



Media Release

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Australians underestimate value of recycling to economy

Planet Ark urges Australians to go beyond the bin for National Recycling Week

Up to 80% of Australians don't realise the value of recycling to our national economy - approximately \$15.5 billion¹ – compared to just 8% who do, according to new research released for Planet Ark's National Recycling Week.

Planet Ark also found that while around 3 in 4 Australians are concerned or very concerned about waste, our motivations differ. For the older generation, reducing landfill resonated more significantly than the rest of the population while younger Australians were more motivated by the potential of recycling to combat climate change and save wildlife.

The new data comes as part of Planet Ark's National Recycling week, returning in 2020 from 9-15 November with the theme "Recovery – A Future Beyond the Bin". The campaign aims to highlight the important role resource recovery can occupy in our economic and societal recovery and the need to shift perceptions of waste to recognise its resource value.

"Recycling is valuable both environmentally and economically, and is more important than ever in light of the coronavirus pandemic. The majority of councils we surveyed reported increased volumes of general waste in kerbside bins as a result of COVID-19," said Planet Ark Deputy CEO Rebecca Gilling.

"The pandemic has challenged the way we live, work and interact with the world around us and has offered us the chance to build a better future. We know that it is critical that recycling and resource recovery are a part of this. We want to encourage Australians to play their part in a creating a future beyond the bin."

Now in its 25th year, National Recycling Week provides an important opportunity for councils, workplaces, schools and individuals to strengthen their recycling knowledge, improve recycling habits and build trust in recycling. A special focus this year is being paid to packaging, food and electronics, three of the most problematic waste streams in Australia with the greatest potential for improved resource recovery.

As well as new research, Planet Ark has also released a new National Recycling Week [Resource Hub](#), the action-based "A Future Beyond the Bin" mini guide and many other fun and educational activities and online events. These free resources aim to help Australians take recycling into their own hands at home, work and school.

¹ Source: Centre for International Economics (2017) [Headline Economic Value for Waste and Materials Efficiency in Australia](#), prepared for the Department of the Environment and Energy



“What we call waste is a sign of inefficiency. Every Australian can own their impact and help make resource recovery part of our country or state’s economic recovery,” said Planet Ark’s Head of Circular Economy Programs Ryan Collins.

“The Future Beyond the Bin mini guide has been created to provide 6 easy steps to resource recovery, such as buying products or packaging with recycled content, getting into composting or recycling that old mobile phone.

National Recycling Week is made possible by Major Sponsor **Coca-Cola Australia**, Associate Sponsors **MobileMuster**, **Australasian Recycling Label** and **Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**, and Supporting Sponsors **Tetra Pak** and **Unilever**.

To learn more or get involved in National Recycling Week, visit NationalRecyclingWeek.com.au

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To read the National Recycling Week Research Report in full, visit:

<https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/documents/doc-2986-nrw-report-2020.pdf>

National Recycling Week Activities and Events

- [Workplace Recycling Trivia Pack](#)
- [Buy It Back Day](#)
- [Workplace Recycling Webinar](#)
- [Containers to Cash Webinar](#)
- [Schools Recycle Right Challenge](#)
- [Recycle Right Quiz](#)
- [November Muster](#)

About Planet Ark

Planet Ark Environmental Foundation is an Australian not-for-profit environmental organisation that was founded in 1992. We create simple, powerful and positive actions that help people, governments and businesses reduce their impact on the environment. Our vision is to create a future where people live in balance with nature.

About National Recycling Week

Planet Ark’s National Recycling Week, founded in 1996, highlights the environmental benefits of re-use and recycling programs, while making participation enjoyable and easy through community events and programs. The dates for National Recycling Week in 2020 are **Monday 9 to Sunday 15 November 2020**.

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