



# POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR RECYCLING IMPROVING OUR WASTE MANAGEMENT

*The Greens' plan to reduce waste and create green jobs*

Better management of Australia's waste provides an opportunity to create new industries and jobs, improve the natural environment and minimise waste production. A container deposit scheme and a national waste register will help this transition.

Successive governments have been slow to respond to Australia's phenomenally high production of waste. The Greens will begin to clean up the nation and protect our environment through the establishment of a national container deposit scheme and a national waste register. The old parties voted against the Greens bill for a national container deposit scheme in Federal parliament late last year.

## > BETTER MANAGING OUR WASTE

The Greens believe individuals and companies must take more responsibility for the amount of waste that is produced. We are committed to removing existing waste from the environment and minimising the creation of new waste.

**The Greens will improve waste management in Australia by:**

- **Establishing a national container deposit scheme** to recover high value materials, stop plastics and other toxic metals from polluting the environment, and encourage investment and create jobs.
- **Establishing a national waste register** to provide transparency on what and where waste is produced to drive innovation and collaboration about how waste is managed. This will include an audit of all municipal waste sites.
- **By funding research** into surveying marine debris, the best ways to remove existing waste and debris and to stop further waste entering the marine environment.

These initiatives will help drive a change in waste management in Australia. They will help the waste management industry grow, securing investment and employment for Australia. It will also help protect Australia's natural environment by ensuring harmful waste is removed from the environment.

## > A CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

The Greens have been pushing a container deposit scheme for a number of years. Beverage containers are believed to account for around 30% of all litter found in Australia and a container deposit reward scheme would help reduce the amount of beverage containers found in our waterways, parks and on our beaches.

The principle of a container deposit scheme and other product stewardship schemes is that, at the point of sale, consumers pay the full life cycle cost of a product (including disposal and recycling). It also provides an incentive for discarded beverage containers to be picked up because each container has a monetary value.

South Australia has had a container deposit scheme in place since the 1970s. Almost 85% of their beverage containers are recycled compared to around 30% for the rest of the country.<sup>i</sup> This means less litter lying around the state.

We would engage in further consultation on the best design for the scheme to be implemented by 1 July 2014.

## > A CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME WILL BRING INVESTMENT AND CREATE JOBS

Not only will a container deposit scheme minimise litter and encourage people to be more responsible it will stimulate investment and create jobs.

In April 2013 leading international recycling companies including TOMRA, REMONDIS and Envipco indicated their willingness to invest approximately \$500 million in container deposit scheme infrastructure if a national scheme is established. Based on their extensive international experience they believe that over 3000 jobs will be created Australia wide.<sup>ii</sup>



## > THE NATIONAL WASTE REGISTER

The Greens will commit \$25 million over the forward estimates to establish a national waste register which will provide information and transparency on the amount of commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste produced and its location. The waste register initiative will also include a yearlong audit of municipal waste sites to ascertain how much of this waste is flowing into landfill.

The scheme will begin on 1 July 2014 and companies will be encouraged to voluntarily participate. From 1 July 2016 participation in the register will be compulsory for medium and large businesses. It will be voluntary for small businesses on an ongoing basis.

To provide transparency the information contained in the waste register will be publicly available on a website.

## > DRIVING INNOVATION IN WASTE MANAGEMENT

Knowing what waste is being produced and where it is will help drive innovation in waste management. Companies who specialise in recycling and waste management will for the first time have more complete information about how much waste is produced. They will be able to adapt and innovate in their businesses to meet the challenges of dealing with the waste that is being produced.

It will also inform all levels of government about trends in waste production and what policies are needed to safely and constructively manage the waste.

The public register will also mean companies are more accountable for the waste they produce. A public register will encourage them to further adapt their waste management practices to ensure they are keeping up with the industry standard and demonstrating their environmental credentials to their customers.

## > MARINE DEBRIS RESEARCH FUND

The Greens will establish a marine debris research fund of \$1m per year for three years from 1 July 2014, to provide funding to universities and other research institutions for the study of marine waste and debris and the ways in which waste moves from land into the marine environments.

It is difficult and expensive to carry out survey work in the marine environment. That is why the Greens will establish a stand-alone fund to provide a \$1m per year for this type of work. Funding will be provided to researchers to survey and collect data on the impact of marine debris on the environment and the most efficient ways to remove and prevent litter and debris entering the marine environment.

This work will help policy makers and others understand the challenges that litter and other marine debris poses to the marine environment. It will also help guide policy makers as to what are the most effective solutions.

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<sup>i</sup> Clean Up Australia

<http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/Whatelsewesuppor/container-deposit-snapshot.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.envirobank.com.au/news/international-investment-australian-recycling>