

Project Manager – Queensland’s Waste Strategy consultation
Natural Resources and Environment
Department of Environment and Resource Management
GPO Box 2454
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Sirs

Re: Submissions of Ideas and Comments for Collaboration for reduction/remediation of Waste:

Having perused the DERM Queensland’s Waste Strategy 2010-2020-Waste Avoidance and Recycling Consultation Draft, and considering the perplexities of the aims and objectives, we submit our brief comments as follows:

FACILITATION In order to create a new value, the change of attitudes of all participants of society must be addressed. This is more important that change is not only seen to be effected from the top with the regulators, more so that the rigidity of the interpretation of “the rules” requires flexibility and accommodation on case by case basis, especially in the formative years of change. Change will driven by incentives and entrepreneurial vision, many of these will come from micro, SME’s, and as such encouragement and avenues for assistance (specifically refer to micro business - which currently falls off the radar screens in all aspects of Governmental dealings) should be put into place. Micro business (less than 10 persons and / or less than a million), have no access to assistance under the current system. Perhaps a means of facilitation which could accept, nurture and accommodate this sector.

EDUCATION In order for society to appreciate the need for change, a large part of budgets perhaps, need be channeled to education, starting from school level, to households, and business. Consumers should be made aware of exactly how waste is processed from collection point to disposal, for without consumer appreciation of the way the current system works, it will be very difficult to ensure a timely transition from ignorance (which at current level is bliss - or out of site, out of mind) to awareness of the need for action to change, and the willingness of all levels of Society to be pro-active and responsible for their actions. We are sure, that many would be amazed at how far waste is carted to treatment plants. In this instance, the cost of cartage, together with the carbon footprint, just some of the issues, would perhaps necessitate the need for “mini” disposals units, almost in some instances down to suburban level.

REWARDS Much of what we read in various draft proposals, concentrate and emphasis the “stick and whip”. Whilst we acknowledge and appreciate the need for increase levies as a method to dissuade waste, there should be more “rewards” for those who comply with the waste avoidance initiatives in the various streams. The intricacies of these rewards, could for example, range from tax relief, to payments, and innovative members of community could submit a huge list to potential rewards. The bottom line is, reward, exemplary behavior, which would probably result change in a quicker time frame. An example of rewards: bottles and cans. Victoria has a scheme, we understand, that refunds returns, further more we understand that this is funded by the Victorian Government. There are many citizens who in youth grew up

with collecting bottles and going getting cents in return. The householders became accustomed to recycling and would keep bottles and return them to the recycling bay which was annexed to the side or back of the supermarket, and receive cash in return. In these days this was not Government supported but organized by Industry itself.

SOURCE REMEDIATION As much waste as possible should be encouraged to be sorted, and treated before disposal. Packaging should be less not more. So often we purchase items, which require a degree and a lot of man-power to open the packaging, which is presented like a Russian Doll, layers upon layers to get to the item of purchase. Perhaps mini-mills, for example shredders should be placed in strategic places in and around towns and cities. Can crushers could become a consumer standard in every building. In other words, each member of society plays a part in the disposal strategy. Education of consumers, whether household or business to sort and use different disposal units should be high priority. Products sold could be sold with a star label indicating what level of recycling the process for disposal (or manufacture) the product will undergo. Consumers are accustomed to seeing the star rating.

Our company supplies Microbial inoculations, formulations of which can be used in a wide range of industry. Our holistic approach is to encourage remediation on site or in-situ. The formulations enable the end user to multiply on site for bigger remediation projects, the advantages and benefits fit the criteria of the WS sustainability, economics, carbon footprints and many more. For small job situations, there are opportunities for job creation offering entrepreneurial individuals a business start, or existing supply companies a means of expanding their range of products which comply with supply sustainability criteria.

For example Grease Traps. By treating the source, the beneficial advantages downstream (ie Council waste water) is obvious. A restaurant can easily apply the formulation to his grease trap, reducing the requirement for regular waste truck collections, reducing odours, and benefiting the down stream sewage wastes and problems, and benefiting from economic savings to the business. In this example, whilst the "Business As Usual" mentality exists, with both Grease Trap owners, and councils, the pace of change will come in very slowly. Current Queensland policies demand that every three months traps are pumped out, and it is not easy to ascertain who to speak to when seeking to discuss sustainable means of change. There appears to be no cohesive chain, and each city appears to have its own agenda as to how waste is handled. Whilst time is spent trying to achieve the objectives sought and ascertaining how to navigate the bureaucratic circles, BAU continues. We therefore feel that it is important that in drawing up of solution plans for Waste Strategy, there is a habitat unencumbered with red tape set up which could facilitate acceptance of submissions, and importantly how these submissions whether they be new or improved solutions can then be implemented.

COMMERCIALISATION Whilst we have briefly touched upon the need to create unencumbered facilitation processes, it is also important, that new solutions and ventures are commercialized as quickly as possible. In order to achieve this there needs to be a network and means whereby companies with products complying

to the waste strategy tick of approval can be listed, and be put in touch with markets who are looking for products to aide their endeavors to achieve their compliances.

We appreciate the opportunity afforded to all, by allowing submissions of comments, however brief.