



One Planet  
Consulting

# **Australia becoming a global super-circular plastics economy**

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Helen Millicer, GAICD, Churchill Fellow

### **Australian Govt**

- Report into product design for circularity

### **Australian Food and Grocery Council**

- National Stewardship program for soft plastics (NPRS)

### **Tasmanian Govt**

- Board Director, Waste & Resource Recovery

### **Society Plastics Engineers**

- 2022&2023 Conference Circular Plastics

### **CRC Solving Plastic Waste Bid 2022-23**

Co-Founder, ClimateWise Associations

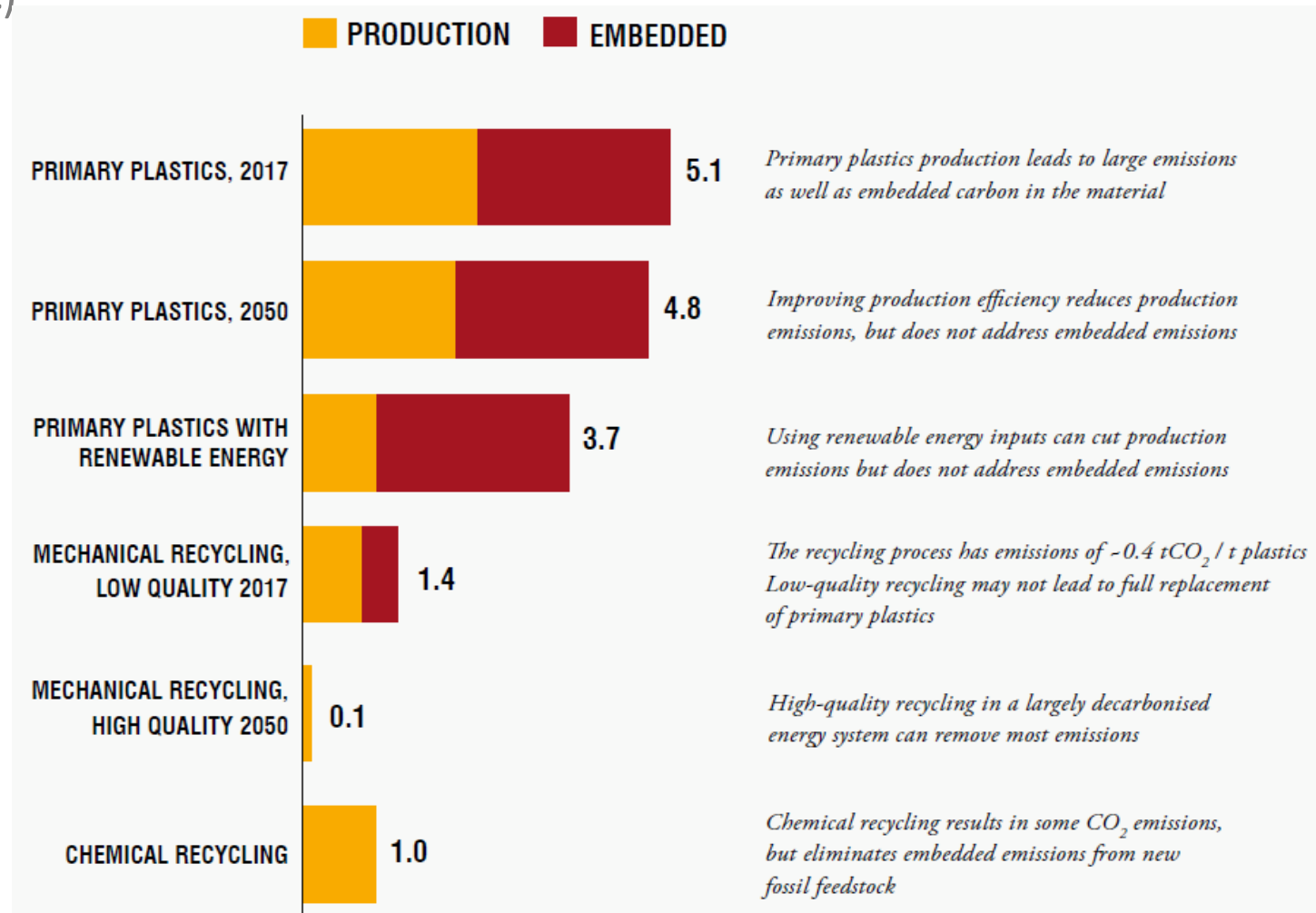
Chair, Churchill Trust

Relevant previous:

