



**Product
Stewardship
Centre of
Excellence**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stewardship Schemes: Help us solve logistics, governance and free riders

Logistics, governance and free-riders are the three biggest challenges facing many of Australia's product stewardship initiatives as they tackle the Australian Government's ambitious plan to decrease waste by 10% and increase resource recovery to 80%.

The Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence surveyed industry participants to understand what is holding back further development and timely expansion of product stewardship.

Australia has about 60 active product stewardship initiatives ranging from industry schemes and programs, industry and supply chain standards, initiatives championed by industry or community organisations, as well as many more individual company initiatives.

"To support the move to a circular economy and achieve the Government's targets, we need more businesses adopting product stewardship nationwide. That means addressing barriers to growth," Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence Director Dr Damien Giurco said.

"Free-riders are businesses or organisations that may benefit from a product stewardship activity without contributing to the cost of developing and operating schemes. Free riders can be a disincentive for initiatives to get off the ground and need to be encouraged to take greater responsibility for the products they place on the market," Dr Giurco said.

"Strengthening product stewardship legislation in the Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020 gives industry more options to address free-riders through scheme accreditation and the Minister's Priority List.

"The Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence is tackling these issues head-on through a series of webinars, advisory papers, decision support tools and direct engagement with scheme proponents.

"In respect of logistics and governance, the Centre's directors have a depth of knowledge we are applying to guide and mentor current and emerging schemes, and a panel of specialist advisers ready to tackle specific problems and barriers," Dr Giurco said.

A copy of the findings from the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence needs assessment can be downloaded [here](#).

"Product stewardship is all about manufacturers, importers and retailers taking responsibility in designing-out waste, making products more durable, repairable and recyclable, and providing customers with easily accessible and affordable options to reuse or recycle their products at the end of its life," Dr Giurco said.

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About the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence

The Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence was established in December 2020 by a consortium of UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures, the Australian Industry Group and Cox Inall Communications in partnership with the Australian Government through the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

The Centre holds the required knowledge and expertise in product stewardship scheme design and implementation, education, training, research, policy, community engagement, supply chains, logistics, government liaison and business engagement.

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