

# Corporate environmental obligation: an examination of the performance of coca col...

[Environment](#), [Pollution](#)



Currently, due to the boosting economy and enhancing consumption of energy and other various resources, Australia becomes extremely flourishing. However, as a consequence of this, an increasing number of wastes are producing by local residents. Before looking at the cause of waste overproducing, it is important to take a view of the definition of the waste. More specifically, according to Healey (2010), waste is generally defined as the materials that individuals have no desire to use and is planning to dispose of. Moreover, in an article by Hyder Consulting (2008), waste consists of three sectors: municipal waste; commercial and industrial waste; and construction and demolition waste. This essay will discuss the causes of the growth in waste production, and suggest several treatments which could solve the waste production issues to some extent. One of the most significant reasons, which contribute to the situation of waste overproducing, is the throw-away society. Specifically, there is considerable rubbish produced by goods that citizens never use. Nowadays, over 1/4, 10.5 billion on products and services are discarded by Australians, which are never or hardly ever used every year (the Australia Institute's report, "Wasteful Consumption in Australia", 2005). Based on the throw-away society, increase in development of disposal commodities has been bringing extreme convenience to modern citizens. Furthermore, the waste removal system enables residents hardly find their waste. As well as 'out of sight is out of mind', packaging and disposability can also make consumers to assure that these goods are not disadvantageous to the environment. As a result of this, consumers are predicted to buy more disposable products as a cycle (O'Connor, 2007). It is also need to be mentioned that the consumer culture

is so advanced that it has created a relationship with waste which cannot be easily severed, said Gay Hawkins, who is an associate professor of cultural theory at the University of NSW. Moreover, it is more expensive to fix the old product than buy a new one (O'Connor, 2007). For example, it is a trendy that a significant number of residents replace their mobile phone every one or two years. And millions of mobile phones are never used again or are removed into landfill ([www. Infoplease. com/ipa/A0933605. html](http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0933605.html)). Several considered toxic materials, such as cadmium, lead and mercury, comprise many components of mobile phones. They are damaged to human health and the environment if not disposed suitably, and even influence the climate because of carbon dioxide emissions or other greenhouse gases. ("Clean up Australia", 2009) Accordingly, the solutions to these problems should be varied as well. To begin with, governments ought to formulate laws, which indicate that manufacturers have obligations for their products and are responsible to reuse their constituent materials. This point is best illustrated with the example of one of German policies. According to Dr Paul Downton, there is a law that German cars' producers should design their products dismountable and reusable (O'Connor, 2007). Not only should government execute proper laws, but manufacturers also need to develop their production process to decrease waste from products' potential waste, either from the process of manufacture or the product itself (Hyder Consulting, 2008). And this point can be confirmed by the example of the National Packaging Covenant. Specifically, it is a attempts that can estimate the amount of waste avoidance because of product design improvement, such as the 'lightweighting' packaging (Hyder Consulting, 2008). Moreover, Dr Paul

Downton claimed that developing the sense of waste can decline impulse expenditure and mindless disposal (O'Connor, 2007). After that, a related opinion was pointed out by Hawkins that if individuals reuse items indifferent way, such as changing dresses to tea towels, the rate of consumption will decrease which can also contribute some impacts on the relationship between citizens and material items (O'Connor, 2007). A study by Hawkins indicates that handing waste is a useful way to reduce the normal distance between residents and their waste as well as help individuals develop their sense of responsibility for waste (O'Connor, 2007). A study by Nina Bailey, the GreenHome project officer of the Australian Conservation Foundation, demonstrated that Australians pay more attention on recycling (O'Connor, 2007). Furthermore, the author of "Wasteful Consumption in Australia" stated that prohibiting individuals from unnecessary consuming will require not only waste education programs but population therapy as well (O'Connor, 2007). As well as the throw-away society, household waste trends also contribute to cause waste issues. It is said that there are 41.4 million tons of waste was collected in Australia between 2006 and 2007, which was approximately a 28 percent growth from the level of 2002-2003.

Furthermore, if this trend continued, there would have 70 million tons of waste in 2020 (Hyder Consulting, 2008). Research carried by Hyder Consulting (2008) illustrated that both economic and social factors can cause impacts on this trend. More specifically, increased population, decreased average household size and an increasing number of household and dwellings compose social factors. And it can be seen from "Australian Social Trends" (2007) that the population of Australia rose around 1 percent per

year from 1997 to 2002, whereas the consumption in household increased about 3 percent per person per year from 1996-1997 to 2002-2003 (Australia Bureau of statistics, 2007). For economic factors, it will influence either resource recovery or waste disposal. Family disposable income is a case in point, if it increase, the trajectory to replacement of a number of household products, such as computers, will not change (Hyder Consulting, 2008). And it is widely known that Australia's economy is booming. According to the table available in 2006, the fact that household do not intent to recycle or reuse selected waste materials are various. Firstly, Australians were not motivated to recycle the waste because they had lack of interests in it, or it would cost too much effort. Secondly, services or facilities were inadequate or there were even no services or facilities available. After that, some Australians claimed that they did not have enough storage at home. Eventually, some residents indicated that they could not find certain services or facilities (" Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices", 2006). To solve these problems, three major factors cannot be neglected, which are the quantity of recyclable waste collected by a household; available services or facilities; and interest (Australia Bureau of statistics, 2007). Government should invest more funds in developing kerbside collection services and formulate more proper provision for recycling waste, more education programs need to be organized by communities, related institutions have to increase the level of landfills and develop more stable markets for recycling materials (Australia Bureau of statistics, 2007). Furthermore, Hyder Consulting (2008) stated that landfill remain the major way to dispose municipal and other waste in Australia, and it should not only be a " rubbish

dump", but have some specific functions, such as separation of materials for recycling. Although the rate of recycling by household rose for nearly all materials (Australia Bureau of statistics, 2007), it is also necessary to mention that some of solutions do have drawbacks. More precisely, compared with other organic matters, most of industrial objects cannot be connected and be reused for something else, because they have not been designed to be recycled and become something new, argued by Dr Paul Downton (O'Connor, 2007). Hyder Consulting (2008) had expressed a similar view that there are restricts to scientific knowledge for human health and environmental influence and future hazards of several waste which disposed into landfills. Due to restricted statistical information of waste, source recovery, and differences between jurisdictions, Australian government finds that it is difficult to make progress in developing a national waste policy (Hyder Consulting, 2008). In conclusion, not only municipal waste, but commercial and industrial waste; and construction and demolition waste also contribute to waste overproducing. Resource recovery is the best way to solve the problem.