

RESOURCES
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**PRODUCT
STEWARDSHIP**

WHAT OUR MEMBERS THINK

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

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IN MAY 2018, WE SURVEYED
WASTEMINZ MEMBERS TO DETERMINE:

THEIR VIEWS ON PRODUCT
STEWARDSHIP

WHICH WASTE STREAMS THEY
CONSIDER TO BE OF THE HIGHEST
PRIORITY FOR PRODUCT
STEWARDSHIP INTERVENTION

WHETHER THEY SUPPORT THE
DECLARATION OF PRIORITY PRODUCT
STATUS FOR THESE PRODUCTS, AND

WHETHER THEY SUPPORT A SPECIFIC
SCOPE FOR SELECTED PRODUCTS
SUCH AS TYRES AND E-WASTE

**101
RESPONSES**

were received from both
individual and organisational
members of WasteMINZ. This
report provides a summary of
the survey's findings.

Support for Product Stewardship

Of the 101 responses there was overwhelming support (93%) for the concept that **well-designed product stewardship schemes can build resilience into New Zealand's waste and recycling systems to mitigate economic issues.**

Additional comments on this question concentrated on four main themes:

Support for a mandatory approach:

“It is an essential step, and making it mandatory evens the playing field”

“Imperative that this happens. Must be mandatory”

The importance of well-designed schemes:

“The emphasis needs to be on the 'well designed' part. It is not just the schemes themselves that need to be well designed but the overall policy settings, so everything works together”

“Well designed, accessible and convenient to use. Credible processing also important”

Transition to a circular economy:

“Product stewardship schemes in conjunction with creating a circular economy is the only way forward”

“Product stewardship schemes are a key tool to help NZ shift to a circular economy”.

Support for local processing:

“We need to develop local markets for recovered materials”

“The critical aspect will be domestic processing and recycling opportunities which will require funding from manufacturers, distributors and end-users (potentially via the WMF)”

Three respondents did not agree. They were concerned that schemes identified using market trends or manufacturer driven models could be economically inefficient and that recycling materials to a standard where they can be re-used is too expensive.

Four respondents were unsure.



Ten respondents commented that voluntary approaches to date have proved ineffective and have enabled industry free-riders:

“Government's preference for voluntary has not worked to date.”

“This is critical to ensure adequate funding for stewardship programmes and to address free-rider issues.”

“Voluntary schemes have shown limited success and do not address free-loaders.”

“There was a reason this (and more) was written into the WMA – it's time we start using that piece of legislation how it was actually intended to be used.”

“Voluntary schemes have had nearly twenty years to prove themselves successful, and haven't.”

“Long overdue, the legislation is 10 years old.”

Four respondents were not in favour of the designation of priority product status for problematic waste streams. One additional comment stated:

“Regulated product stewardship schemes undermine innovation and the adoption of 'better' solutions.”

Priority Products

Members were asked which products they thought the Minister for the Environment should designate as priority products, and if so, should they be designated now or later. Their responses are summarised in the table below.