- Replas Board Advisor, APCO, Vic and local Govt, Industry and Environment Assoc incl PACIA (now Chemistry Australia)



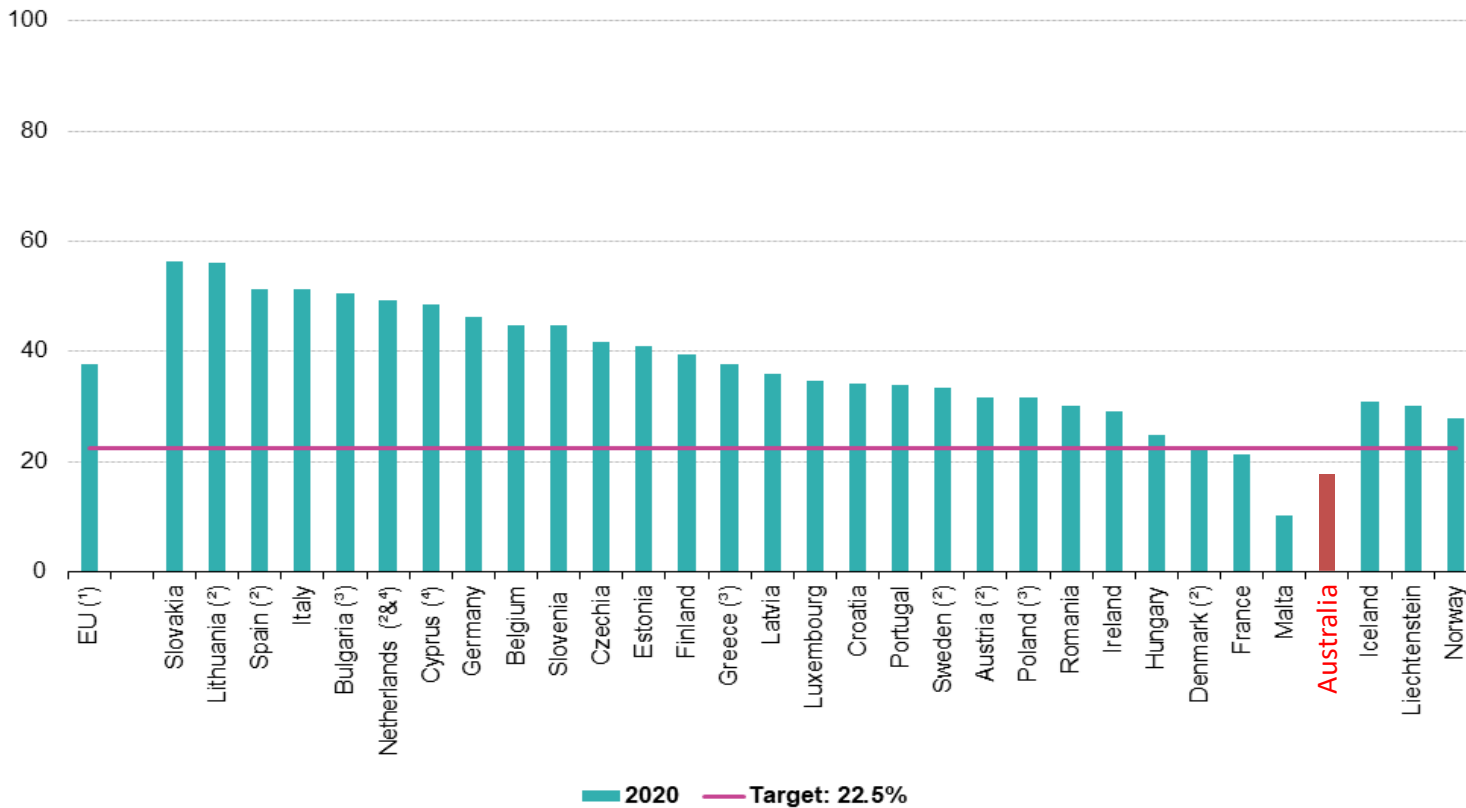
# Fact 1. Emission intensity of plastics production vs recycling (t CO<sub>2</sub>/t plastic)



