



BOOMERANG
ALLIANCE

PLASTIC FREE PLACES



GOVERNMENT BRIEF

www.plasticfreeplaces.org

ABOUT 'PLASTIC FREE PLACES'

The Boomerang Alliance (BA) and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) have established a national, community-based program to facilitate a switch away from single-use non-compostable plastic items.

The Plastic Free Places program works in communities to directly reduce the amount of single-use plastic packaging used within that community and empowering it to make lasting changes towards supporting a circular economy. The program directly engages and provides tailored solutions for food retailers, events and markets to eliminate single-use plastic and switch to reusable (preferred) or 100% compostable alternatives.

The program focuses on away-from-home plastics, specifically takeaway items. This includes water bottles, coffee cups/lids, straws, takeaway containers, food ware (cups, cutlery etc.) and plastic bags.

The program is set up in a number of locations around Australia and follows a model developed in Noosa, QLD. The model since been successfully implemented in Byron (NSW), Perth (WA), Adelaide (SA), Cairns (Qld) and Townsville (Qld). In these communities, the program has eliminated over 6 million single-use plastic items. It continues to expand.

The partnership between BA and APCO ensures that funding organisations receive a proven project delivered by an established community-based organisation, with the backing and expertise provided by the packaging industry.

The program is a comprehensive system that can be implemented in any community in partnership with local government and stakeholders, and has demonstrated strong community support. It can be adapted in size and scope to suit government priorities.

For local governments who have adopted motions and policies to ban single-use plastics, the program is complementary and can help implement these initiatives on council land and in the wider community.

In 2019 the Queensland Government commissioned a cost-benefit analysis on the Plastic Free Noosa project. The analysis found that the program delivered a healthy cost-benefit ratio of 4.33:1. Extrapolating the results to all cafes throughout Queensland showed the economic impacts to be significant, suggesting an estimated \$943.7 M in net benefits (6% discount rate over 40 years) to the Queensland economy.

PROOF OF CONCEPT

Our program has been highly successful in achieving systemic change away from single use-plastic.

As of the end of October 2020, our program has worked with over 550 businesses, markets and events. 150 of these have eliminated all target plastic items and are awarded the status of Plastic Free Champion.

We obtain ordering data from members and can determine how much plastic they have eliminated through the program. Based on current data, we have avoided over **6.3 million** single-use plastic items in the period 1st Feb, 2018 – 30th Oct, 2020.

Note: At the end of 2019, the Plastic Free Noosa project was handed over to the Noosa community and is now managed by Tourism Noosa.





THE PROGRAM

THE PROGRAM IN BRIEF

ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT TARGETS: The program aims to align with and support state and local government policies, programs and strategies to phase out single-use plastics and reduce plastic pollution and waste.

INITIAL FOCUS AND EXPANSION PATHWAY: Programs implemented have concentrated on adopting better practices in the food retail, markets and event sectors. The project should be a three-year program to manage a permanent switch in practice and establish a closed loop system that meets national packaging targets.

LOCAL PARTNERS: Partnerships with stakeholders in the local community, including local government, business and trade associations, tourism bodies etc. provide both ownership and credibility as a broad-based community initiative.

KEY COMPONENTS: Direct engagement with target sectors and local suppliers, partnerships with manufacturers for bulk purchasing/discounts, working with council to implement plastic free policies and waste/composting solutions.

PRACTICAL SUPPORT: A trained, local coordinator will be in place to support local businesses and program partners. The coordinator will have access to the national networks and expertise of Boomerang Alliance and APCO. Detailed guides and resources for all target sectors will be provided to participants.

PROMOTIONAL COLLATERAL: Includes shop signage and display, media coverage, promotion at strategic events, promotion through partner networks, newsletters, word of mouth, a website and social media.

DEMONSTRATING SUCCESS: Reduction in waste-to-landfill is also measured where possible. Progress and final reports will be produced, and communication of success will be supported nationally by Boomerang Alliance and APCO.

WHAT WE OFFER

A TRIED AND TESTED PROGRAM: The program has been developed and improved through delivery in Noosa, Perth, Byron and Adelaide. We continue to improve the model as we deliver it around Australia.

AN EXPERIENCED TEAM: We have extensive experience supporting businesses and communities to go plastic free, and in navigating the growing market of alternative products, identifying those which are substandard, misleading or greenwashing.

