



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **RECYCLING TARGETS NOT BEING MET, NEW EXPERT REPORT FINDS**

A new independent report has shown that States and Territories have not yet met any of their current waste diversion and recycling targets, and only one previous target of all set across the country has been met.

[The report](#) commissioned by the Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR), Australia's peak body for the recycling industry, has highlighted significant gaps between what's been promised at the jurisdictional level and what's been achieved.

The expert consultancy Arcadis found only one of the 12 waste reduction targets set by jurisdictions in previous strategies was achieved, and that few States and Territories are on track to achieve their current targets. This broadly suggests that jurisdictions will need to go 'beyond business as usual' to achieve current targets.

The report also assessed the remaining landfill capacity in Australia's major metropolitan areas as a broad indicator of the requirement for investment in higher levels of recycling and recovery in each jurisdiction. The high level review identified medium-term landfill challenges in Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart, under current conditions.

ACOR CEO Pete Shmigel said: "This report shows that, while progress has been made, the States and Territories have struggled to meet their own more conservative targets for recycling, let alone the National Waste Action Plan's new and very ambitious target of 80% by 2030 recovery rate for waste.

"In no State or Territory is there a mandatory requirement on any party to achieve targets. Also, none actively ties programs or funding support to an explicit achievement of targets.

"While we now look forward to jurisdictional contributions to the Recycling Modernisation Fund, a historic lack of reinvestment in resource recovery infrastructure and recycle market development is one of the biggest issues. At the Plastics Summit earlier this year, the Prime Minister noted that only around 8 per cent of the \$2.6 billion collected in the last two years in waste levies was being reinvested by State and Territory Governments in recycling infrastructure.

"It's reasonable that Australians should expect that the waste levies that are being collected by the State and Territory Governments are more significantly used to reduce the amount of waste ending up in landfill.

“A great opportunity for State and Territory Governments is to remove waste levies from legitimate recycling operations. There is a direct cost to recyclers and remanufacturers from unwanted contamination that they have no control over, and it makes them even less competitive compared to overseas players.

“It makes little sense to set new resource recovery and recycling targets, as several States and Territories are now doing, only to turn around and penalise exactly those companies trying to help meet those targets. Queensland-style exemptions are do-able and would strongly increase the likelihood of meeting new targets.”

“Recycling is clearly on the State, Territory and Federal Governments’ agendas, and that is very welcome. However, the current policy conditions need to be evolved so that Australians can truly take full responsibility for their waste, as the Prime Minister rightly says,” Shmigel said.

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