



## RESEARCH PROVIDERS ANNOUNCED - PLASTIC PACKAGING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

Progress on the design of a plastic packaging stewardship programme for New Zealand is progressing well as the project reaches its six-month milestone.

Mr Tony Nowell, Independent Chair of the project says the project team is designing a Plastic Packaging Stewardship (PPPS) scheme that will mean producers will pay for the plastic they use in New Zealand, including the end-of-life packaging costs such as collection and recycling.

As part of its work, the team will consider how a local circular economy can be created and expanded to where plastic packaging in New Zealand is more sustainably recovered and recycled, and what investment in infrastructure and new advanced recycling technologies is required.

Mr Nowell has provided an update on the Scheme design's progress, including the announcement of the research providers that will conduct the first tranches of detailed data and information gathering required to support the project.

"We asked for proposals in December 2022, and received eight responses, for three tranches of research to be undertaken at this time. Our evaluation process was thorough with each proposal being evaluated against the agreed set of criteria by Steering Group members; meetings to determine the short list; presentations and discussion with short list candidates, and a unanimous agreement to appoint the successful candidates," says Mr Nowell.

**Valpak** has been appointed to conduct research to identify New Zealand's current knowledge of plastic data and material flows and to identify the gaps between our current state and what is required for a successful scheme to operate. The two tranches of work are:

**The Current State & Problem Definition – Plastic Data:** This will include identification of all plastic packaging, available data (tonnes) on plastic consumption, recovery, and processing.

**The Current State & Problem Definition – Internal flow of plastic packaging from placed on market (POM) to collection and processing:** This will include mapping out how plastic is placed on the market in New Zealand, collected at end of life, separated at a recycling plant (MRF), and processed.

Valpak specialises in data insights – data collection and analysis and packaging material flows. Based in the UK they are part of the Reconomy Group which operates in more than 80 countries.

Mr Nowell says the Steering Group was impressed by Valpak's approach to collating data and providing a clear pathway to "what good looks like" for New Zealand. Since 2010 Valpak has undertaken a programme of works known as Packflow projects in the UK which are seen as market leading and will be ground-breaking for New Zealand.

This research will be underpinned by a team of technical and subject matter experts from across the New Zealand plastic value-chain including suppliers, brand owners, retailers, waste management, collection, and processing industries as well as local government.

Research reports will be discussed with a wide range of stakeholders at facilitated workshops before being finalised.

**RPS Group** has been appointed to conduct the third tranche of work which will **review global best practice schemes to recommend scheme options for New Zealand which meet the requirements set out in [the gazette](#) and the Waste Minimisation Act 2008**. This will include a desk top review of international Product Stewardship models leveraging research which is publicly available from project stakeholders.

RPS Group, in collaboration with Helen Lewis Research and the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence, have extensive experience in product stewardship modelling and scheme design in Australia and New Zealand and in Europe.

The Steering Group was impressed by the collaborative approach and the wide range of experience in the design and construction of regulated Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes around the world. RPS Group will work with technical and subject matter experts from New Zealand and around the world identified by the Project Team.

All three tranches of work are interrelated and will be managed by Rob Langford, Project Manager, PPS and the project team. The research will form the basis of the next phase, which will be commissioned later this year to prepare cost benefit analysis reports on the preferred scheme design(s) identified through this work.

**ENDS**

**For more information, please contact:**

Kristie Penwarden (on behalf of the PPS)  
021 575 222

**Notes:**

The PPS co-design project is jointly led The Packaging Forum and the NZ Food & Grocery Council (NZFGC) supported with funding from the Waste Minimisation Fund.

The Packaging Forum and NZFGC have considerable experience in facilitating industry-led solutions - the Packaging Forum has more than a decade's experience with the development and management of voluntary product stewardship schemes for glass packaging, soft plastic, and public place recycling/litter. NZFGC is part of a global leadership group on product stewardship, and directly engaged in the Australian Food & Grocery Council's research to design a soft plastic product stewardship scheme in Australia.

As the PPS is a co-design process, consumer and community groups, government, producers, and processors are involved in the decision-making process throughout the project.

Plastic packaging (excl. beverage containers) was declared a priority product under section 9 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 in July 2020. This means a product stewardship scheme for plastic packaging must be developed and all producers of plastic packaging must be part of the scheme. At this stage, all plastic packaging used for consumer goods sold via retail or wholesale (excluding beverage containers) including liquid paperboard and compostable plastic will be included.

The project sets out to recommend a not-for-profit, product stewardship organisation structure, which is responsible for the delivery of the plastic packaging priority product scheme, and a scheme design that will be able to meet the requirements of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, including sections 12,14, and 15.

For more information on the PPS project, the PPS Project Team and the Steering Group, please visit <https://pps.org.nz/>