VERSION 1: DECEMBER 2024

RIGID PLASTIC

CONSUMPTION AND RECOVERY

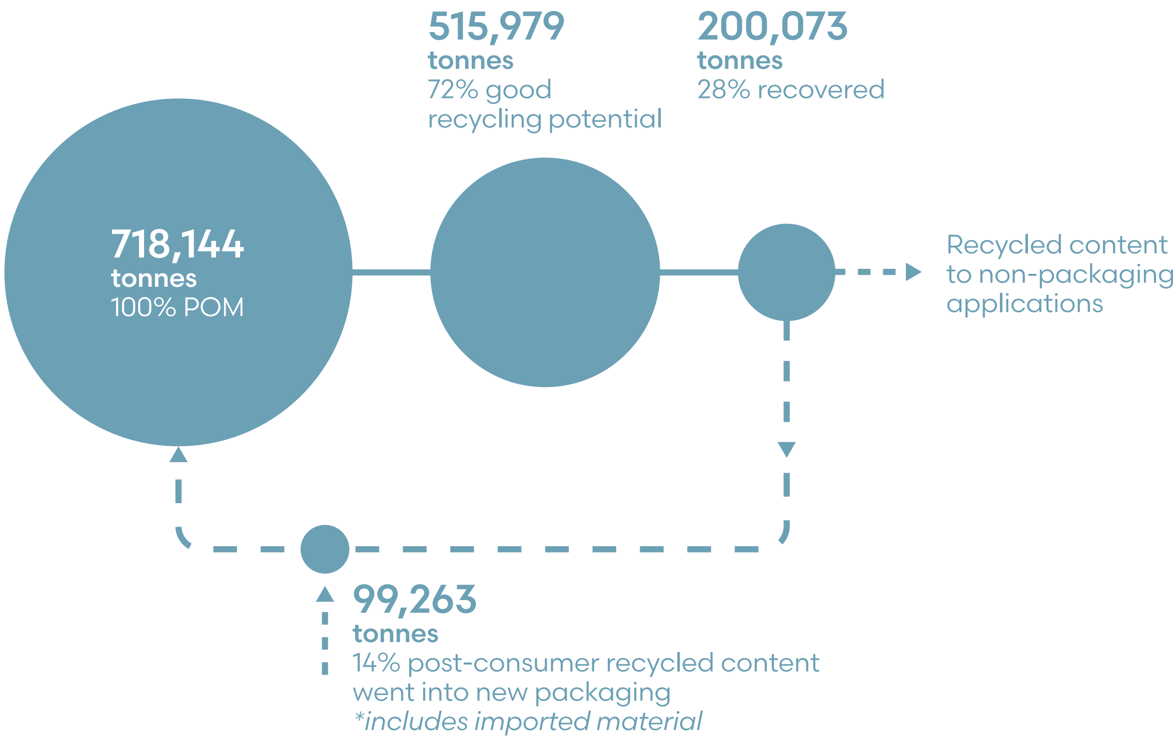
2022–2023 FACTSHEET

Australian
Packaging Covenant
Organisation

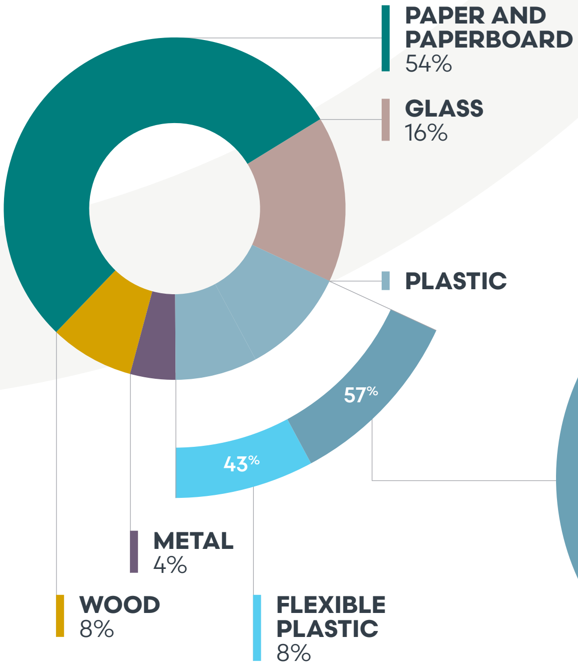
Summary
RIGID PLASTIC

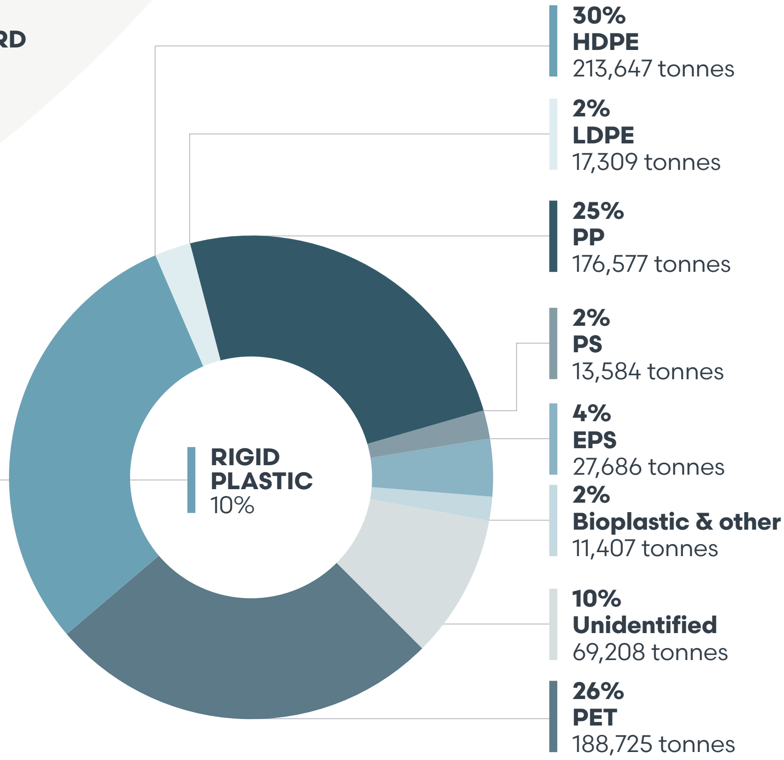
- 10% of packaging placed on market (POM) was rigid plastic, representing 718,144 tonnes.
- **Post-consumer recycled content has grown from 10% to 14% (as a proportion of POM)**, with an additional 32,194 tonnes of post-consumer recycled content used vs 2021-22 levels.
- Further increases in the demand for and supply of post-consumer recycled content in rigid plastic packaging are required to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets for rigid plastics.
- While close to three quarters (72%) of rigid plastics are classified as having good recycling potential, only 28% of rigid plastic was collected throughout 2022-23.
- This improvement in recovery rate must also be accompanied by rigid plastic **reprocessing capacity**, which **has a current shortfall of 429,366 tonnes on packaging POM**. Reprocessing capacity is projected to rise to 46% of POM by 2027-28.
- **The volume of rigid plastic packaging POM has grown 12.4%** in the 2018-19 to 2022-23 period. Rigid plastic POM is estimated to grow at a rate that continues to be well above population growth, with a 5-year projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) POM of 3.2%/yr across the 2022–23 to 2027–28 period compared to a population CAGR of 1.4%.
- **The prevalence of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastics has continued to decline**, with the largest decreases in rigid plastic seen across PVC packaging, EPS and rigid PS.
- Rigid plastics have more established collection pathways, reprocessing capacities and stronger end markets than flexible plastic packaging. Rigid plastic packaging represents 57% of all plastic packaging POM, but accounts for 85% of all plastic packaging recovered.

