

Australia, are we sleepwalking or managing our plastics future?

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- Consultant, [Australian Food and Grocery Council, National Plastics Recycling Scheme](#)
- Co-Founder, [ClimateWise Associations](#) – Climate and Emissions program for Australia’s Associations
- Director, [Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board](#)
- Chair, [Churchill Trust Australia](#), Selection Panel Victoria (Agriculture, Commerce and Logistics)
- Expert Panel Member, [Solving Plastic Waste Bid Advisory Committee, Griffith University](#)
- Project Co-Lead Consultant, Australian Government, Enabling Product Design for Environmental Good
- **Member:** Society Plastic Engineers, Renew, Waste Management Resource Recovery, Australian Institute of Company Directors, Women on Boards

Australia's plastic sector status

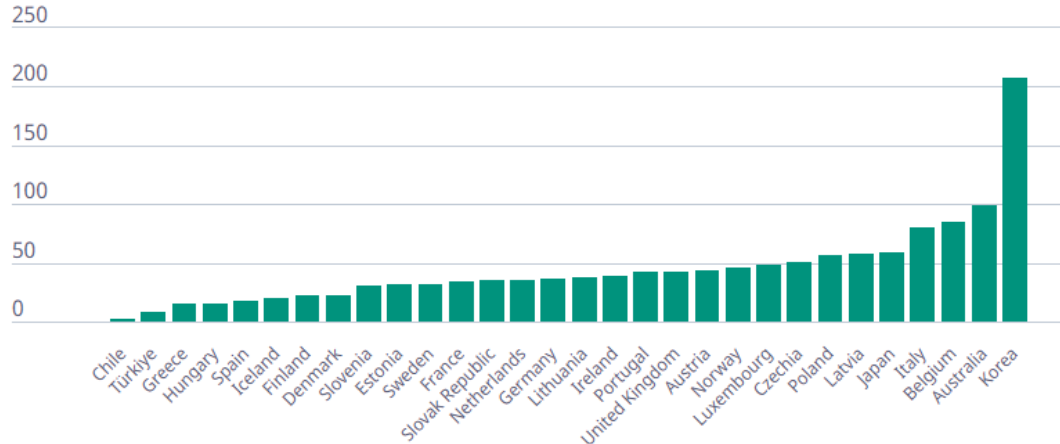
Challenging conditions, increased import competition.

898 businesses, 10,500 employees, \$4.3B revenue, resin & product manufacturing base. High consumption, high waste to landfill; few activated circular levers.

Main sectors: food/beverage, construction, furniture, transport.

Plastic waste generated per person

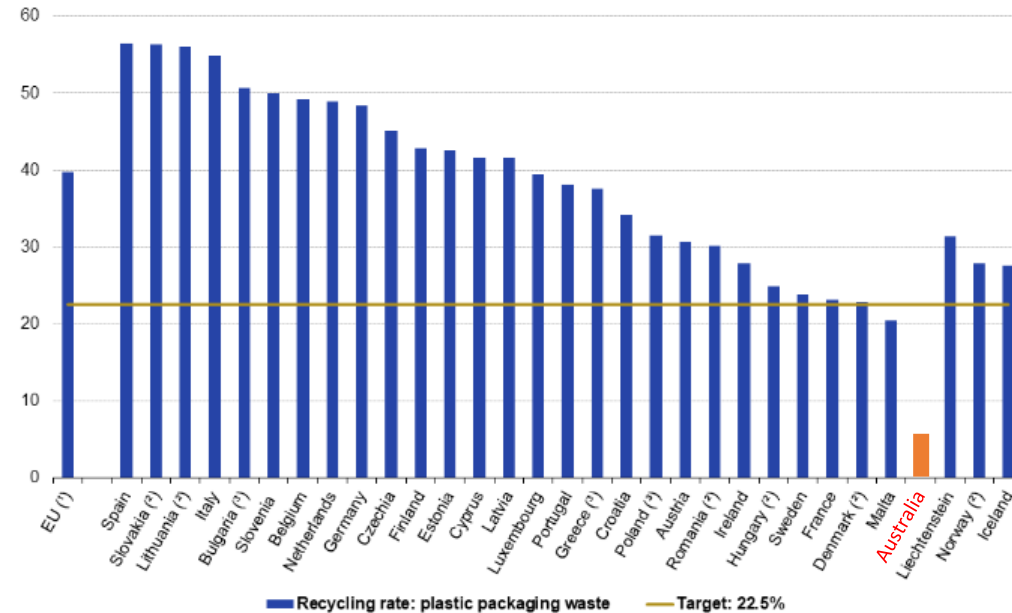
Kilogrammes per person, 2021 or latest available year