THE BENEFIT OF A LEADING NATIONAL PROGRAM: The strategic partnership between BA and APCO ensures alignment of the program with best practice packaging and compostability standards.

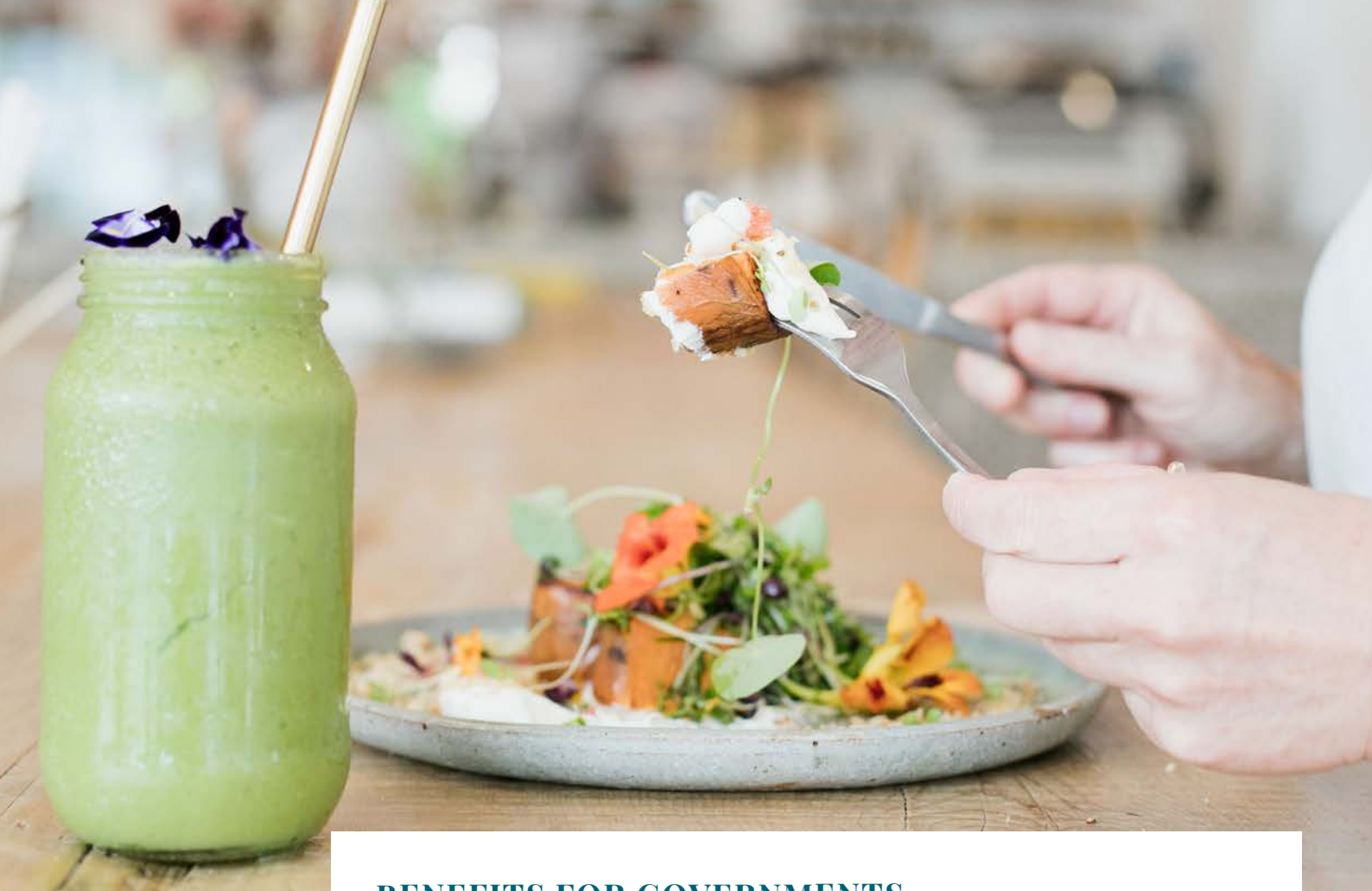
RESULTS: Measurable results supported by a proven data collection system.

