



**BOOMERANG**  
ALLIANCE

COMMUNITIES TAKING CONTROL

REDUCING **YOUR**  
PLASTIC  
FOOTPRINT



OVERVIEW DOCUMENT

## Communities Taking Control: A Plastic Free Community Plan to Address Plastic Packaging

*‘At least 8 million tonnes of plastic leak into the ocean every year. By 2025 the oceans will contain one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of fish and by 2050 more plastic than fish’* -Joint EM Foundation/World Economic Forum Report Davos 2016

Globally 95% of all plastic packaging is used once and then wasted, often as litter.

In its 2014 Marine Debris report in Australia, the CSIRO stated that, ‘two thirds of the marine debris found along our coastline is plastic, most from local sources.’

In our Threat Abatement Plan on Marine Plastics (Boomerang Alliance/Dave West) we identified that 90,000-120,000 tonnes of plastics ended up in waterways around Australia every year. That is equivalent to 2.4 kgs of littered plastics per person, per year.

### BE A LEADER AGAINST MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION

"Plastic is so permanent and so indestructible, that when you've cast it in the ocean, or even in a dust bin... it does not go away"  
- Sir David Attenborough

<p>In Australia, litter comprises 60% of all plastic entering our oceans</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>420 million plastic bottles</li> <li>200 million plastic packaging</li> <li>180 million plastic bags</li> <li>10 million plastic products</li> <li>11 billion cigarette butts</li> </ul>	<p>3 million tonnes of plastic is consumed each year</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">  </div> <p><b>129 kg per person</b></p> <p>90,000 - 120,000 tonnes of these plastics will end up in our waterways and along our coasts</p>
<p>Over 200 species are directly affected and 96% of all marine biodiversity is vulnerable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 52% of all sea turtles</li> <li>◆ 90% of all sea birds</li> <li>◆ 100% of all coral reefs</li> </ul>	<p>10 international studies show average 27% of seafood contains plastic</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">  </div>
<p>We spend approx. \$500 million per year to combat litter</p> <p>The damage to fishing, shipping and tourism in the APEC region is \$1.7 billion per year</p>	<p><b>We have a plan to cut the amount of plastic entering our oceans by 70% by 2020</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🗑️ Container Deposit Schemes</li> <li>🗑️ Single-use Plastic Bags &amp; Microbeads Bans</li> <li>🗑️ Stop Factory Pollution</li> <li>🗑️ Washing Machines Filters</li> </ul>

Join Us to Protect Our Oceans

- 🗑️ Endorse our Community Owned Threat Abatement Plan
- 🗑️ Make a donation & become an official sponsor
- 🗑️ Implement your own plastic pollution reduction plan
- 🗑️ Introduce the issue to your staff, partners and clients

For More Information <http://bit.ly/2eDGJ8b>





## Executive Summary

The campaign ‘Communities Taking Control’ aims to bring together key individuals and organisations within a community to develop a community owned initiative to address plastic packaging and waste. To inform the ‘Communities Taking Control’ campaign, the Boomerang Alliance is piloting ‘Plastic Free Communities’ in Noosa & Wollongong, playing a coordinating role offering expertise, strategies and advice with a focus on the community itself being heavily involved in the development, execution and monitoring of the initiative.

At the conclusion of the pilots, we will be providing a guide based on our experiences for all communities to access, in order to implement their own community initiative to reduce single-use plastic waste and litter.

In broad terms our two CTC pilots aim to:

- (1) set the framework for a community plan to reduce its plastic footprint
- (2) identify partners and design a plan
- (3) launch and roll out the plan
- (4) compile lessons about strategies and implementation that can be applied to other communities

## Contents

- 1. Background for the Campaign**
- 2. The Vision for a Community Plan**
- 3. Action Schedule**

## Background: Australia is Changing

2016/2017 has been a monumental time period for waste and litter progress in Australia. NSW, QLD, WA and the ACT announced plans to introduce cash for containers schemes in the next 18 months. This means that, in addition to South Australia and the NT, only Victoria and Tasmania will not have a scheme in place.

Four states and territories (SA, ACT, TAS and the NT) have banned plastic bags. QLD and WA will follow in 2018 (extending the ban to biodegradables) with VIC just announcing they will also ban the bag! This leaves NSW and as the only state without a ban.