Material recovery

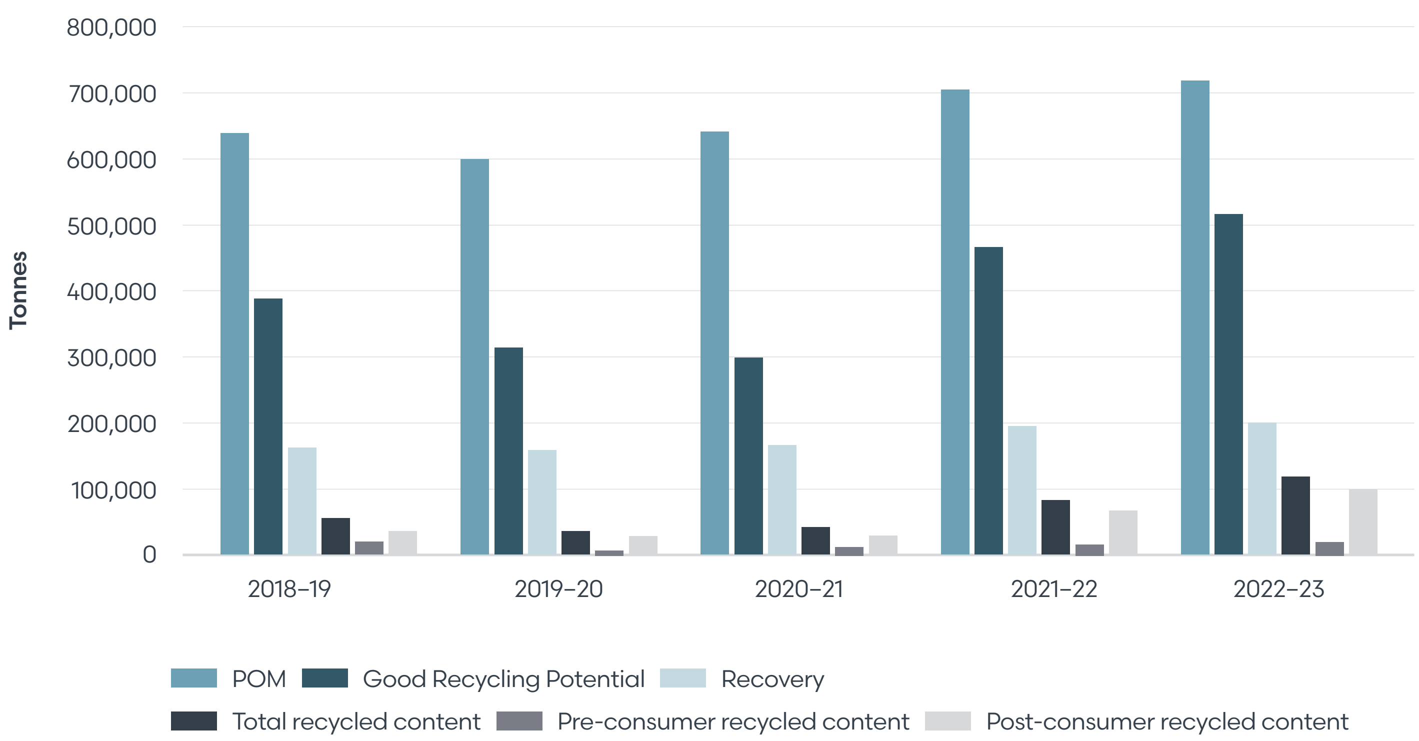


Placed on market
RIGID PLASTIC

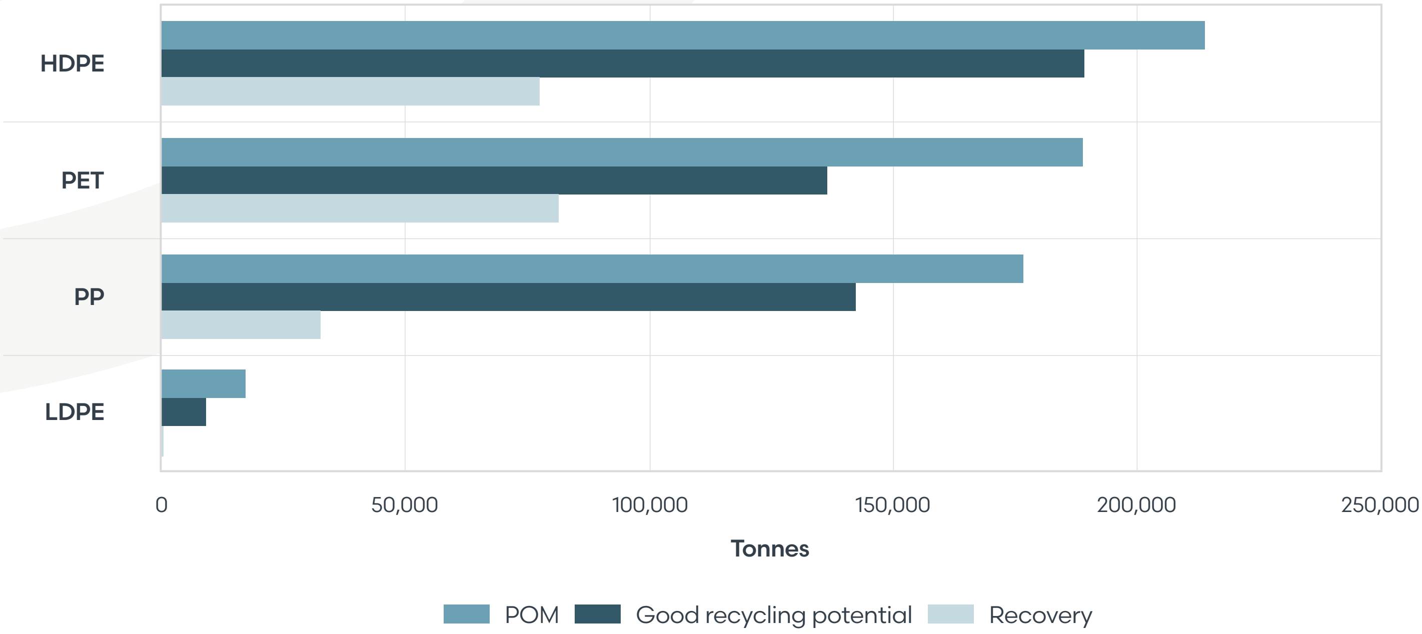




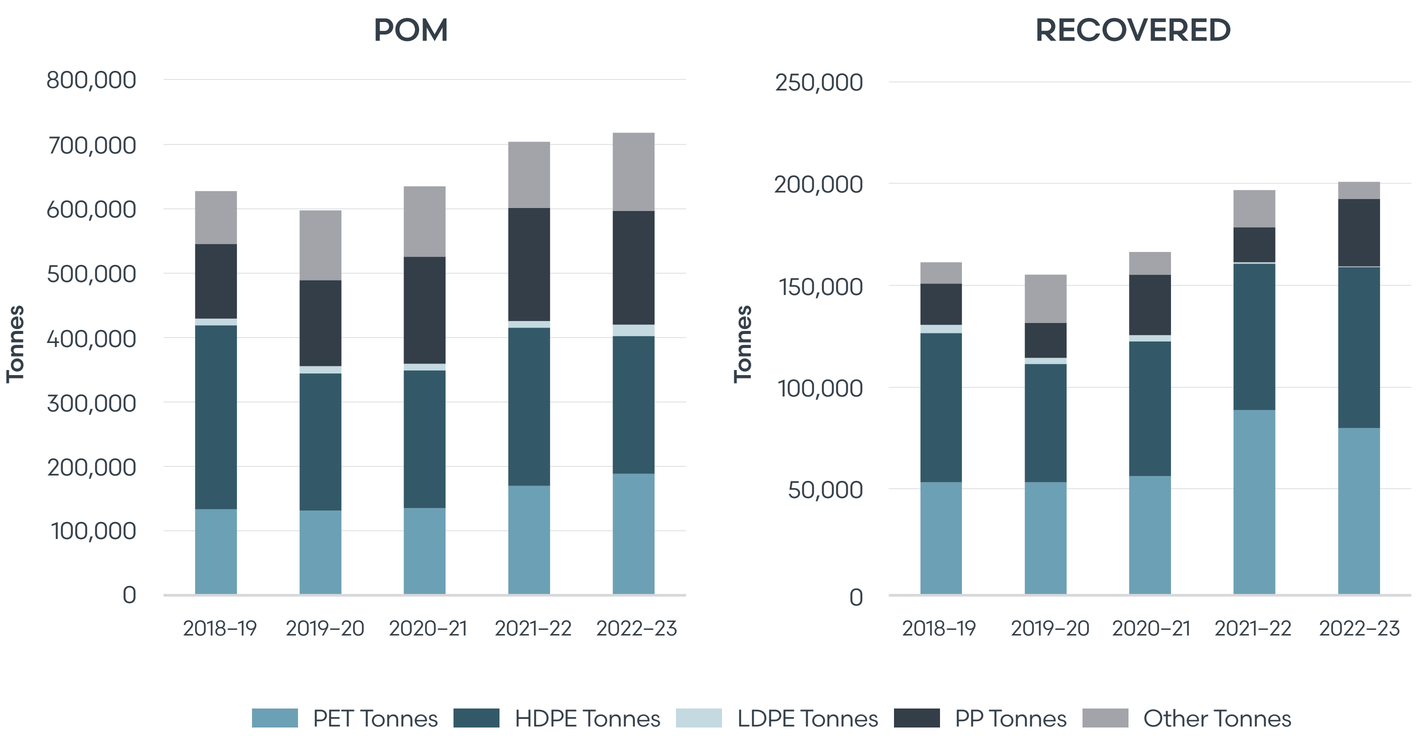
TRENDS



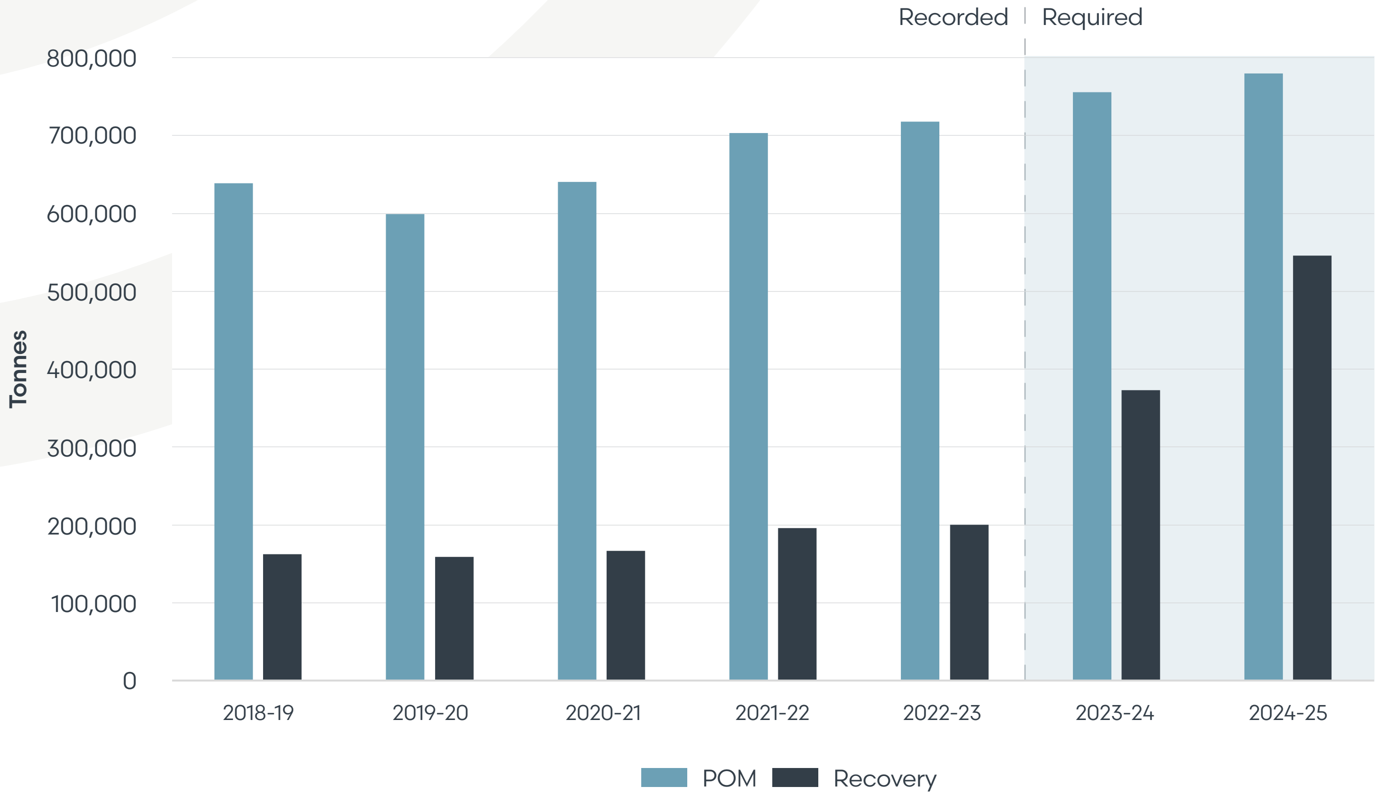
Polymer breakdown



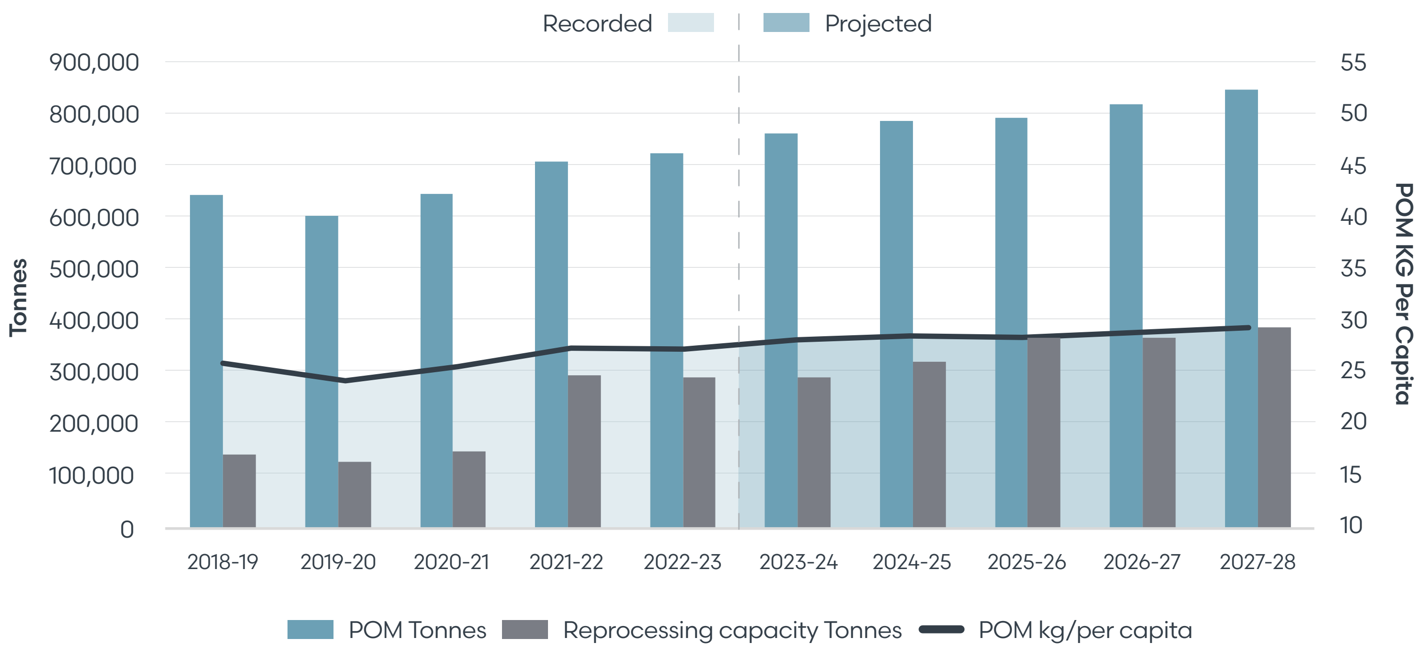
Polymer trends



Recovery required to meet targets



Reprocessing capacity



Top 3 priorities
RIGID PLASTIC

The following three groups represent 81% of all rigid plastic packaging placed on market (POM) in 2022-23.

	POM (tonnes)	Recovery (tonnes)	Pre-consumer recycled content (tonnes)	Post-consumer recycled content (tonnes)
