on making the 2025 Pact and National Packaging targets mandatory in Australia,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

“When a company says its packaging product is recyclable or compostable and even has an Australian Recycling Label, that does not mean it will be recycled in practice. It's a small step and we have seen the repeated failure of voluntary schemes to make a major difference. With just a few years to 2025, we can't waste time on case studies, pilots, workshops and more roadmaps.”

“Our report, [‘What's the Plan B for Packaging?’](#) sets out the key benchmarks for when mandatory action should be taken by governments. Our position is that if all necessary measures are not in place by mid-2022 and an independent review reporting by then is not confident all the targets can be met by 2025 - then all targets should be mandated, by the start of 2023. This gives three years to achieve the targets - that is change product design and content; invest in new processing; and place on the market.”

“There is also a lack of standards and targets for compostability and reuse options.”

“So far the only major advance on polluting single use plastic items has been the passage of legislation banning them by several states, with more to come. If we took the same regulatory approach to the recycling and recycled content targets – then we can guarantee substantial action. However, the Packaging Covenant has resisted such action for many years,” Mr Angel said.

“One highlight of the launch today was the commitment by the Assistant Minister for Waste Minimisation to further engage on regional and global arrangements for plastic pollution reduction.”