Plastics packaging *recycling* in EU vs Aust

Recycling rate of plastic packaging waste, 2021

(%)



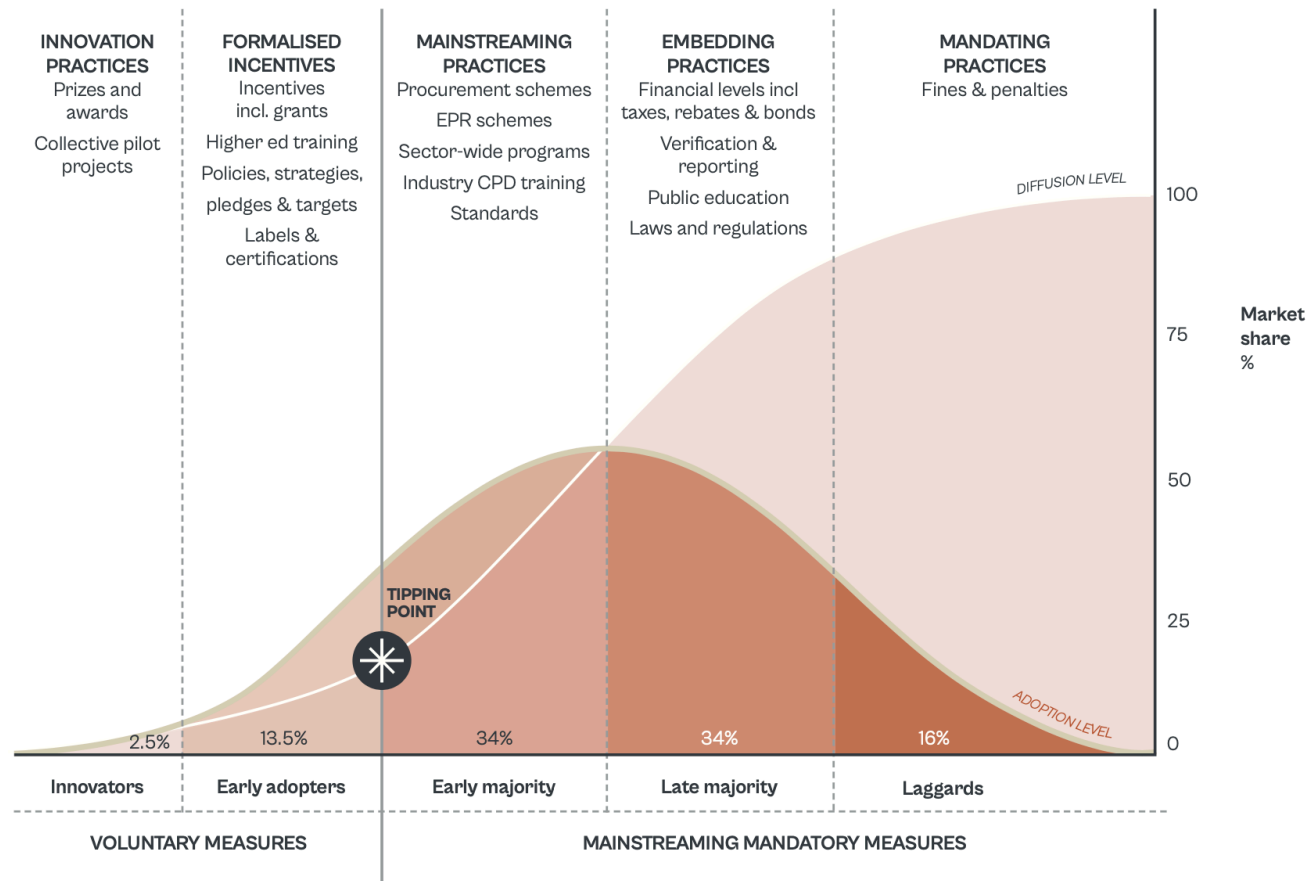
(*) Eurostat estimate.