Figure One: Designation of priority products

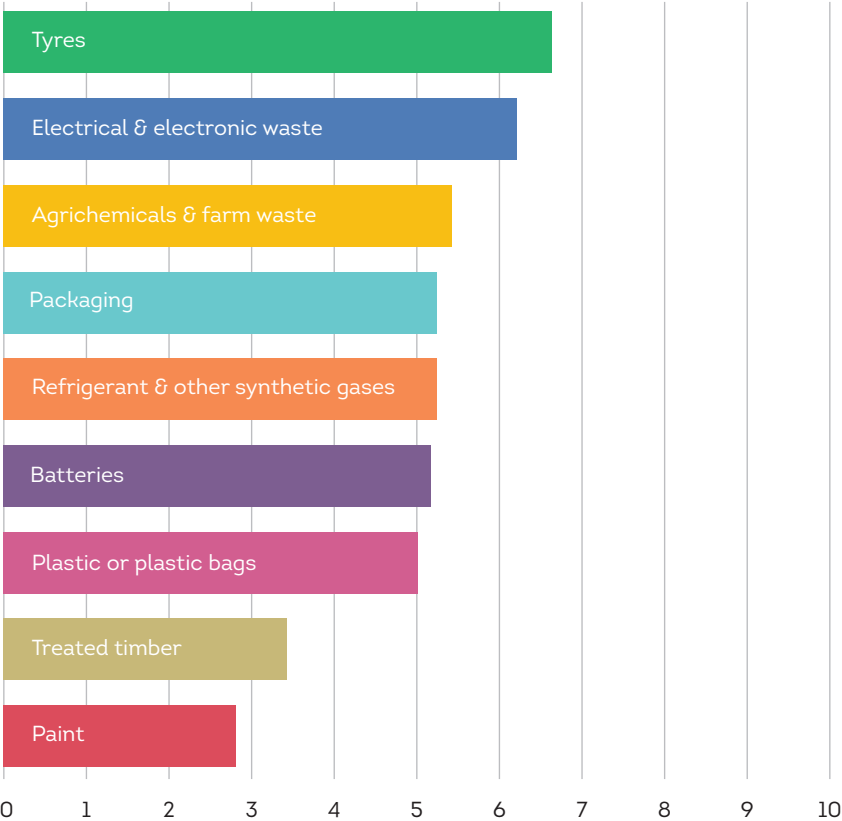
PRODUCT	YES to designation (now)	YES to designation (later)	YES to designation (total)	Unsure	NO to designation
Tyres	94	2	96	2	1
E-waste	80	15	95	1	2
Batteries	60	28	88	3	2
Packaging	59	26	85	7	4
Agrichemicals & farm plastics	64	19	83	6	3
Refrigerants & other synthetic greenhouse gases	58	22	80	8	1
Paint	29	47	76	9	6
Treated timber	29	46	75	12	4
Plastic or plastic bags	48	26	74	6	12

Tyres were seen as the key focus for priority product declaration with 96 respondents (95%) considering they should be a priority product. 94 of these respondents believed tyres should be designated now (rather than later or not at all).

E-waste was the second area of focus, with 95 respondents (94%) considering it should be a priority product. 80 of these respondents believed e-waste should be designated now (rather than later or not at all).

Members were also asked to rank the waste streams in order of priority from highest to lowest. The weighted rankings across all respondents are summarised below.

Figure Two: Weighted ranking of priority products:



Of the products ranked as the respondent's number one priority, 86% believed their product should be designated a priority product as soon as possible.

Scope of Schemes



Electronic waste

78% of respondents believed that if e-waste becomes a priority product in New Zealand it should include all electronic waste (everything with a plug or battery).

One respondent was unsure and one respondent believed that there is no environmental hazard resulting from disposal of e-waste so voluntary product stewardship is more appropriate.



Tyres

71% of respondents believed that if tyres become a priority product the scope should be for all pneumatic (air-filled) tyres including those for cars, motorcycles, trucks, buses, off-road vehicles, aircraft, and certain solid tyres (forklifts) but not bicycle tyres.



Refrigerant and other synthetic gases

Respondents were asked if refrigerant and synthetic gases become a priority product should the defined product be the containers holding the target gases, or the gases themselves?

53% of respondents believed the gases should be the focus of a relevant product stewardship scheme, supported by comments such as:

**“System needs to ensure the gases are captured.
No point in picking up empty containers.”**

“I’m not clear what the difference would imply in terms of system operation. At first glance, it would seem appropriate to simply manage a take-back scheme on the gases, with the take-back organisations having an ability of how they wish to manage the rest of the product (e.g., recycle, reuse, dispose, export) within tightly enforced regulations.”

44% of respondents believed the containers should be the focus of a relevant product stewardship scheme, backed up by comments such as:

“For ease of communication to the public.”

“I am unsure how the gases could be targeted by a product stewardship programme, though would be good to hear of any research in this field.”