## Fact 2. Plastics packaging recycling across EU vs Aust

### Recycling rate of plastic packaging waste, 2020 (%)

(%)



(1) Eurostat estimate.

(2) Break in series.

(3) 2020 data not reported, 2019 data presented.

(4) Estimate.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: env\_waspacr)

## Why such poor results? Old ways with soft plastics

- Incentives and priorities for high consumption and easy disposal
- Lack policies, incentives and programs for improved design, efficient collection, reprocessing and recycled content
- Focus favouring BAU, linear, waste, landfills
- Insufficient strategy, guidance, commitment and forums for transformation, investment and collaboration

### **Results in**

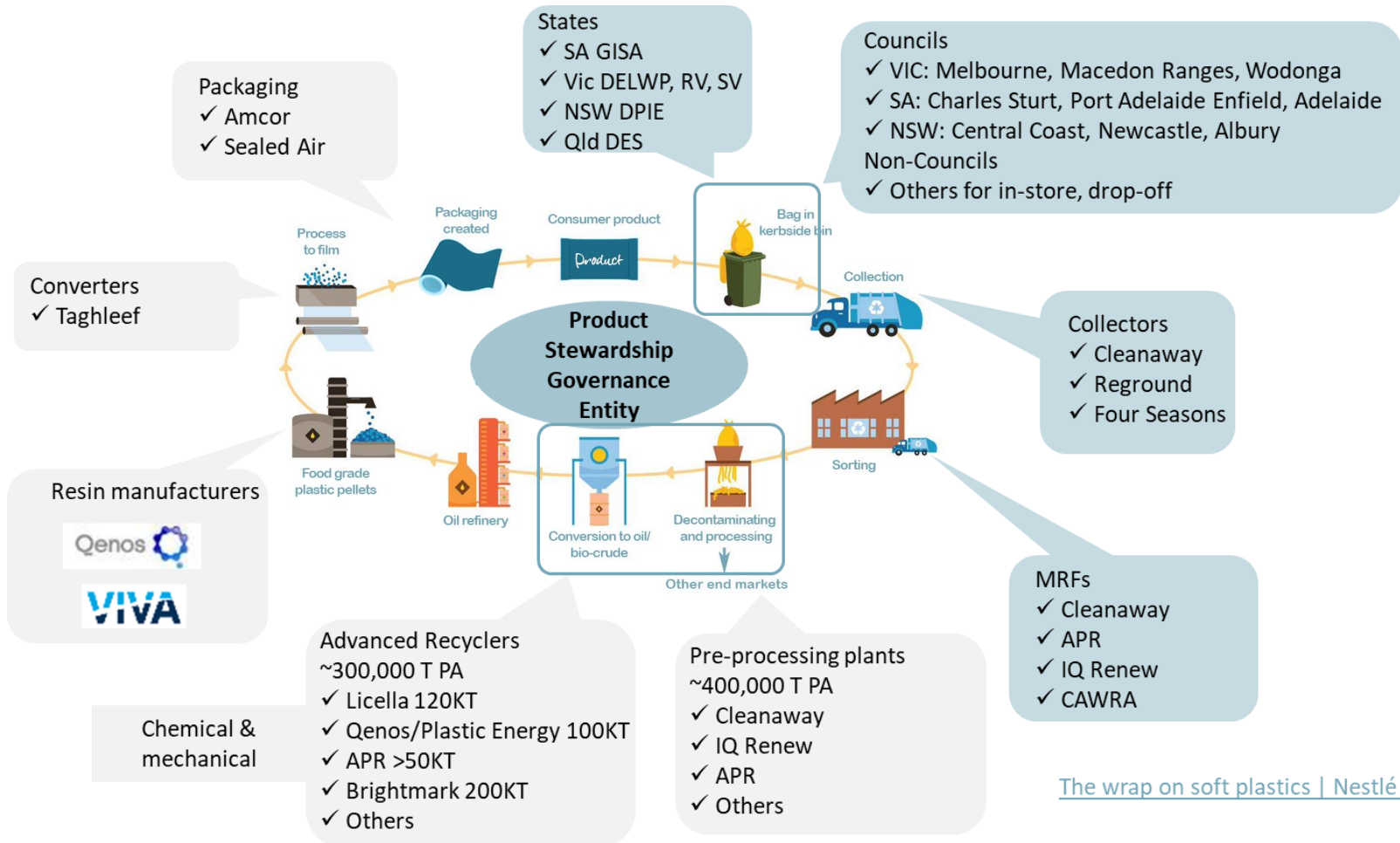
- Linear systems and supply chains =
  - High waste in quant, qual, \$, landfills, litter
  - High costs of living and environmental degradation
  - Lost jobs, stagnant productivity and manufacturing
- Status quo, uneconomic ventures and slow difficult improvement

