



Senator Steve Fielding
FAMILY FIRST Leader

MEDIA RELEASE

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PM SHOULD ANNOUNCE 'CASH FOR TRASH' RECYCLING SCHEME ON CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

A coalition of groups has called on the Prime Minister to commit to a national plan to pay money to families for the recyclable material they collect, to mark Clean Up Australia Day.

Family First leader Senator Steve Fielding and the Boomerang Alliance, (a coalition of most environment groups and local councils in Australia), made the call in Sydney today.

“Prime Minister Kevin Rudd should announce a federal plan to improve recycling with a deposit scheme for bottles and other recyclable material similar to South Australia's on Sunday for Clean Up Australia Day,” said Senator Fielding.

Family First is working on federal laws to introduce a national container deposit scheme.

South Australia has been paying deposits to people for recycling bottles for the past 30 years.

“Rather than regulate packaging, state and federal government have endorsed the controversial National Packaging Covenant which over the past 8 years has done little to fix the problem and failed to introduce any comprehensive system to recover bottles and cans consumed away from home, where they are predominantly consumed,” said Jeff Angel from the Total Environment Centre who represents environment groups on the National Packaging Covenant Council.

“We are sick of industry's tokenistic efforts and pilot programs. Its time for the State and Federal Governments to take decisive action on recycling,” said Angel.

“It's hard to understand why the federal government is reluctant to act. Over 90% of the public wants the government to take action against packaging manufacturers, there are clear environmental benefits, and a container deposit system doesn't cost treasury a single cent,” said Boomerang Alliance spokesperson Dave West.

“Clearly the likes of Coca Cola, Fosters, Lion Nathan and Cadbury Schweppes have far too much influence over government policy,” said West.

Container Deposit Schemes are a sensible way to look after our environment, involving industry and the broader community. They place a value on recyclable waste, which can be claimed at recycling centres.

A national container deposit scheme would:

- Save 300,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases a year;
- Lift drink container recycling from 38% to 85%;
- Recycle an extra half a million tonnes of waste every year;
- Reduce litter by 25%;
- Save the average family \$30 every year on kerbside recycling;
- Create more than 2000 new jobs;
- Allow community and sporting groups and children to earn money (eg. Scouts in South Australia earn \$7 million from container recycling).

For media enquiries

Senator Steve Fielding, Family First, phone 0409 550 446

Dave West, National Campaign Director, Boomerang Alliance, phone 0404 093 718

Jeff Angel, Executive Director Total Environment Centre, phone 02 9261 3447

The Boomerang Alliance:

- Australian Conservation Foundation • Arid Lands Environment Centre • CleanUp Australia •
- Conservation Council of South Australia • Conservation Council of Western Australia •
- Environment Centre of the Northern Territory • Environment Tasmania • Environment Victoria •
- Friends of the Earth • Greenpeace Australia Pacific • Local Government & Shires Association of NSW •
- NSW Nature Conservation Council • Queensland Conservation Council •
- Tasmanian Conservation Trust • Total Environment Centre •