

20 November 2015

Turnbull Government takes a welcome first step back toward buying 100% recycled paper

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has applauded the action taken by the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt, in writing to all Government Ministers strongly urging them to do the right thing and ensure their Departments buy 100% recycled paper.

The Assistant Minister for Defence, the Hon Darren Chester, is also to be congratulated for his continuing advocacy for the Government to address this issue and reverse its position.

Minister Chester agreed to have the letter written to him by Minister Hunt on this issue published and it is [available here](#).

AFPA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ross Hampton, said "This Ministerial letter strongly encourages Ministers and Government Departments to commit to the purchase of 100% recycled copy paper and adopt sustainable practices consistent with the National Waste Policy. This is an important first step."

However we are still a long way from restoring the position which existed under the recently scrapped "ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-2015". The Sustainability Plan 'mandated' (according to the Environment Department's own website) the requirement for Departments to procure 100% recycled copy paper. It defies belief that the Turnbull Government has seemingly stepped away from the environmental gold standard of 100% recycled copy paper when 95% of households are in support of recycling. I remain confident that the full reinstatement of this 'buy recycled rule', in a procurement connected policy or equivalent directive, will occur in the near future."

"Australian Paper has a new \$90 million copy paper recycling facility which has just started operations in Gippsland, Victoria. This plant has the potential to transform Australia's recycling landscape, diverting some 80,000 tonnes of Australian waste paper from local landfill each year.

However unless the Government reverts back to its previous position and formally requires Departments to 'do the right thing', buy 100% recycled and minimise waste, the significant advantages of recycled paper made from Australian waste paper will not be realised and the plant's future will be undermined."

AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.

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