



Media Release

4th March 2021

There's No More Butts! Australian charity supports Government action to address Australia's most litter item

The inclusion of cigarette butt litter on the list of actions as part of the National Plastics Plan is a big step forward, according to No More Butts.

Today, the Federal Government released its National Plastics Plan containing nearly 40 actions to tackle pollution and increase recycling of plastics in Australia.

Amongst the identified actions that the Federal Government will implement across legislation, investment, industry targets, research and development and community education, is the establishment of a task force to address the plastics in littered cigarette butts.

Adding cigarette butts to the National Plastic Plan formalises an long overdue recognition that cigarette butt filters are a waste plastic. Made from a fibrous plastic (known as cellulose acetate), cigarette butts can be recycled, with successful programs already operating overseas.

8 billion cigarette butts are littered into the Australian environment annually, which is approximately a third of all cigarettes consumed. Approximately 10% of these littered butts end up in the waterways.

An earlier study estimated that the redirection of all cigarette butts consumed in Australia would fill a Margaret Court Arena-sized ash tray within approximately 20 months.

A cigarette butt can take up to 15 years to break down and, whether in the natural environment or in landfill, they can cause significant damage to our planet. They leach toxic chemicals, such as arsenic and lead, into the environment.

"The announcement by the Federal Government today that cigarette butt filters have been identified as a key issue to take action on under the National Plastics Plan supports our vision of a butt free environment", said No More Butts Founder, Shannon Mead.

"We are excited by the opportunity that the formation of this task force represents and we look forward to the introduction of a Product Stewardship Scheme to ensure collaboration across all stakeholders to tackle this long-standing issue".

A formal scheme could direct research into environmentally-friendly filter materials, packaging changes, national litter awareness campaigns, as well as the standardisation of terminology and infrastructure. It could also expedite the introduction of recycling programs and the creation of sustainable products.

Roderic Byrnes, Executive Chair, says: "Although we are a young charity, we carry with us an energy and a passion like no other. Based on the support we have received to date, creating a more sustainable world - one ciggy butt at a time - is more than achievable."

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For further information please contact No More Butt's media team: media@nomorebutts.org

About No More Butts

Based in Queensland, Australia, No More Butts is the brand and a registered business name of No Butts About It (International) Ltd, a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission. It holds a Deductible Gift Recipient status, having been entered onto the Register of Environmental Organisations in 2020.

No More Butts is taking action on the single biggest contributor to litter in Australia and around the world - cigarette butts. Made from cellulose acetate, cigarette butts are not biodegradable and leach harsh chemicals into the natural environment. It has been reported to take 15 years for a cigarette butt to break down in seawater, causing damage to marine life and has the ability to enter the food chain as a microplastic. Cigarettes are also considered to be a major contributor towards fires.

<https://nomorebutts.org.au>