

VERSION 1: OCTOBER 2025

RIGID PLASTIC

CONSUMPTION AND RECOVERY

2023–2024 FACTSHEET



Australian
Packaging Covenant
Organisation

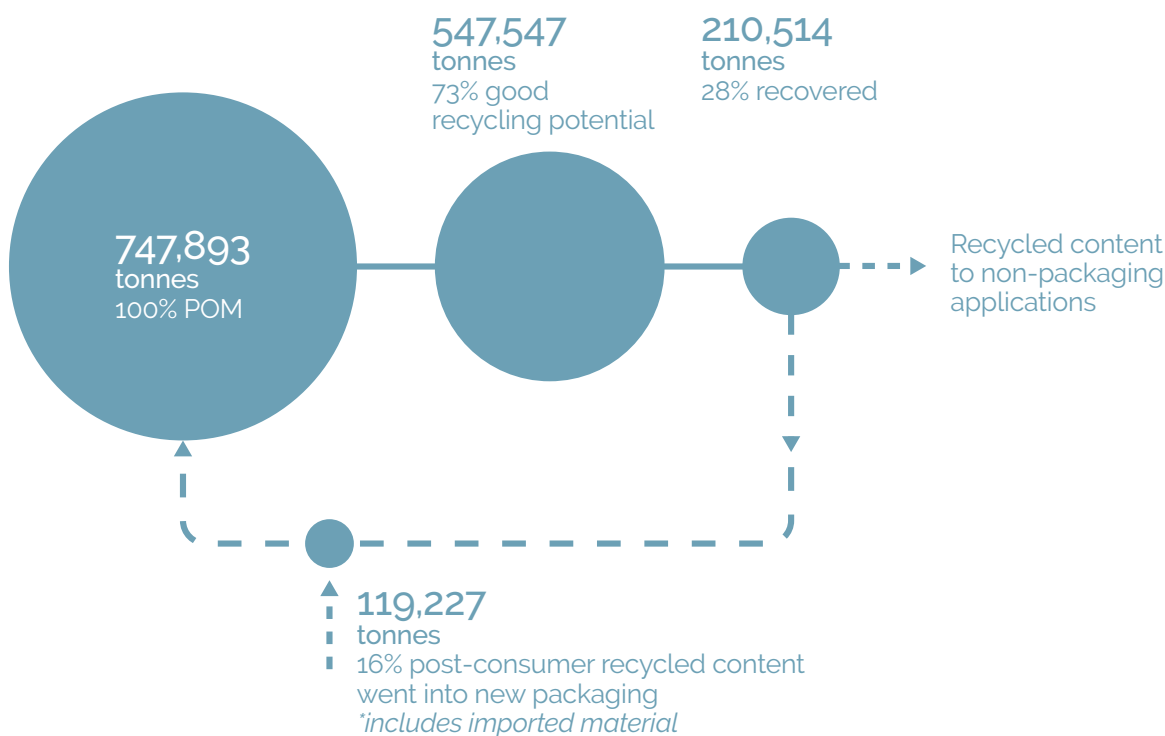


Summary

RIGID PLASTIC

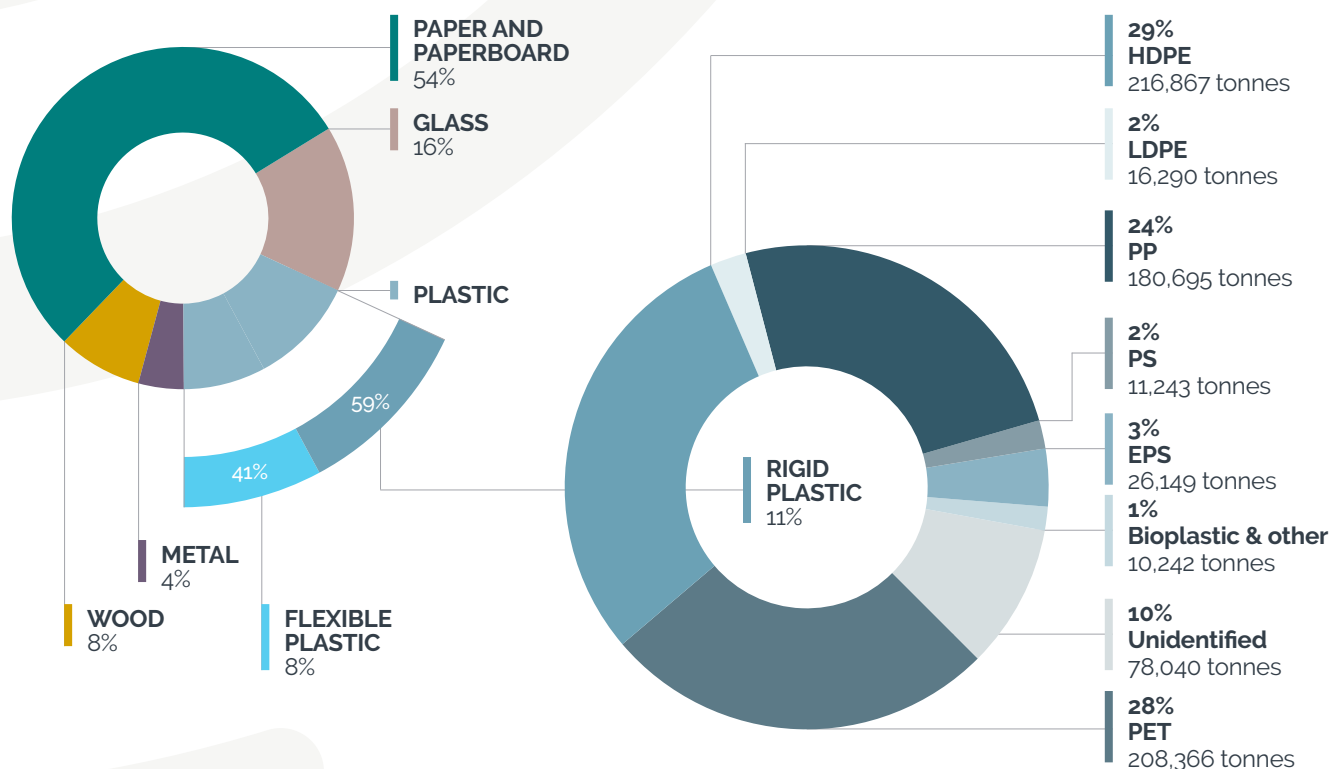
- 11% of packaging placed on market (POM) was rigid plastic, representing 747,893 tonnes.
- **Post-consumer recycled content has grown from 14% to 16%** (as a proportion of POM), with an additional 19,965 tonnes of post-consumer recycled content used vs 2022-23 levels.
- While close to three quarters (73%) of rigid plastics are classified as having good recycling potential, only 28% of rigid plastic was recovered throughout 2023-24.
- An improvement in recovery rate must also be accompanied by rigid plastic **reprocessing capacity**, which **has a current shortfall of 373,808 tonnes on packaging POM**. Reprocessing capacity is projected to rise to 46% of POM by 2028-29.
- **The volume of rigid plastic packaging POM has grown 17%** in the 2018-19 to 2023-24 period. Rigid plastic POM is estimated to grow at a rate that continues to be well above population growth, with a 5-year projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) POM of 4.2%/yr across the 2023-24 to 2028-29 period compared to a population CAGR of 1.3%.
- **The prevalence of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastics has continued to decline**, with the largest decreases in rigid plastic seen across PVC packaging, EPS and rigid PS.
- Rigid plastics have more established collection pathways, reprocessing capacities and stronger end markets than flexible plastic packaging. Rigid plastic packaging represents 59% of all plastic packaging POM, but accounts for 82% of all plastic packaging recovered.

