

For immediate release

14th March 2022

Plastics NZ would like to see faster action on Kerbside Standardisation

Plastics New Zealand's CEO Rachel Barker attended Minister David Parker's announcement of the *Transforming Recycling* consultation yesterday. The consultation covers a container return scheme, standardisation of recycling, and food-waste collections.

It's great to see this consultation finally launched as we've been waiting to see action on this for the last couple of years. We have huge variation in recycling collections across Aotearoa New Zealand. This makes it hard to design packaging for the New Zealand system. It also makes it difficult to create effective campaigns that help people to recycle better. Plastics are valuable materials and should never end up in landfill or polluting our environment. The proposals will boost recycling rates and ensure that materials stay in the system and circulate back into new products.

There has been a lot of prior work done on both kerbside standardisation and a container return scheme says Ms Barker. Plastics New Zealand would like to see real action implemented as fast as possible in both areas.

Plastics New Zealand has done a lot of work to encourage Councils to collect the three main kerbside collected plastics, #1 (PET), #2 (HDPE) and #5 (PP). Recycling of these plastics into NZ-made products happens right here in New Zealand. In 2021 alone we have seen an increase of almost 12% in population access to #5 plastics collection.

We believe that the progress on plastics shows that standardisation can be achieved well before the 2030 date outlined. Government is proposing that we agree a standardised list of materials this year. We would therefore like to see implementation of these improvements for recycling in place by the end of 2025.

Ms Barker is also keen to see further focus on community-based recycling centres. Kerbside collections are not possible for all communities.

It's important that we see collection of recyclable materials available to as many people as possible across Aotearoa New Zealand. Some areas are too isolated for kerbside collections. Others have challenging geographies, meaning household bins aren't practical. We need to ensure those areas have community collection points. These facilities will also be an important part of nation-wide collection of resources not collected at kerbside due to their size or non-packaging use. The more resources we can recover and use for remanufacturing, the better this will be for the planet. We'll divert materials from landfill, reduce pollution, and reduce our carbon footprint.

END

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Plastics NZ is the trade organisation representing the New Zealand plastics industry. Our membership comprises over 200 businesses including manufacturers, raw material suppliers, recyclers (reprocessors), brand-owners, and consultants to the industry. Plastics NZ has a strong focus on environmentally responsible management of plastics and driving forward the transition to a circular plastics economy.