These measures will dramatically reduce plastic litter and the publicity around their introduction, further building community awareness about the dangers of plastic litter. The next step is to focus on the many other forms of disposable plastics that legislation does not currently address.

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## Let’s Make a Difference

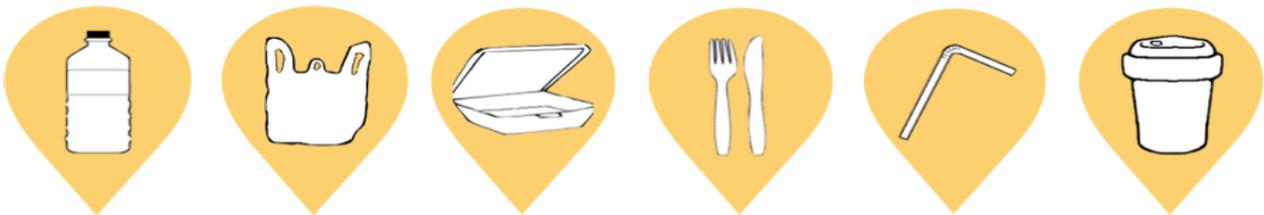
Many individuals, businesses and communities have become aware of the plastic pollution problem and are changing habits and practices on their own accord. However, what is lacking is a comprehensive community approach to systematically address disposable plastic packaging litter and use, with a focus on long lasting solutions.

## The Community Plan

Our Plastic Free Pilot programs are aimed at proposing community-wide initiatives to reduce the use of identified single use plastic packaging across all stakeholders. The plan involves council, local businesses, local media, community organisations, NGO’s, schools, event organisers and active individuals, working together.

The plan targets the elimination of 6 identified single use, disposable plastic items which represent problematic and prolific sources of the litter stream. Whilst there are a number of plastic litter items in communities, the Boomerang Alliance is targeting 6 items to focus resources to ensure initiatives are implemented thoroughly. The Boomerang Alliance advocates for the elimination of the following items and the use of reusable items or non-plastic alternatives by all stakeholders.

- Single use plastic bottles, single-use plastic bags, polystyrene/rigid takeaway containers, food ware, single-use plastic straws & coffee cups/lids (see Appendix 1 for the full table of items).



## Collateral

The Boomerang Alliance will be developing a national guide that includes case studies that will expose common hurdles various stakeholders experience when attempting to transition away from plastic; and offer insights into how to overcome them, operating as an educational tool for business managers. The guide will include:

- Educational material - an overview of the issue of plastic pollution, simple infographics on litter and waste for broad community education and existing information on existing NGO programs for communities to engage in.
- Program materials– information on programs that communities can roll out to incentivise businesses to adopt sustainable practices
- How-to-guides: Guides for each stakeholder group to reduce their single-use plastic including recommended product alternatives and case studies to give practical advice to help management transition away from single use plastics as well as guides for community leaders to engage local council, NGO groups and take on a project of this scale.



### **Goals:**

In the first year we want

- **Individuals** – to take up the plastic free challenge and support those businesses and events who are providing plastic-free alternatives.
- **Local businesses** - to participate in programs by agreeing to switch to preferred practices (alternatives to single-use)
- **Councils** – to promote CTC program, adjust any regulations to support business/community organisation changes to practice, collection services and audit on plastic reductions at landfill, provide funding for program elements
- **Chamber of Commerce** – to promote the program to members and assist in coordination of program. Audit reduced disposable plastics purchased by business
- **Local plastic free/environment and community organisations** – to adopt plastic free arrangements for any events. Promote reducing plastic footprint kits and practices
- **Surf shops/schools** – to promote the program to their customers and change any relevant practices
- **Schools/education facilities in area** – to run plastic free events, educate parents on reducing plastics in school and promote plastic footprint reduction
- **Local Festivals/events** – to promote the program and adopt preferred practices (alternatives to single-use)

**Boomerang Alliance** - will play a coordinating role engaging with all partners, keeping the program on track and assisting with advice as required. We want local ownership so participants will be running most of activities and engagement. As much as possible BA will participate in face to face activities but will more likely only be in locations for one week per month.

*The success of the initiatives will be measured by the amount of identified plastic items removed from use (audit of participants' procurement/audit of wastes received), and the number of local businesses/agencies and individuals who sign up as partners in the project. Included in the guide will be advice on what could not be achieved and recommendations on potential next steps.*

# SINGLE-USE PLASTIC POLICY

It is estimated that Australian's use over 1 Billion takeaway coffee cups every year, most of which get sent to landfill.