HDPE	213,647	77,489	11,420	14,862
PET	188,725	81,304	7,437	48,418
PP	176,577	32,586	203	34,172

Reduction of problematic and unnecessary single-use packaging

Reduction in problematic and unnecessary SUPs by year (mix of rigid and flexible plastics).

Priority item	2019-20 (tonnes)	2020-21 (tonnes)	2021-22 (tonnes)	2022-23 (tonnes)	2021-22 to 2022-23 change
Single-use HDPE shopping bags	159	81	100	–	-100%
Rigid PS	17,074	17,169	16,694	13,904	-17%
EPS	22,709	29,048	29,778	27,686	-7%
PVC	16,873	14,768	10,813	9,706	-10%
Oxo-degradable plastics	2,133	758	8	8	0%
Plastic tableware	25,225	13,224	18,694	19,323	3%

Progress towards the National Packaging Targets

OUTCOME	TARGET	PROGRESS
Packaging designed for circularity and sustainability	**100%** of packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable	**72%** was classified as having good recycling potential
	Problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging will be phased out	**~40%** reduction from the 2017-18 baseline **All plastics*
Harmonised and expanded reuse and recovery systems are in place	**70%** of plastic packaging is recycled or composted	**28%** was recovered
Deep and resilient markets exist for recycled materials	**20%** recycled content included across Rigid Plastic *Target across all materials is 50%*	**14%** of Rigid Plastic was made with post-consumer recycled material

For more information on 2022-23 Australian Packaging and Consumption Recovery data visit:

www.apco.org.au or contact APCO.

All data provided within this document is from or estimated based on the data available within the sources outlined below.

These figures do not include packaging lost to litter or with extended shelf life.

Population data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – National, State and Territory Population data sets.