## Fact 3. Lifting standards and certifications to shift systems

- EU Parliament [new draft law](#) (11 May 2023)
  1. all sustainability labels must have impartial certification scheme or government backing
  2. protecting consumers against early obsolescence with durable products
  3. no greenwashing claims based on carbon offsetting
- EU Council committed to [Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism](#) on imported products by 2026 in countries without a carbon price
- [EU approvals](#) for recycled food-contact plastics processes & facilities (Sept 2022)
  - Opened up mechanical and chemical recycling innovations
  - Approves closed and controlled supply chain feedstock and processing
  - Register of approved facilities
  - Quality assurance systems certified by independent parties
- [EU Commission](#) and EU Green Deal and [Circular Plastics Alliance](#) investigating:
  - EPR/stewardship for select packaging
  - mandatory reduction, reuse and recyclability targets in select formats
  - recycled content by 2030 in certain categories incl for imported packaging
  - harmonised labelling and reporting
- [NZ Plastic Packaging Stewardship](#) scheme with labels and levy
- [South Korea](#) packaging requirements in 2021 incl govt procurement
- Green Public Procurement, use of certifications, traceability eg [Hamburg](#)



# Example 1. NPRS relies upon certifications and specifications



[The wrap on soft plastics | Nestlé Australia \(nestle.com.au\)](https://www.nestle.com.au)

## Solutions: Aust Govt Report for circular products into Australian market

1. **Circular Australia Strategy** for eco-design product
2. Improve **Stewardship** and **introduce EPR**
3. Activate **Reuse and Repair Reset Program**
4. Align **product standards and specifications** with global best
5. Establish **Eco-Design Innovation Fund** for national circular, supply chains
6. Accelerate recycling by raising **landfill fees** on priority products
7. **Financial and regulatory** mechanisms fixing negative externalities
8. **Buy for Good Program** procurement for government and industry
9. **Learning and Upskilling Program** for Environmental Good
10. Public **education**

### 4 Priority Sectors: **Plastics, Buildings, Textiles and Electronic Goods**





## Opportunity: to transform Australia into global super-circular plastics economy

- Shift to highly efficient collections, technology, stewardship and supply chain agreements for circular plastics
- Drive recyclable and recycled content plastics
- Help cut plastics' emissions ~30-50% by 2030
- Help Australian plastics packaging and industry comply with international standards and requirements
- Drive up industry investment and resilience with credible, industry-Govt backed certifications and meet national targets

### **Results in**

- Faster essential movement toward a viable and sustainable future



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