

# THE PACKAGING SOLUTION

## AN EFFECTIVE, BEST PRACTICE PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP SCHEME FOR PACKAGING

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[www.boomerangalliance.org.au](http://www.boomerangalliance.org.au)

**“Businesses producing or selling packaging have a responsibility beyond the design and use of their packaging, which includes contributing towards it being collected and reused, recycled or composted in practice.”** New Plastic Economy, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

The Commonwealth Government has announced its intention to introduce a mandated Product Stewardship Scheme for Packaging by 2025. The Boomerang Alliance has developed model guidelines for a best practice scheme to inform the proposed Commonwealth scheme.

The guidelines include all packaging and Circular Economy arrangements associated with that packaging, supported by the following principles:

### 1. Prioritisation of Avoidance and Reduction.

Manufacturers must avoid and reduce unnecessary packaging and harmful materials. One single use product should not become a replacement for another single use product and the scheme must facilitate national collaboration to accelerate ‘refill & reuse’.

### 2. Best Practice Eco-Design of Products.

Best practise design includes the elimination of products and materials that cannot be recovered and maximising the use of recycled content in new products.

### 3. Mandated Standards

All packaging will be designed for circularity and based upon their highest resource recovery value. Standards include the requirement that products are recovered in practice and at scale (not just technically recyclable). Only products tested to a standard can be labelled as such.

### 4. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Whole of Life Cycle and Supply Chain

EPR covers producer responsibility across the entire life cycle – from design to the costs associated with the collection, transport, processing and recovery of all packaging. All manufacturers and suppliers are included to ensure a level playing field. Eco-modulated fees need to be considered to incentivise preferred options.

### 5. Mandatory National Targets and Obligations

Targets should be set based on current National Waste Plan (NWP) targets. In addition, a 20% plastic reduction and a 30% reusable target (by 2030) should be included.



## 6. Development of secondary markets for discarded products.

Existing recycled content targets will be applied and expanded to ensure the highest possible resource value outcomes. Specific packaging categories will be prioritised with specific targets. Incineration (waste to energy) is not supported as it hinders the transition to a circular economy. Exports for recycling is not considered a secondary market option.

## 7. A national scheme managed under Commonwealth legislation

The new mandatory scheme must be governed by a national body with authority to implement, monitor and enforce targets. Its Board must be accountable to the Commonwealth Government, not industry. Legislation must be designed to create a level playing field and avoid 'free riding'.

## 8. A standardised monitoring, compliance, and enforcement regime.

This regime should be established to meet government policy obligations and for all producers, ensuring public accountability and performance outcomes. Significant and proportionate financial penalties will be applied for non-compliance and greenwashing to act as effective deterrents.

## 9. Commitment to continuous improvement

A commitment to continuous improvement includes regular updated lifecycle analysis of product and supply chains, adoption of best practice and integration of latest and emerging technologies to improve upon current practices. Continuous improvement takes account of associated impacts on human health and wellbeing, carbon footprint, job creation and the effects of plastic pollution on other industries and the environment.

## 10. Consumer education, awareness and behaviour change.

Consumers must be informed about best practices to reduce unnecessary packaging, and the potential impacts of packaging they have purchased. Individuals and businesses need to know how to discard any packaging according to its category. Producers must enable consumers to 'close the loop' by providing easy access to fit-for-purpose collection services for all packaging types.

The Packaging Lifecycle wheel shows actions required to achieve a best practice circular economy for packaging.