“The containers because their disposal should be controlled and hence the gases should have to be controlled when that is done.”

Two respondents believed both containers and the gases should be part of any scheme.

It was clear from the range of responses, that a better understanding of the relevant advantages and disadvantages of each approach is required.



Other greenhouse gases

80% of respondents agreed that other synthetic gases that deplete ozone and contribute to climate change should also be included in any priority product designation. Comments included:

“We need better public education on this subject.”

“There needs to be an on shore solution to these instead of shipping them offshore.”

One respondent disagreed that synthetic gases should be included and 18 were unsure. Of those who were unsure comments included:

“This would include methyl bromide and possibly other industrial gases, so caution needs to be exercised here to prevent unwanted outcomes.”

“Depends on scale, we have to hit the big ones first, we are so easily distracted by what does not matter.”

“Trickier here; and with the other gases because many gases leak over their life or are “used” and there is nothing to return. How to justify a charge in these situations and who should pay for “leaks”? the user or the manufacturer?”



Container deposit schemes

Container deposit schemes are often cited as one mechanism for dealing with packaging. 83% of respondents supported, in principle, the establishment of container deposit schemes that are not simply limited to beverage containers:

“The benefits have been clearly stated in the Envision report and this was supported by Auckland Council's independent review of the report.”

“The long term savings are greater than the short term costs.”

“It may be the only way to remove more containers from the landfill/illegal dumping/ litter waste streams”

“As long as the funds are invested in technology to process and recycle the container. But also need emphasis on minimising packaging”

“Container deposit systems work! Not only to add value but litter reduction is significant and people love to be rewarded for doing the smallest right..”

Three of the four respondents who were not in favour of container deposit schemes commented that they were economically inefficient, mere greenwashing or that the “problem” the container deposit scheme was to address needed to be defined first.

13 respondents were unsure whether they supported container deposit schemes with comments indicating that they needed more information about these schemes first.

General Comments

Members were given the opportunity to provide any additional commentary. Most of the comments called for urgent action on product stewardship. Comments included:

“All systems need to be mandatory. Stress urgency for product stewardship, increase in waste levies, single use anything, polluter pays. We have a short period of time to minimise consumption to avert climate change.”

“So far, 'product stewardship schemes' have been all mouth and no trousers. I look forward to some action.”

“We have so much to do and so little time, the sad thing is we know what to do, we just waste time doing more studies.”

Five respondents felt that mandatory Product Stewardship was not a priority compared to other waste issues, as demonstrated by comments such as:

“The whole issue is relatively minor compared to other solid waste management issues that NZ faces. More significant in my mind would be: littering, fly-tipping, safety/risk, high costs for waste management overall, long term planning for solid waste management, climate impacts and carbon sequestration.”

“Review the efficiency of investment of hypothecated waste levy. Specifically, identify where that money has been used to facilitate unsatisfactory outcomes including the co-mingling of council collected waste such that the materials cannot be recycled domestically.”

Summary

WasteMINZ members showed overwhelming support for product stewardship with 93% agreeing they can build resilience into New Zealand's waste and recycling system to mitigate economic issues.

The majority of comments supporting this can be grouped into four major themes:

- the need for a mandatory approach;
- the need for well-designed schemes;
- a belief that product stewardship would help NZ transition to a circular economy;
- a belief that product stewardship would support enhanced local processing.

Tyres were seen as the key focus for priority product declaration with 96 respondents (95%) considering they should be a priority product. 94 of these respondents believed tyres should be designated now.

E-waste was the second area of focus, with 95 respondents (94%) considering it should be a priority product. 80 of these respondents believed e-waste should be designated now.

83% of respondents support the establishment of container deposit schemes to tackle the problems of littering, material quality, materials ending up in landfill instead of recycling and as a funding stream for community groups.

In general members believe that urgent action must be taken on designating priority products, as they consider that voluntary schemes have proved ineffective.

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