PROBLEM SOLVING: Knowledge and capacity to facilitate solutions to supply chain problems, including procurement of compostable and reusable products through trusted networks of product manufacturers and suppliers, the facilitation of commercial composting services, and delivery of viable cost-saving solutions for businesses.

POLICY EXPERTISE: We are able to advise local government on plastic-free policies and their implementation on council land and the wider community.

ESTABLISHED MATERIALS AND SYSTEMS: We have already developed, tested and refined our materials and communications, which can be quickly adapted to suit your community. These include flyers, guidelines, signage, media releases, website, social media, blogs etc.





BENEFITS FOR GOVERNMENTS

IMPLEMENTATION OF PLASTIC-FREE POLICIES: The program can assist to deliver on policies and motions which aim to ban single-use plastics on government land and in the wider community. We can work with individual businesses, events and markets who are required to shift practices, giving them the right assistance to comply with policy requirements. This takes away the need for governments to undertake this role.

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: The program engages public-facing sectors in the community in actively promoting waste reduction and alternative practices. This helps to establish a new culture, instil local pride and encourage behaviour change around plastic use and waste, leading to a community engaged and aligned with waste reduction goals.

ROBUST MEASUREMENT: A focus on robust measuring and reporting of results will demonstrate program success, assist governments in understanding community motivations and behaviour, and inform the development and implementation of new solutions to local waste and resource management.

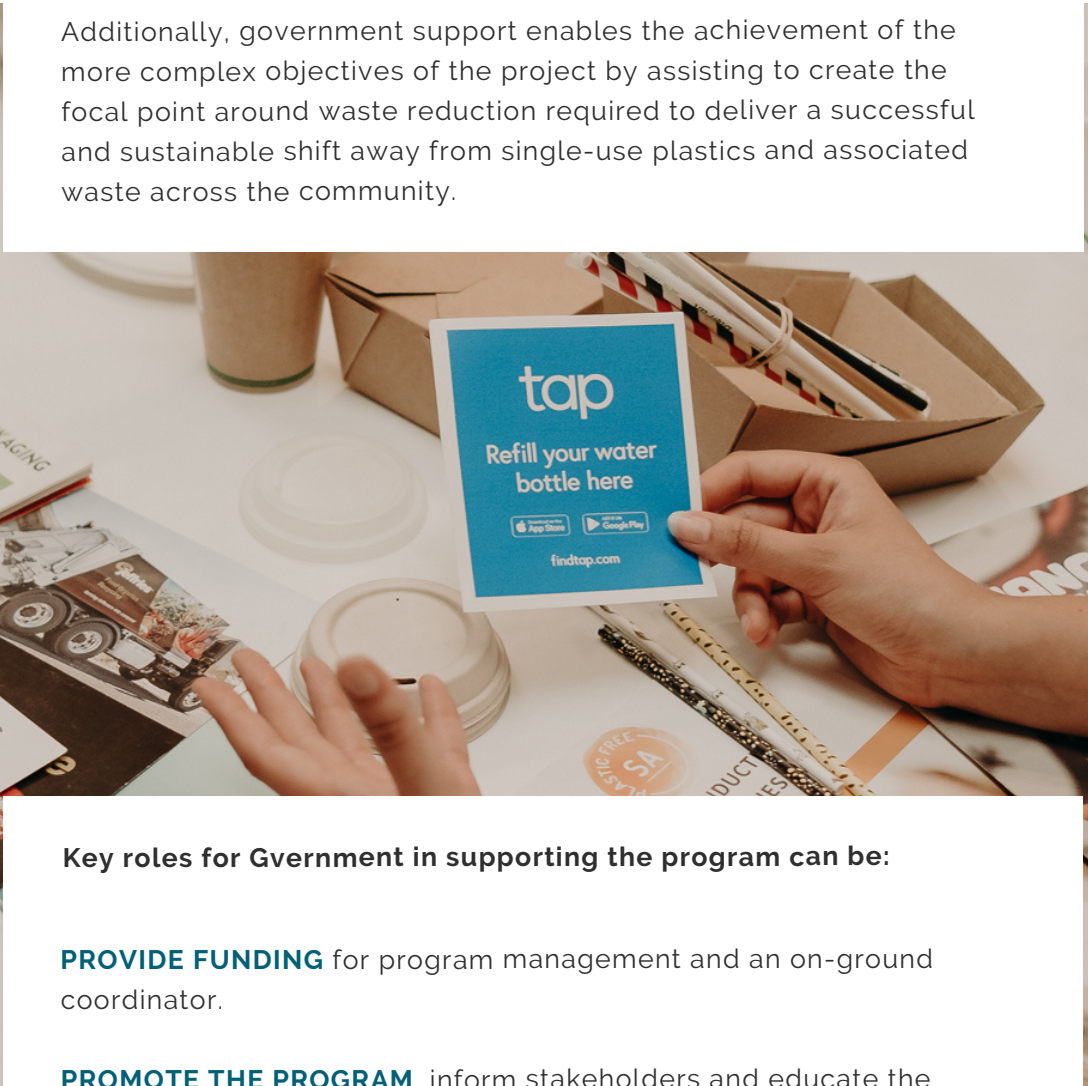
REDUCED CLEAN UP COSTS: The program provides a proven model to reduce disposable, single-use plastic items, often a major component of litter and landfill, at source.

