

ACOR Media Release (April 27, 2018):

RIGHT CHORDS BUT MISSING KEY NOTES: RECYCLING INDUSTRY ON MINISTERIAL MEETING

At their meeting today, Australia's Environment Ministers have recognised the need for reform, but now need to move to real action to re-boot recycling, according to the recycling sector's peak body.

"The right chords have been struck by Ministers about investing in recycling's future, but we did not hear two very important sounds: implementation details and dollars in the till," Pete Shmigel, ACOR CEO, said.

"The recycling industry welcomes commitments about ensuring recyclability of packaging products, buying recycled content products by governments, expanding domestic reprocessing capacity and developing a new national plan.

"However, today's Ministerial announcement lacks comprehensive targets for all measures, and consequences for underperformance, that make practice from theory.

"Pro-recycling policy principles are welcome; pro-recycling positive action and investment is now to be expected.

"As ACOR, we look forward to working directly with the CEFC to identify and facilitate a strengthened investment presence in resource recovery - including in an expedited timeframe. There are good projects that merit backing among our members.

"As ACOR, we strongly question the timeframe given for products' recyclability as packaging is getting more complex each day and resulting in greater contamination and community cost each day that passes. By 2025, millions of tonnes of potential contamination would have passed through the system without the producers of packaging taking greater responsibility for their decisions.

"Similar commitments were given in the 2009 National Waste Policy and, on current timeframes, it will be 16 years by the time they have been realised. That is truly mediocre.

"Finally, further work is urgently needed at State levels to ensure that recyclate does not need to be disposed to landfill in the short-term," Mr Shmigel said.