Target single-use plastic items for cafe's/food retailers to avoid



Coffee Cups



Polystyrene/  
Rigid Plastic



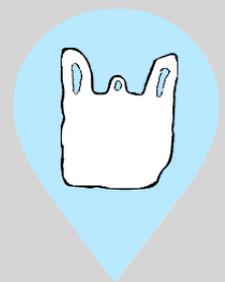
Food ware



Straws



Bottles



Bags

- 1. Avoid disposable items and use reusable options**
- 2. Replace plastic items with non-plastic alternatives**
- 3. Reward customers who refuse single-use**

# Single-use Plastic Policy

## For 'open environments'

The following policy is targeted towards cafes/food retailers who operate in an 'open environment' (takeaway) where there is no guarantee or control over how takeaway items are disposed of or collected and processed. In an open environment, the threat of plastic disposable items being littered or mismanaged is high, therefore the Boomerang Alliance does not endorse the use of any single-use plastic or bioplastic product due to the potential impact they have on the environment, particularly marine and wildlife. BA only endorses the use of reusable items or non-plastic takeaway items.

### Compostable bioplastic products

Compostable bioplastic products will only decompose in Industrial composting facilities or purpose built organic composting apparatuses (this does not include home composting units) and will not break down in marine or natural environments. Given that Industrial composting facilities are not widely available to the Australian public, a transition to compostable bioplastic products in open environments will not result in a reduction of waste sent to landfill and if littered or mismanaged, bioplastic products present similar risks to marine and wildlife (ingestion) as they will not biodegrade in the natural environment. BA therefore does not endorse the use of bioplastic compostable single-use items.

### 1. Single-use coffee cups

*Policy: Avoid single-use takeaway coffee cups and offer/incentivise reusable cup options*

Due to the limited recycling and composting of takeaway coffee cups in public spaces, BA does not endorse the use of any single-use coffee cup. For managers a number of initiatives can be implemented to reduce single-use coffee cups and encourage the use of reusables.

### 2. Polystyrene and rigid plastic food ware (containers/takeaway)

*Policy: Avoid polystyrene (health implications) and rigid plastic containers*

*Best alternative: Provide reusables or compostable non-plastic items (cardboard, paper)*

For the majority of takeaway food options, non-plastic alternatives exist (cardboard with no plastic lining). Management will have to manage a transition with hot liquid takeaway containers where cardboard may not be a suitable option.

*BA recommends management encourage/incentivise the use of reusable containers (discounts or return system for reusable containers) in order to avoid single-use plastic or bioplastic food containers.*

### 3. Single-use plastic food ware (cutlery)

*Policy: Avoid single-use plastic cutlery and use reusable cutlery or non-plastic alternatives (wood, bamboo). BA does not endorse the use of bioplastic cutlery.*

For cafes/food retailers that have 'eat-in' options, reusable items should be used. For takeaway, cafes/food retailers should use compostable alternatives (wood, bamboo) including knives, forks, spoons, chopsticks and coffee stirrers. Given that non-plastic alternatives exist for food ware, bioplastic products should be avoided.

#### **4. Single-use plastic straws**

*Policy: Avoid single-use plastic straws and use reusable straws if required.*

*\*To manage the transition to no-single use straws, paper alternatives may be used only upon request by customers.*

\*Note for takeaway options reusable straws may not be a realistic option. BA endorses the redesign of takeaway beverage containers or practices by cafe's so that no straws are required.

#### **5. Single-use plastic water bottles**

*Policy: Avoid single-use water bottles and offer refill stations for reusable bottles/ offer house water in reusable drink ware*

Beverage containers are the highest volume litter item and present the largest source of single-use plastic entering the marine environment. Therefore whilst cafe's and food retailers are likely to sell sports drinks and soft drink, BA encourages the elimination of water bottles and the use of water stations for customers to reduce single-use plastic. BA encourages cafes/food retailers to collect and recycle beverage containers and to utilise Container Deposit Schemes where available.

#### **6. Single-use plastic bags**

*Policy: Avoid single-use plastic bags and offer/encourage reusable bags or paper alternatives.*

Cafes/food retailers should avoid single-use plastic bags including degradable and biodegradable bags. BA endorses the use of reusable bags followed by paper bags for all takeaway options.

