



Waste

Policy Category: A. Environment

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Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. waste management policy should adopt a zero waste goal to conserve natural resources for future generations, avoid the build up of toxic and noxious substances, conserve water and achieve deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.
2. reducing, reusing and recycling are integral to achieving zero waste.
3. full social, environmental and economic costs must be taken into account in decisions about creating, managing and disposing of waste.
4. the transportation of hazardous waste must be minimised, and the Australian community must be fully informed about its location, disposal and transportation.

Goals

The Australian Greens want:

5. a comprehensive national waste strategy, addressing each stage of the production and consumption cycle, with mandatory targets for the avoidance, reduction and recycling of the different categories of waste.
6. to orient waste management policy on the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility
7. active management of greenhouse gas emissions from current and legacy landfill sites
elimination of the incineration of materials producing toxic emissions
8. strict enforcement of penalties for illegal dumping.

Measures

The Australian Greens will:

9. in cooperation with the states and territories, regulate hazardous materials collection and treatment facilities, with the aim of keeping all stockpiles and newly generated hazardous waste to a minimum.
10. phase out the use of toxic elements in consumer goods sold in Australia
11. regulate to phase out where possible non-recyclable plastics, composite materials, and arsenic treated timber
12. strengthen and independently verify the National Pollution Inventory to ensure it comprehensively documents all point source substances released to the environment.
13. implement reporting systems to document the true volumes, generators and types of waste.
14. through the Council of Australian Governments, implement a national phase-out of the use of landfills for the disposal of unsorted waste.
15. work with states and territories to structure strong and consistent levy systems which act as disincentives for unsorted waste, with the monies raised directed to the provision of sustainable waste reuse and recycling facilities.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Waste (cont'd)

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16. work to introduce national container deposit legislation.
17. introduce a system of Extended Producer Responsibility that obliges manufacturers, distributors and importers to take financial responsibility for the end of life recovery and recycling of the product, and requires them to use re-use and recycling strategies that meet minimum health, safety and environmental standards.
18. prohibit export of E-waste unless similar health, safety and environmental standards exist in the importing country..
19. work with states and territories and the industry sector to implement extended producer responsibility schemes for E-waste, tyres, batteries, compact florescent lights, packaging and gas bottles.
20. provide economic incentives for the use of 100% post consumer recycled and other products with a significant proportion of recycled content.
21. restrict the distribution of junk mail.
22. end the dumping of reusable building wastes in landfill and work with industry to develop a waste strategy for the construction sector.
23. support mandatory labelling of electronics and large manufactured goods that clearly indicates that they may not be placed in household waste or municipal landfill streams.
24. introduce a national green labelling scheme for products that are biodegradable, reusable or recyclable, and for products which are primarily made from recycled materials.
25. ratify Decision III/1 of the Basel Convention to stop Australia's practice of dumping hazardous waste on non-OECD countries.

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