TOURISM BENEFITS: The plastic-free ethos in practice increases goodwill from tourists who are increasingly choosing destinations that tick environmental boxes.

GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

Active support for the program by state and local governments has been demonstrated through other PFP projects to be important for achieving objectives in a timely manner. Endorsement creates a public profile and affords the credibility required for on-ground coordinators to successfully engage with local businesses and establish the program as a community-wide initiative.

Additionally, government support enables the achievement of the more complex objectives of the project by assisting to create the focal point around waste reduction required to deliver a successful and sustainable shift away from single-use plastics and associated waste across the community.



Key roles for Government in supporting the program can be:

PROVIDE FUNDING for program management and an on-ground coordinator.

PROMOTE THE PROGRAM, inform stakeholders and educate the community about the program.

FACILITATE THE PROVISION of collection services that support plastic-free practices by businesses, where possible.

ADVISE ON EXISTING waste collection composting services currently available.

COLLABORATE ON OPPORTUNITIES to develop future programs and services to further enhance the effectiveness of the program.

LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES to review/change policy and practice that reduces single-use plastic and waste, demonstrating leadership by example.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

1 BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSITION

The program assists food retailers, events and markets who join as a member to eliminate identified single-use plastic items and replace them with reusable or 100% compostable alternatives. This is done through direct engagement with each member to develop tailored solutions. The main barriers to success, such as cost concerns, time availability, greenwashing and misconceptions about products, are effectively addressed. We offer member guidelines, tailored action plans, signage and staff training to ensure a successful transition, and remain on hand to assist with follow up.

To ensure businesses are able to source the right solutions easily, we establish partnerships with local suppliers and work with them to facilitate the process for our members. We also work with major product manufacturers to provide compostable catalogues, and implement programs that allow our members to utilise reusable networks and systems. As the project grows, back of house plastics can be addressed. We may also include additional sectors into the program (such as hotels) beyond the first year.

For events and markets, we work organisers to assist the transition process with their vendors, as well as provide effective alternatives to the use of water bottles, soft plastics and balloons. We also assist with composting and waste solutions, as well as signage and communications to ensure stakeholders and community are well informed.



STOP SUCKING!



@clairtineydesign

ASK IF YOU NEED A STRAW

HELP US REDUCE SINGLE-USE



3 ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO TRANSITION

There are numerous systemic issues that are creating barriers for success in communities transitioning to plastic free. These centre around difficulties for businesses in identifying and sourcing the right products because of practices such as greenwashing, mislabelling and product certification under foreign standards that do not provide sufficient guarantees about their compostability. Additionally, there is a disconnect between standards used to certify products and composters standards for output, creating difficulties for composters to assess which products they can accept. The program will address these barriers on a systemic scale through projects developed through the BA/APCO partnership.

4 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Businesses will be educated through their involvement, with many realising the advantages and becoming advocates for the program to customers and through business networks. Complimentary messaging to customers is reinforced at the point of purchase by businesses with the motivation to reduce costs and waste, using the resources provided by the program.

Through a dedicated website and an active media and social media campaign, the plastic-free message will be broadcast to the wider community. To further promote the project, our team gives regular briefings to business associations and community organisations interested in plastic free issues. We also partner with local groups for cross-messaging opportunities.

GOT YOUR OWN CUP OR CONTAINER?