Material recovery

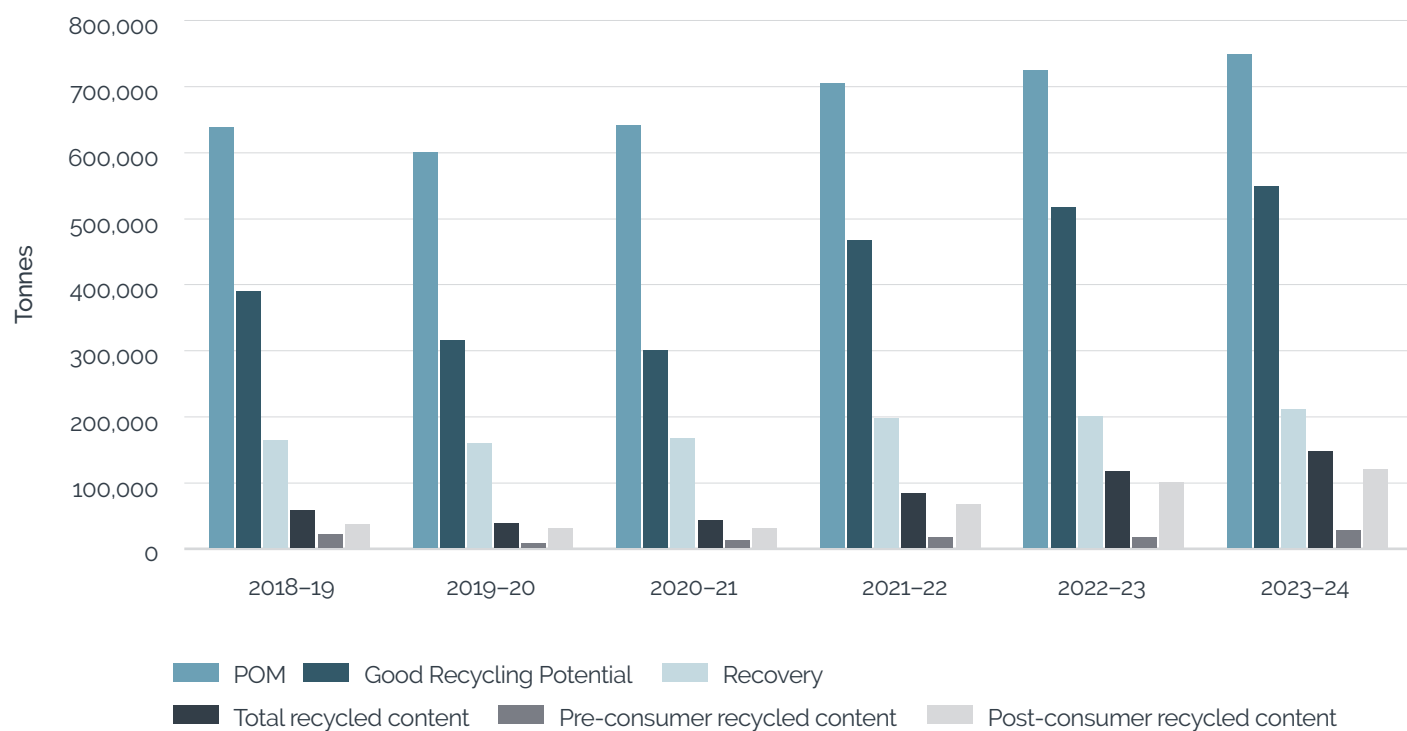


Placed on market

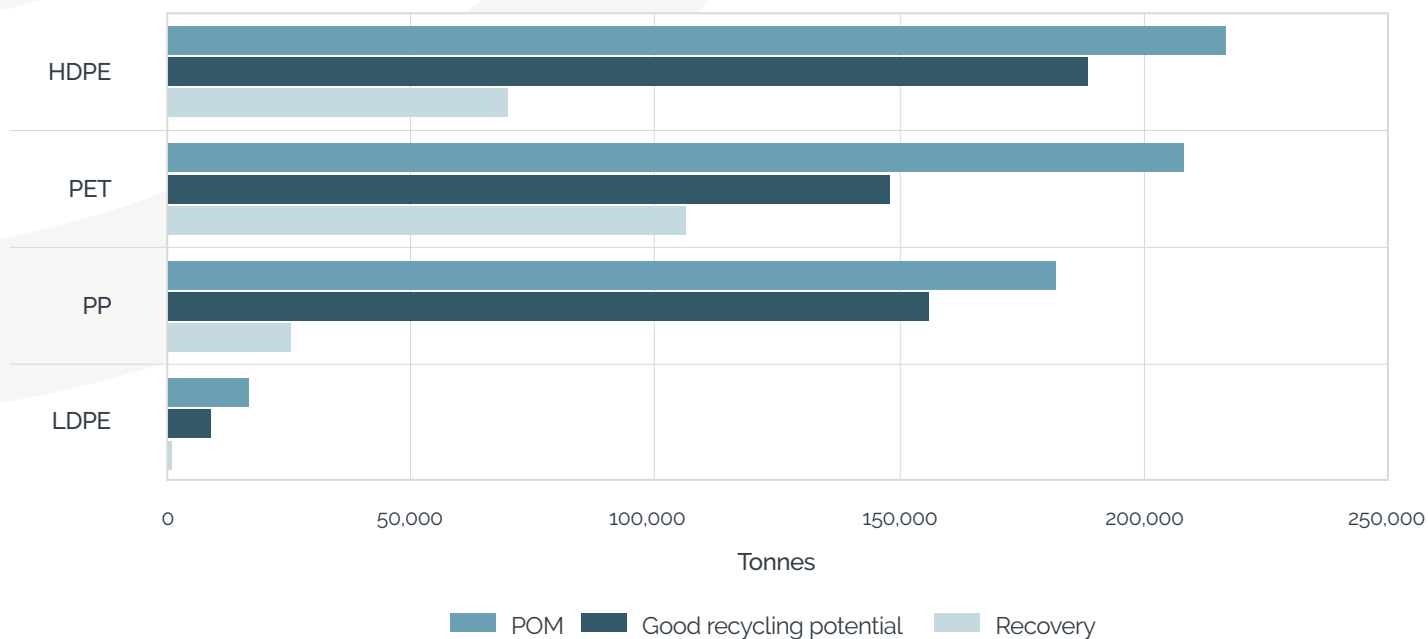
RIGID PLASTIC



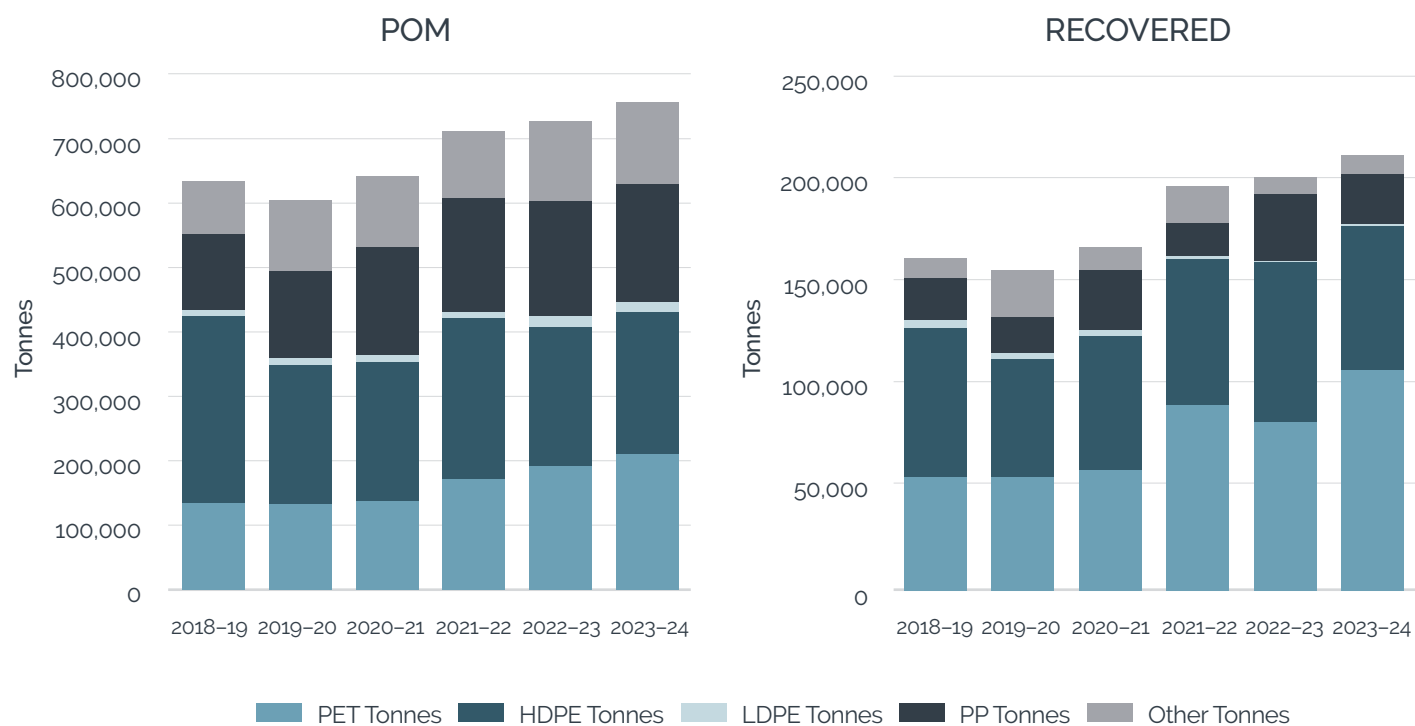
TRENDS



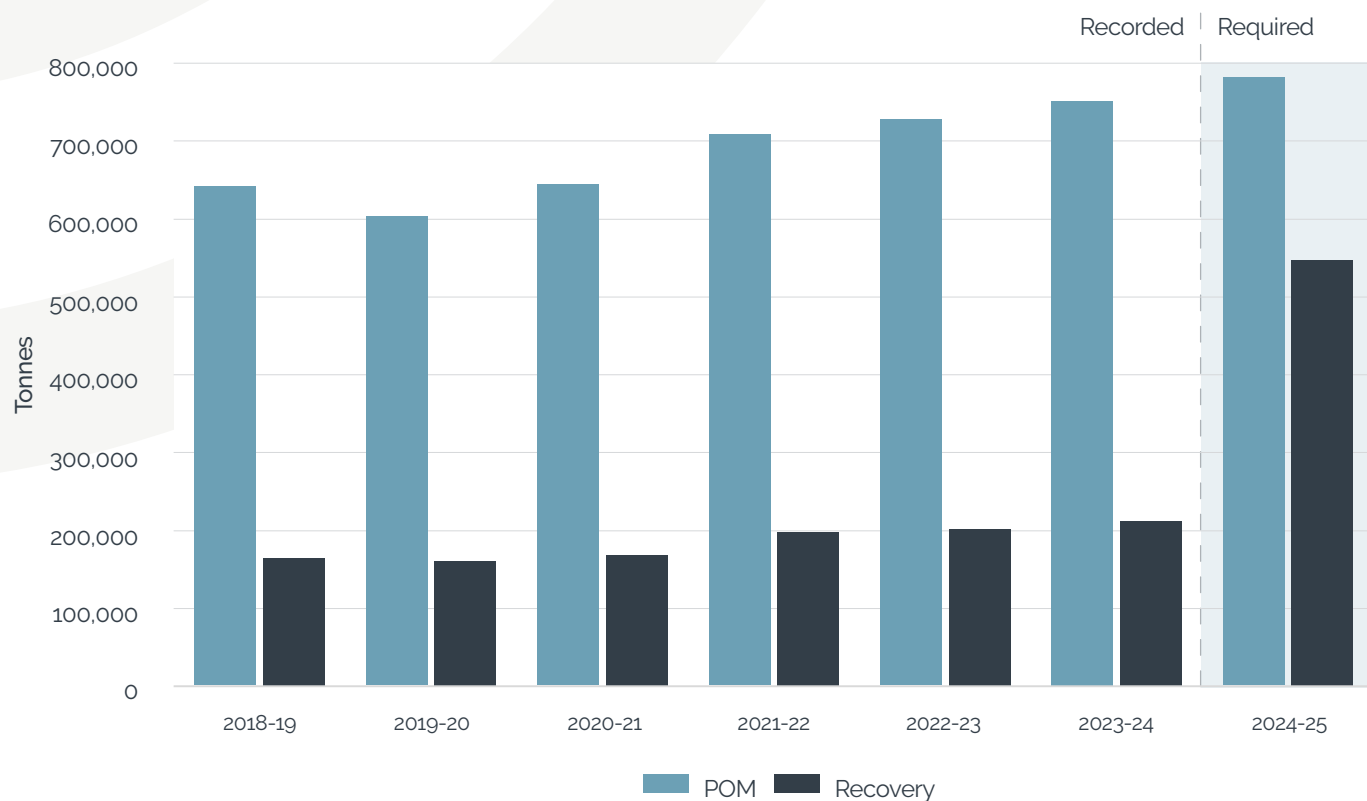
Polymer breakdown



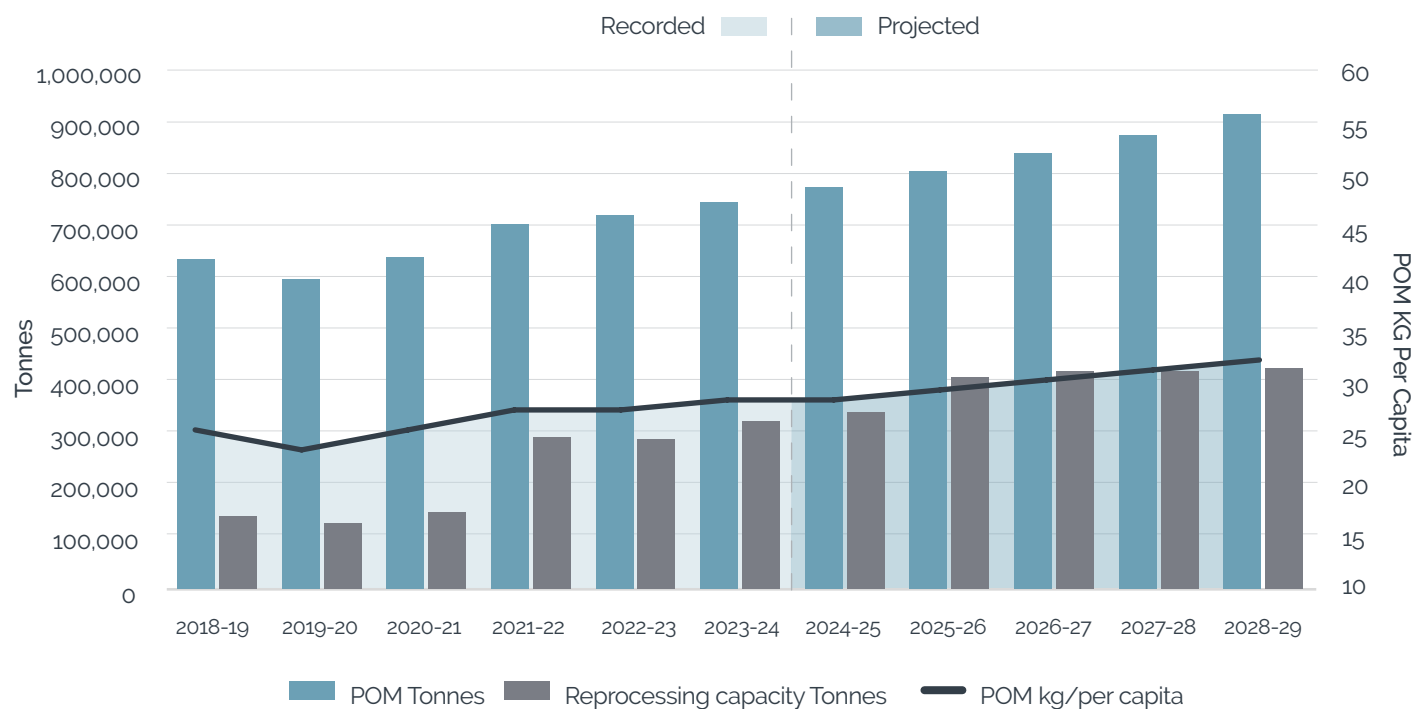
Polymer trends



Recovery required to meet targets



Reprocessing capacity



Top 3 priorities

RIGID PLASTIC

The following three groups represent 81% of all rigid plastic packaging placed on market (POM) in 2023-24.

	POM (tonnes)	Recovery (tonnes)	Pre-consumer recycled content (tonnes)	Post-consumer recycled content (tonnes)
HDPE	216,867	69,729	11,848	21,175