(*) 2020.

(*) 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: env_waspacr)

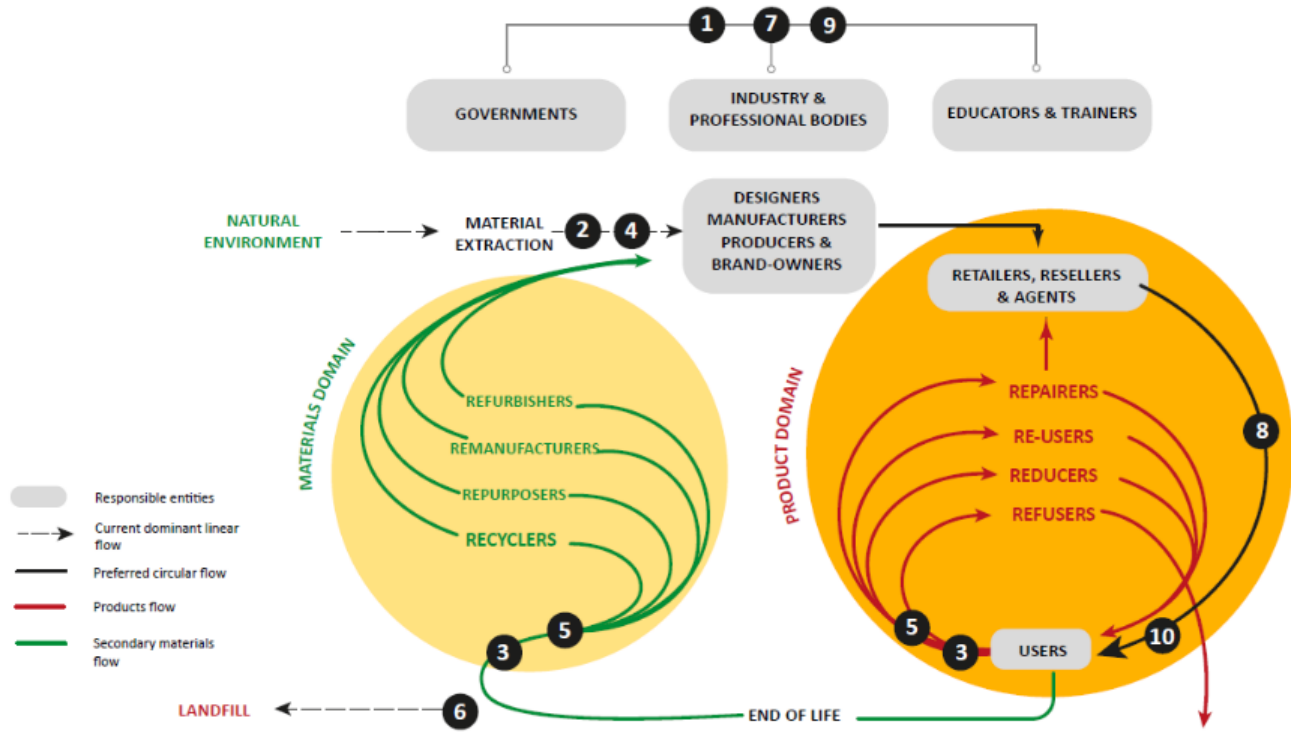
Mapping Global/Aust Policy Maturity



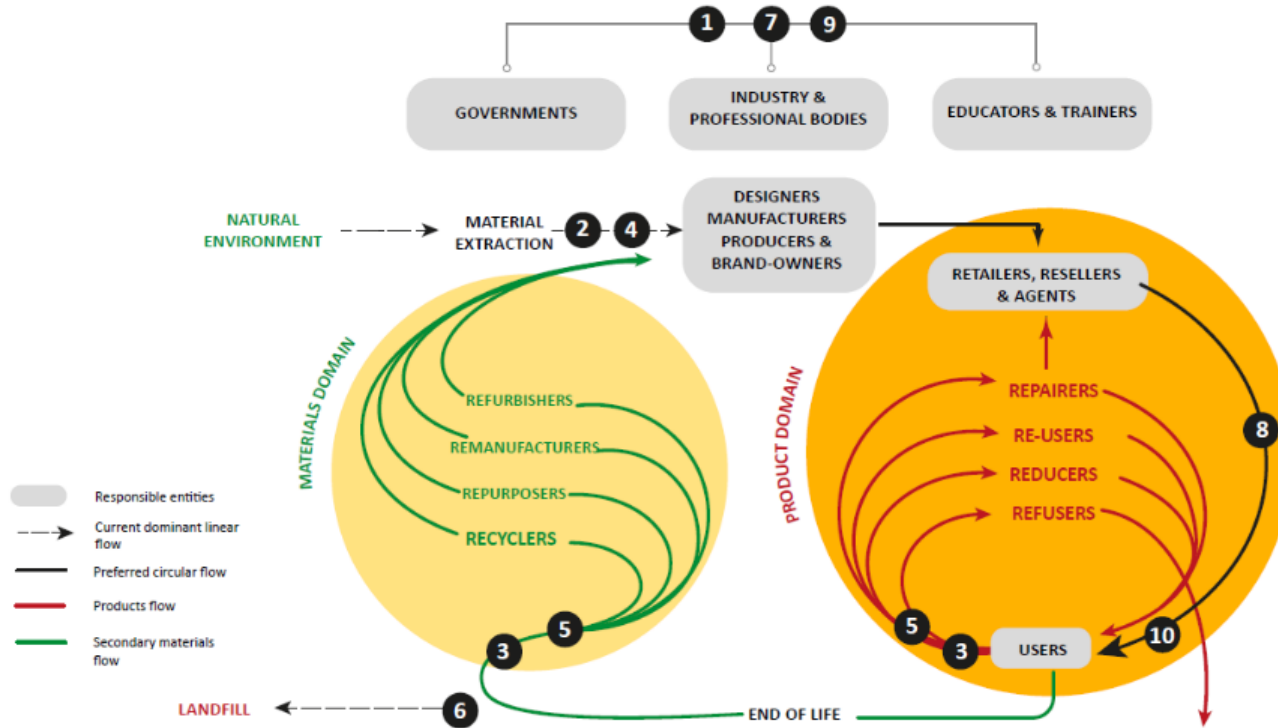
Adopted by Millicer, from Rogers (1962, 2020)

[DCCEEW Report & video, 21 Summary Report](#)

Plastic supply chain in Australia









Plastic supply chain improvements for Australia



Recommended Levers 2022 for success for Australia:

1. Eco-design Circular Strategy
2. Improve stewardship with EPR
3. Activate Reuse & Repair Reset program
4. Align to global best specs & standards
5. Eco-Design Innovation fund for supply chains
6. Raise landfill fees on recyclables
7. Apply financial and regs on negative externalities
8. Buy for Good program
9. Learning and Upskilling
10. Public education

How are we going? What's underway?

Recommended 10 Levers 2022-23	CE Min Adv Group, Other Possible Actions
Eco-design Circular Strategy	National CE Framework & targets; ISSB, Director duties; Integrate sector climate plans; 
Improve stewardship with EPR	Review: measurement, impact and reporting; membership?
Activate Reuse & Repair Reset program	ABCB update NCC with embodied carbon & CE
Align to global best specs & standards	IChEMS 
Eco-Design Innovation fund for supply chains	NF Fund? 
Raise landfill fees on recyclables	
Apply financial & regs on negative externalities	CE & Green Bonds Framework; Govt power & role
Buy for Good procurement program	Product standards; NR Fund; Built Enviro; Govts' procurement 
Learning and Upskilling	Building industry training on CE
Public education	

Conclusion – CE is underway. Is plastics addressed?



Progress, finally!

Recognition and vision underway
Revising lots of roles, frameworks,
investigations of options.

However, nothing mandatory.
Economics and regulations are still
lacking or lax.

Hopeful, but scope and scale not clear on
design, EPR, labelling, standards,
traceability and revised management of
products and packaging.





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