

Media Release

24 May 2019

Exposed! Australia's waste dumping in Philippines and Asia Pacific region must end.

Australia's failed waste management system can no longer be ignored by the Federal and State governments.

Australia's business as usual approach to dumping its Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) in the Asia Pacific region, already confirmed in Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia, reveals a colonialist and deceitful approach to waste management by a country that should, and can, manage its own waste.

"It is unethical for Australia to send its non-recyclable, residual MSW, rebadged as 'Process Engineered Fuel', to be burnt in cement kilns in other countries, effectively escaping Australian regulatory responsibility for its impacts, including the adverse human health and environmental impacts associated with burning municipal waste in cement kilns.", states National Toxics Network, Zero Waste Coordinator for the Australia, Jane Bremmer.

"Further, the global waste flow restructuring triggered by China's rejection of imported waste from wealthy western countries, is a wake-up call for Australia to finally act on the decades of deliberate neglect and mismanagement of waste in Australia.

No longer can Australia ignore the dinosaur in the room. Waste stockpiles are growing and our environment, our atmosphere and oceans are full of waste residues that cause irreversible and catastrophic hazardous and toxic impacts. The 'Zero Waste to Landfill policy' across the country is driving residual MSW into dangerous false solutions like combustion industries (i.e. Cement kilns and Paper Pulp Mills), polluting waste to energy incinerators and exports to vulnerable Asia Pacific countries. Successive Australian governments have not been serious about developing sustainable waste management policy, instead allowing global waste management corporations to define the type of waste management policy our country implements. Our national waste and recycling policies have for decades been based on export to poor countries while we failed to develop genuine domestic recycling infrastructure. As exports are scrutinised and blocked, industry is pushing to burn waste in Australia which will pollute the atmosphere, ramp up CO2 emissions and poison the food chain through toxic ash dumps.

It's time for the Australian government to end its unsustainable, linear approach to materials production and waste management by implementing a sustainable Zero Waste policy where the focus is on circular economy model at a domestic level. It's not rocket science. Cities all over the world are showing that Zero Waste policy is effective and successful. Residual MSW represents all that is wrong in our world. Hiding it in incinerators, dumps and vulnerable Asia Pacific countries means we will never resolve the causes driving this waste stream. Some would say that is exactly what the plastics and corporate waste management sector want. Australia is better than this" states Jane Bremmer.

For more information: Zero Waste OZ coordinator, Ms Jane Bremmer – 0432 041 397 www.zerowasteoz.org.au

