

Priority 4*: Realising the economic potential of recycling

Fulfilling the potential recovery of value and resources, increasing infrastructure investment.

The draft waste strategy (the strategy) sets out the goals, targets and priorities for achieving a sustainable, low-waste future powered by a circular economy where our communities, economies and environment can thrive.

A circular economy keeps products and materials circulating in the economy for longer, at their highest value, and brings multiple economic, social and environmental benefits.

The strategy identifies five priorities, all of equal importance, that will inform development of a roadmap which sets out key initiatives and actions to be implemented over the next five years with the aim of achieving the strategy's goals and targets.

Background

Currently about 77 per cent of the material recycled in WA is circulated back into the state's economy through local markets (mainly construction and demolition [C&D] and organic waste). The remainder is transported overseas (20 per cent) or interstate (3 per cent). Appropriate collecting, aggregating and sorting of waste results in waste streams which are more likely to be recycled. The true economic value of recycled materials can be captured by supporting the development of effective supply chains, and developing new markets and sustainable industries.

Through state government procurement and infrastructure planning, the strategy can focus on:

- increasing demand and developing markets for recycled products and those that contain recycled content
- better understanding the economic potential of the commercial and industrial (C&I) waste stream.

Relevant targets

The 2019 strategy set a target of increasing the recycling rate to 70 per cent by 2025 as well as specific targets for municipal solid waste (MSW), construction and demolition (C&D) and C&I waste. While WA's recycling rate is higher than ever, up from 42 per cent in 2014–15 to 62 per cent in 2021–22, the 70 per cent target will not be met. The target of increasing the C&D recycling rate to 77 per cent by 2025 has been met; however, the target for increasing the C&I recycling rate to 75 per cent by 2025 will not.

The strategy builds on the 2019 strategy's recycling targets and proposes the following:


- Increase the recycling rate to 75 per cent by 2030
 - MSW: Increase the recycling rate to 70 per cent in Perth and Peel, 60 per cent in major regional centres
 - C&D: Increase recycling rate to 80 per cent
 - C&I: Increase recycling rate to 80 per cent
- Continue the delivery of FOGO and FO collection and recycling to households and businesses in Perth, Peel and major regional centres
- Recover energy only from residual waste
- Ensure no more than 15 per cent waste generated in Perth and Peel is landfilled.

Increasing demand and developing markets for recycled products and those that contain recycled content, as well as ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is available to process and recycle waste is essential to realising its economic potential.

The following table sets out the **current activities** being implemented and proposes **additional 'draft'** actions that could be implemented to support the achievement of this priority and the relevant waste strategy targets. The actions have been included here to help stimulate discussion and brainstorming around actions to include in the roadmap that will make meaningful contribution towards achieving the targets.

*The draft revised strategy's priorities are equally important. The priority numbering is for reference only.

Our current activities	Actions and ideas to build on in the waste strategy roadmap		
<p>Legislation and regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish a rolling five-year schedule of anticipated waste levy rates which is updated annually. Containers for Change Development and implementation of the Recovered Materials Framework Working with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to develop a framework to accelerate product stewardship and to better coordinate work across governments <p>Leadership, advocacy, policy, programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads to Reuse program C&D rollout plan FOGO rollout plan Collaboration with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> align with the national agenda support the development of a national recycled content traceability framework enhance reporting on recycled content in procurement <p>Education and behaviour change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide WasteSorted initiatives including WasteSorted Toolkit, GREAT Sorts campaign, WasteSorted Community Education grants, WasteSorted Schools 	Key initiatives – what we want to achieve	Proposed State Government-led actions	Proposed collaborative actions
	<p>4.1 Increasing demand and developing markets for recycled products and products that contain recycled content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the development of targets for the use and reporting of recycled product in government construction projects of a specific size or value. Explore options to further incorporate waste and sustainability considerations into government office builds and fit-outs. Establish Common Use Arrangements preferencing waste avoidance, reuse, recycling and use of recycled/recyclable products. Develop tools and guidelines for State Government procurement for the assessment of waste avoidance and the use of recycled content in tenders. Expand the implementation of FOGO or FO collections for State Government agencies and assets. Investigate the establishment of innovation funding to support new businesses turning waste into a resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop case studies on the use of recycled materials in construction projects. Explore options to support research and innovation that creates new markets and business opportunities for recycled materials.
<p>4.2 Building on the findings of the State waste infrastructure plan to ensure sufficient and appropriate recycling infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake detailed analysis to determine food and organics waste processing needs outside Perth and Peel, with a focus on the South West and Great Southern regions. Investigate the development of waste precincts and strategic industrial areas to facilitate additional recycling facilities, particularly in highly constrained areas such as northern Perth and the South West region. Develop appropriate guidelines, a regulatory framework and specifications for the recovery and treatment of bottom ash. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to increase the recycling of co-mingled recyclables through the development of regional materials recovery facilities and the consolidation and sorting of materials at transfer stations. Support research into innovative recycling technologies and initiatives. 	



Discussion questions

- How well do these draft actions support our priority to realise the economic potential of recycling?
- Are there other actions that will support this priority?