

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE****22 September 2023****National Packaging Solution: Producers mandated to take full responsibility for waste & pollution**

The Boomerang Alliance has today challenged the packaging industry to take full responsibility and pay for the costs of its waste and pollution decisions and urges the government to regulate the sector, with the release of its model guidelines for a best practice Product Stewardship Scheme for Packaging.

"The key to addressing excessive, damaging and problematic packaging is to make packaging producers responsible for the full costs of product design, collection, and processing of all packaging wastes. Packaging wastes must be eliminated and the environment protected – it's what consumers and the general community want," said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance of 55 groups.

"That means taking a circular economy approach involving the whole supply chain, with producers directly accountable for meeting stringent reduction, recovery and recycled content targets.

With the Commonwealth Government planning to publish its consultation draft on industry regulation shortly – the public, industry and intergovernmental debate about the future of packaging is about to enter its most crucial period. After years of inaction and failure to meet national targets, we must have a mandated scheme in place by the end of 2024 to meet those agreed targets," Mr Angel said.

"The soft plastics crisis, following the collapse of REDCycle collections, was a result of an industry failing to take responsibility for its own packaging waste."

"The container refund schemes now active across Australia, are successful examples of a circular economy where producers (the beverage industry) are responsible for the full costs associated with the recovery of their products."

The Boomerang Alliance has identified 10 key principles that need to be included in the mandated national scheme. In addition to full producer responsibility, introduced packaging standards must include the requirement that packaging is recovered in practice and at scale. The current Australian Recycling Label (ARL) does not meet this requirement with the result that most plastic packaging goes to landfill.

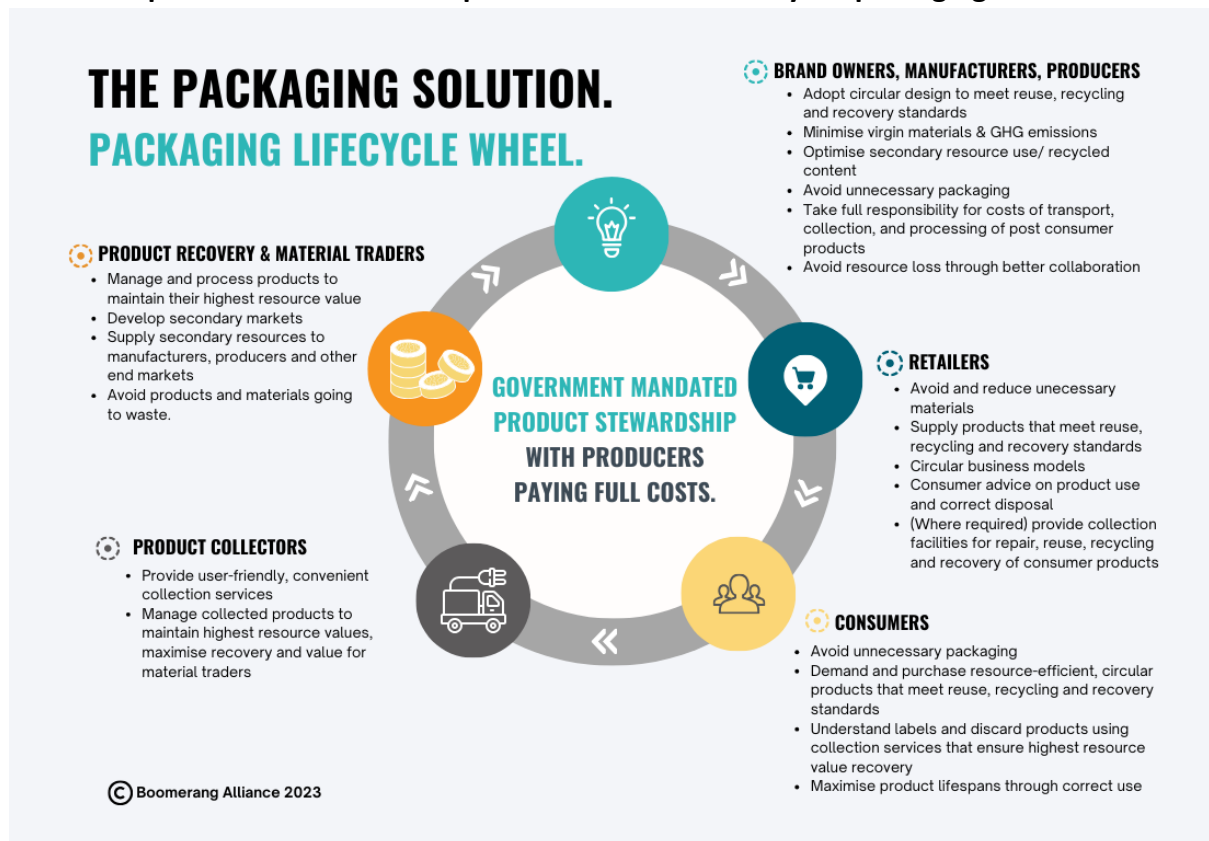
"The Boomerang Alliance is also calling for a national harmonised scheme that has State and Territory support. The scheme needs to be managed by a national body with authority and accountability to the Commonwealth and not governed and exclusively run by the packaging industry. Any targets must be mandatory with penalties attached for non-compliance."

This new scheme will bring Australia in line with International best practice. In 2024 the packaging industries in the EU will be subject to stringent Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, including the requirement to cover the full costs of plastic packaging from collection, transport to treatment.

'The community has been waiting for over 25 years to solve the packaging waste crisis, it's time to get the policies and practices right,' says Angel.

**10 guiding principles for a best practice Product Stewardship Scheme:**

1. Prioritisation of Avoidance and Reduction
2. Best Practice Eco-Design of Products
3. Mandated Standards
4. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) - Whole of Life Cycle & Supply Chain
5. Mandatory National Targets and Obligations
6. Development of Secondary Markets
7. A national scheme managed under Commonwealth legislation
8. A standardised monitoring, compliance, and enforcement regime
9. Commitment to continuous improvement
10. Consumer Education and Awareness

**Actions required to achieve a best practice circular economy for packaging:****ENDS.****Further Information:****Packaging Solutions Report & Factsheet:** [www.boomerangalliance.org.au/national\\_packaging\\_solution](http://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/national_packaging_solution)

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