@clairtineydesign

WE'RE BYO FRIENDLY!

HELP US REDUCE SINGLE-USE



2 COLLECTION AND PROCESSING SERVICES

Within each community, we aim to trial a commercial collection and composting service with business members. As we are already working with our members to ensure they are using the right products and can manage their composting, we are well positioned to achieve this with the partnership of Council. The aim for the trial is that it could be developed into a larger scale service, fulfilling many Council goals to lower waste to landfill.

5 INTEGRATION WITH APCO PRIORITY PROJECTS

The program benefits from its integration into APCO's priority projects for achievement of the 2025 National Packaging targets. These projects include:

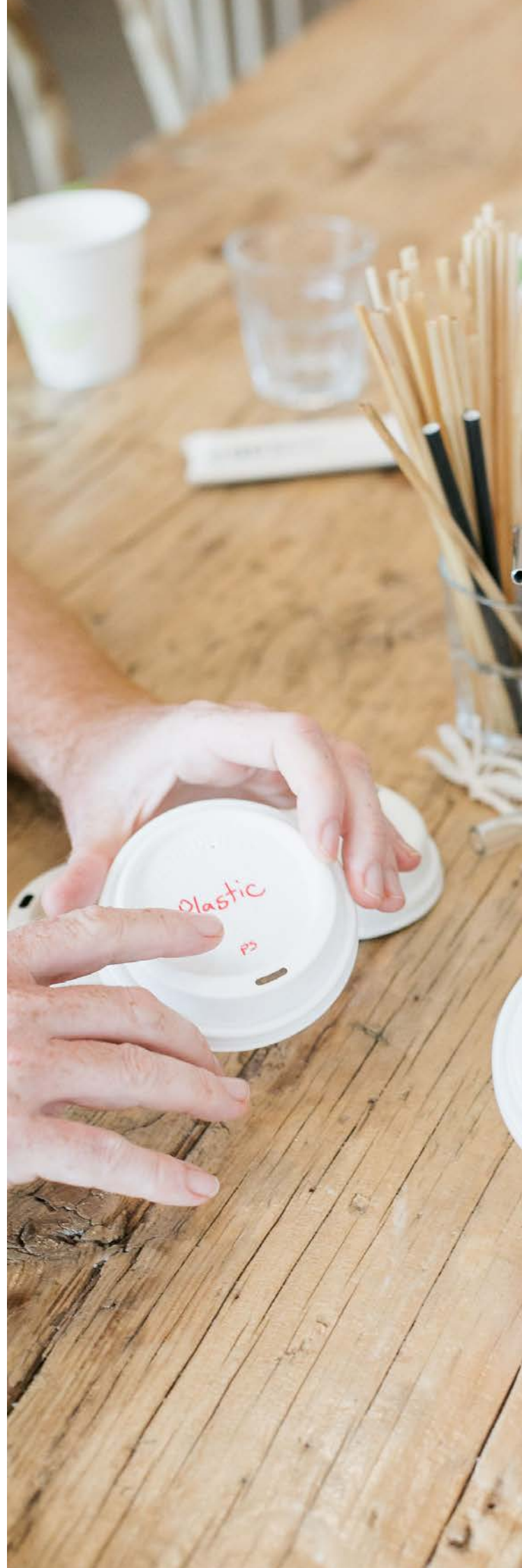
COMPOSTABLE PACKAGING GUIDELINES to meet Australian Industrial Composting Standard (AS 4736) and Australian Home Composting Standard (AS 5810).

FOOD SERVICE PACKAGING GUIDELINES will engage food service sector case studies, procurement and recycling guides.

COMPOSTABLE PACKAGING LABELLING will engage stakeholders on consistent packaging labelling, supported by consumer education campaigns.

RECYCLED CONTENT LABELLING will provide transparency on use of labels designed to meet the 30% national packaging target.

COMPOSTABILITY TRIALS to demonstrate that certified materials can be successfully processed in various processing facilities in compliance with relevant standards.



WHAT NEXT?

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our program further and provide you with a detailed proposal. For more information, please contact:

Kellie Lindsay - Plastic Free Places Program Manager, Boomerang Alliance

kellie.lindsay@boomerangalliance.org.au



Thank you for the opportunity to present the

PLASTIC FREE PLACES PROGRAM

www.plasticfreeplaces.org