
From: Graeme McCormack
Sent: Tuesday, 19 December 2023 9:22 PM
To: Climate Change
Subject: Developing an Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan for Tasmania's waste sector

Categories:

I would like to commend the efforts put forth in the Waste Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan. I believe though, that there are several areas where the proposed draft could be enhanced to maximise its effectiveness.

First and foremost, it is crucial to address the issue of vague language within the plan. The Global Carbon Project's latest report emphasises that urgent and expansive action is necessary to combat the worst impacts of the climate crisis. To align with this urgency, I urge the government to replace words such as "reducing," "exploring," and "improving" with clear, measurable targets. Without concrete goals, the plan runs the risk of being ineffective. It is also essential to allocate sufficient funding and resources to ensure the plan's implementation and impact.

An integral aspect of tackling waste emissions lies in adopting product stewardship practices that empower consumers to repair, reuse, and recycle their products. One effective measure to achieve this is through the implementation of the right to repair legislation. By ensuring manufacturers design products that are durable, repairable, and upgradable, we can promote a culture of sustainability. Moreover, providing consumers with access to repair information, tools, and spare parts will further enhance this effort. Manufacturers themselves must also take responsibility for the end-of-life management of their products, which can be accomplished through take-back and recycling schemes. These schemes aim to prevent environmental harm and recover valuable materials.

It is crucial for Tasmania to take a strong stance against single-use items that not only consume resources and energy but also generate waste and pollution. These items pose a threat to the health of humans, animals, and ecosystems. By implementing a ban on single-use items, Tasmania can significantly contribute to waste reduction and the protection of our environment. Additionally, the introduction of an environmental levy on every item purchased will reflect the environmental impact of the product, including its waste, pollution, and carbon cost. This levy should take into account a product's potential for repair, return, refill, reuse, or composting at home. These measures together have the potential to foster a circular economy and promote a culture of repair.

Another critical aspect of waste emissions reduction lies in the treatment of water in wastewater treatment plants. Unnecessary volumes of water not only waste resources but also produce significant greenhouse gas emissions and consume valuable energy. Therefore, Tasmania should incorporate mandatory water harvesting and recycling in new dwellings and other buildings. Retrofitting grants for existing structures can also encourage the adoption of water-saving technologies. By incorporating these measures into the revised Waste ERRP, Tasmania can establish a future-proof and sustainable wastewater management system.

To combat emissions from

food waste, a multi-pronged strategy could be considered. Firstly, a sector-wide ban on food waste can significantly reduce the amount of organic matter reaching landfills. Implementing supermarket donation programs can further minimise waste. Initiatives like Loaves and Fishes and Food Bank bridge the gap between waste and need, while upcycling surplus produce provides an innovative solution. By prioritising resource efficiency and landfill diversion, Tasmania can ensure a more sustainable and food-secure future.

While biogas from landfill

or water treatment offers renewable energy benefits, it is essential to consider its drawbacks, such as potential incentives to create more waste.

While biogas can contribute to emissions reduction, it should not be the sole focus of long-term waste management solutions. Instead, we should explore other means of reducing emissions as recommended by the Climate Council and others.

I am wholeheartedly

supportive of the transition towards a circular economy. Achieving a truly sustainable economy requires comprehensive efforts from businesses, industries, and communities. Public awareness campaigns can play a pivotal role in educating the younger generation and decision-makers about the benefits of embracing a circular economy. It is important to hold businesses accountable through measurable actions, not greenwashing tactics aimed solely at profit maximisation.

Extending container refund

schemes to incentivise responsible consumption practices and promoting product reusability and recycling initiatives are a must. Embracing locally grounded food systems and advocating for widespread composting facilities will also contribute to minimising waste and promoting sustainable food production methods.

Ultimately, collaboration

between government bodies, industry players, communities, and environmental organisations is integral. It will enable collective action towards embedding circular economy practices into our everyday lives while striving for substantial waste reduction outcomes.

Thank you for considering

these recommendations. I believe that by implementing these measures, Tasmania can become a leader in waste emissions reduction and contribute to the fight against climate change.

Kind regards

Graeme McCormack