PET	208,366	106,712	11,403	62,569
PP	180,695	24,581	2,979	34,349

Reduction of problematic and unnecessary single-use packaging

Reduction in problematic and unnecessary SUPs by year
(mix of rigid and flexible plastics).

Priority item	2019-20 (tonnes)	2020-21 (tonnes)	2021-22 (tonnes)	2022-23 (tonnes)	2023-24 (tonnes)	2022-23 to 2023-24 change
Single-use HDPE shopping bags	159	81	100	–	–	N/A
Rigid PS	17,074	17,169	16,694	13,904	11,335	-18%
EPS	22,709	29,048	29,778	27,686	26,149	-6%
PVC	16,873	14,768	10,813	9,706	8,552	-12%
Oxo-degradable plastics	2,133	758	8	8	8	0%
Plastic tableware	25,225	13,224	18,694	19,323	16,452	-15%

Progress towards the National Packaging Targets

OUTCOME	TARGET	PROGRESS
 Packaging designed for circularity and sustainability	100% of packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable	73% was classified as having good recycling potential
	Problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging will be phased out	~46% reduction from the 2017-18 baseline <i>*All plastics</i>
 Harmonised and expanded reuse and recovery systems are in place	70% of plastic packaging is recycled or composted	28% was recovered
 Deep and resilient markets exist for recycled materials	20% recycled content included across Rigid Plastic <i>Target across all materials is 50%</i>	16% of Rigid Plastic was made with post-consumer recycled material

For more information on 2023-24 Australian Packaging and Consumption Recovery data visit:

www.apco.org.au or [contact APCO](#).

All data provided within this document is from or estimated based on the data available within the sources outlined below.

These figures do not include packaging lost to litter or with extended shelf life.

Rounding of percentage data may result in discrepancies among totals. For more details, please refer to the Consumption and Recovery Report 2023-24.

Population data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – National, State and Territory Population data sets.

This factsheet was developed by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) using information collated from publicly available sources. Such collated information could not be, and was not, independently verified by APCO and this information may contain typographical and other errors or inaccuracies. Although all reasonable attempts were made to ensure the accuracy and Aon an "as is" basis without any representation, warranty or guarantee of any kind. To the maximum extent permitted by law, APCO accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for any use of or reliance upon this factsheet by any third party.