



Committee Secretary
Standing Council on Environment and Water Secretariat
GPO Box 787,
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28 March 2012

Comments on the Packaging Impacts Consultation Regulation Impact Statement.

UnitingJustice Australia is the justice unit of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia, pursuing matters of social and economic justice, human rights, peace and the environment. It sits within the mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship and works in collaboration with other Assembly agencies, Uniting Church synod justice staff around the country, and with other community and faith-based organisations and groups.

It engages in advocacy and education and works collaboratively to communicate the Church's vision for a reconciled world. It provides resources for the Church as it considers its position on issues of national and international importance and public policy.

The Uniting Church's commitment to the environment arises out of the Christian belief that God, as the Creator of the universe, calls us into a special relationship with the environment – a relationship of mutuality and interdependence which seeks the reconciliation of all creation with God. We believe that God's will for the earth is renewal and reconciliation, not destruction by human beings.

In 2006, the Assembly Standing Committee of the Church resolved to adopt the statement *For the Sake of the Planet and all its People*. In part, the statement declares:

It is increasingly the case that some humans consume the earth's resources whilst other humans pay the price... As long as we remain prepared to abuse the atmosphere and entire ecosystems for the sake of short-term economic gain for a few, we undermine our own future. It is important that Australia's social, economic and environmental policies begin to reflect that social justice and ecological justice are not competing interests, but have shared solutions.

For a World Reconciled

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It is in accordance with these beliefs that UnitingJustice welcomes this opportunity to offer its full support for the submission of the Boomerang Alliance to the COAG Standing Council on Environment and Water (SCEW).

The in-depth analysis of the Packaging Impacts Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) prepared by the Boomerang Alliance makes clear the importance of a nationwide introduction of a Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) to reduce high levels of waste in Australia. As the Alliance's submission explains, a CDS would not only respond to the overwhelming community desire for cost-effective ways to deal with waste, but would also provide strong and necessary support for the Australian Recycling Industry.

Packaging waste is one of the most persistent environmental problems faced by Australians, and the solutions offered to date have been cumbersome, expensive and difficult to garner public support for. A federal CDS would reduce the volume of litter in our public areas by 15%, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by over 1.3 million tonnes of CO₂e, divert at least 6% of municipal solid waste away from landfill, and provide over 250,000 homes with access to recycling for the first time.

CDS schemes have a proven and long-established track record of success in the international arena, and would enable Australia to meet its obligations to reducing waste without introducing a financial burden on consumers. To date, the implementation of a nationwide CDS has been stonewalled by large corporations that have sought to stifle the voices of the community calling for change. It is time for the Government to support and promote a CDS that will provide benefits for generations to come.

Yours faithfully,



Rev. Elenie Poulos
National Director

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