



## Media Release

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### What's happening with plastic pollution in Port Phillip Bay?

Environmental groups have called for a sustainable solution focused on source control and interception, after the switch from raking Mornington Peninsula beaches to manual hand cleaning has exposed the true extent of plastic pollution problems in the Bay (pics below).

Many local residents are reporting that they have never seen so much plastic debris before. This pollution is not just an eyesore, it's also threatening sea life. And who would want to visit or holiday anywhere with beaches in this state?

'There is too much plastic waste ending up in the Bay. Our volunteers are picking up so much. It's mostly single use items that are not necessary. We (consumers, government and industry) need to be a lot more responsible,' said Dr Ross Headifen, Co-Founder of Beach Patrol Australia.

'It's time for the authorities to address the sources of this plastic debris.'

'Much of this debris is coming from stormwater and runoff from urban rivers, particularly the Yarra. The first thing we need is renewed investment in pollution trap infrastructure to stop plastic waste getting into the Bay.'

Birte Moliere, Boomerang Alliance Packaging Product Stewardship Lead said: 'The second thing that is needed are effective policies to curb the amount of plastic waste we produce in the first place. The Boomerang Alliance is calling for new packaging laws that make producers responsible for managing their packaging, including their collection and recovery with mandatory reduction, recycling, recycled content and reuse targets.'

'When packaging producers have to pay the costs of collection and recovery, we will get less plastic packaging and the packaging we do use will be more efficiently collected and recovered.'

'The container refund schemes now active in most states are a good example of producers, in this case beverage companies, being responsible for collecting and recycling discarded cans and bottles. We are already noticing much less cans and bottles on our beaches.'

This week European countries introduced laws to require all bottles to have tethered caps. Beach Patrol report that they collect hundreds of bottle tops on Port Phillip Bay

beaches every week. The NSW Government is proposing having tethered caps on bottles by 2030 - a move the Victorian Government could fast track for an earlier date.

