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Question 1 - What are the key issues facing the NSW waste system?

Infrastructure to support recycling and resource recovery in regional areas:

- alternative Waste Treatment facilities
- Materials Recovery facilities
- compost facilities

Improvements could be made in providing guidance and cost-effective solutions for the business to dispose of e-waste and hazardous waste.

Question 2 - What are the main barriers to improving the NSW waste system?

The lack of specialised infrastructure and smaller markets for recycled products and lack of coordinated effort across state boundaries and national level. Lack of market incentives for recycled content packaging.

Question 3 - How can we best reduce waste?

Incentivising reusable packaging.

Question 4 - How can we recycle better?

Building new (or upgrading) resource recovery facilities such as the one being built in Shoalhaven LGA which is capable of extracting and diverting over 90% of mixed waste from landfill. The waste levy could be utilised to fund the upgrades. A roadmap to Circular Economy in NSW that would facilitate the adoption of circular economy principles, guide and support the industry that is changing and enhance the markets for recycled goods. Behavioural change principals when rolling out recycling initiatives to improve recycling rates and reduce waste contamination, e.g. clear bags when recycling exposes the incorrect items.

Question 5 - What are the main opportunities for improving the NSW waste system?

NSW being the largest state economy, is in a unique position to start the waste reporting and show the way to the rest of the country, just as it did with NABERS. This could be done by Published Benchmarks and Performance Dashboards related to waste that increases transparency, increases accountability and enables consistency across states. Establish ambitious State-based waste targets, supported by required infrastructure, incentives, education and processes. Third, improving regional coordination and supporting local government to work collaboratively across LGA boundaries on household collection, resource recovery and community education. Combining the effort might also reduce related costs, e.g. deploying smart bins with sensors could potentially mean fewer pickup trucks as well as pick up across the boundaries if the trucks are not full. Fourth, developing incentives for local governments and industry to invest in infrastructure of investment into infrastructure or research and development, for example, solutions in industrial ecology.

Question 6 - Any other information that you would like to contribute to the waste strategy initiative?

National legislation and regulation could assist in governance, compliance and continually improving performance. Investing in the developing Industrial Ecology networks and an online platform for trading and auctioning waste. Adopt the proposed national target of 90% of packaging waste to be diverted from landfill by 2030.