



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Environment and Communications References
Committee report:

Never waste a crisis: the waste and recycling industry in
Australia

May 2024

Response

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Australian Government prioritise the establishment of a circular economy in which materials are used, collected, recovered, and re-used, including within Australia.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Australian Government show leadership through the urgent implementation of the 16 strategies established under the National Waste Policy.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Australian Government prioritise waste reduction and recycling above waste-to-energy, and seek a commitment through the Meeting of Environment Ministers of all levels of government to the waste hierarchy.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Australian and state and territory governments agree to a phase out of petroleum-based single-use plastics by 2023. The scope of this commitment would require careful consideration and should be developed through the Meeting of Environment Ministers.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that the Australian Government establish a Plastics Co-Operative Research Centre (CRC) to lead Australia's research efforts into reducing plastic waste, cleaning up our oceans and finding endmarkets for recovered plastic.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the Australian Government commit to implementing the recommendations of the Senate Environment and Communications References Committee inquiry into the threat of marine plastic pollution in Australia, particularly in light of the need to improve plastic resource recovery.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory and local governments to assist recyclers to increase the diversion of material from landfill; improve the quality of materials recovered through collection programs; improve the sorting of materials at recycling facilities; and assist manufacturers to increase the amount of recycled material used in production.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 8

- a. The committee recommends the Australian Government set mandatory targets for all government departments in relation to the recycled content of materials bought directly or provided by private contractors.
- b. The committee recommends that state and territory and local governments also pursue sustainable procurement policies to ensure strong domestic markets for recycled material.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 9

- a. The committee recommends that the Australian Government implement the 65 agreed improvements to the National Waste Report, and the data collection and analysis practices, as established by Blue Environment's Improving national waste data and reporting report.
- b. Further, the committee recommends that the National Waste Report be published at least biennially.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that the Australian Government support state and territory, and local governments in ensuring effective education programs are available to assist the public in understanding how best to undertake recycling

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that the Australian Government implement a national container deposit scheme.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that product stewardship schemes established under the Product Stewardship Act 2011 be mandatory schemes.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that mandatory product stewardship schemes be established for tyres, mattresses, e-waste, and photovoltaic panels.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 14

The committee recommends that the Australian Government extend producer responsibility under product stewardship schemes to ensure better environmental and social outcomes through improved design.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 15

The committee recommends that the Product Stewardship Advisory Committee be re-established and that they be tasked with recommending products for listing under the Product Stewardship Act.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 16

The committee recommends that the Australian Government assist state and territory governments to ensure that landfill levies in proximate jurisdictions are such that there is a no incentive to transport waste for levy avoidance purposes.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 17

The committee recommends that the Australian Government support state and territory governments fully hypothecating landfill levies towards measures that reduce the creation of consumption and waste, and that increase the recycling of waste materials.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 18

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to ensure the implementation of harmonised, best-practice landfill standards.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.