



Coca Cola takes the Northern Government to court for trying to improve recycling

**MEDIA RELEASE
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Sydney: Environment groups including Take 3, Greenpeace, Clean Up Australia, The Total Environment Centre and Two Hands will be holding a court-side vigil at the Supreme court in Sydney protesting Coca Cola's legal challenge to the NT 'Cash for Containers' scheme.

"Today, we stand with the Northern Territory Government and the 80% of Australians who want a national recycling refund scheme.¹ To Australian Premiers and Environment Ministers, we say join with us and reject Coke's bullying", said David Ritter, Greenpeace's Chief Executive Officer.

Since it started last year the Northern Territory scheme has reportedly seen 35 million containers recycled and recycling rates have already doubled.²

"The world's oceans are awash with plastic which is having a devastating effect on wildlife. According to scientists from the CSIRO, a quarter of this pollution comes from the beverage industry led by Coca Cola", said Tim Silverwood, co-founder of Take 3.³

"40% of the rubbish removed by volunteers on Clean Up Australia Day is bottles and cans, but in South Australia, where there is a refund system, they are just 10%"⁴, said Ian Kiernan AO, founder of Clean Up Australia Day and former Australian of the year.

"Our volunteers are sick of cleaning up plastic from the environment and extracting it from birds, turtles and other animals, both alive and dead. Coca Cola, Schweppes and Lion need to clean up their act and support effective measures to keep their products out of the environment", said Rochelle Ferris, General Manager, Australian Seabird Rescue.

"Some drinks producers like Fosters and Diageo have been getting on with the job of complying with the Northern Territory legislation and demonstrating corporate responsibility", said Jeff Angel, "it's time for Coca Cola to back off the bullying and clean up their act."

"I spent a month at sea in the North Pacific, on average we spotted large pieces of plastic pollution every 3.6 minutes. Over the whole voyage I only spotted one piece of driftwood. We are creating a toxic ecosystem that simply should not exist", said Paul Sharp, founder of Two Hands

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¹ Newspoll July 2012 commissioned by the Boomerang Alliance. Available on request.

² Chief Minister Terry Mills reported in the NT News, February 14, 2013, 'Cash for Cans Put on Hold', http://www.ntnews.com.au/article/2013/02/14/317605_ntnews.html

³ Dr Britta Denise Hardesty, quoted in ABC TV's Catalyst Program, September 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/stories/3583576.htm>.

⁴ <http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/Whatelsewesupport/why-do-we-need-a-container-deposit-legislation-.html>