

# China's "National Sword" Policy Strikes the Plastics Circular Economy

*Global plastic being exported for recycling is now under threat from China's new "National Sword" policy which is disrupting the plastic scrap marketplace.*

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, September 19, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Global plastic waste resources which are being exported for recycling are now under threat from China's new "[National Sword](#)" policy which is disrupting the region's plastic scrap marketplace. Rather than creating doom, this change in circumstances offers new opportunities for both existing recyclers and new businesses which can mobilize domestic innovation, job creation and plastic resource recycling domestically in the countries where the waste is generated.

The United States, Australia, Hong Kong and much of Europe, have relied heavily on China as a destination for recovered mixed plastics, with an estimated 2/3 of plastics exported for processing and recycling from Australia alone, leaving a void in local processing capacity. Experts predict that the Chinese Government's decision to dramatically restrict the importation of scrap plastic, expanding upon their previous "Green Fence" restrictions, means Australia, and other western countries will need to find new export markets or

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As plastic pollution becomes more widely understood, it's recapture is increasingly important. China's new restrictions on scrap imports will spur needed domestic innovations in this space.”

*Douglas Woodring*

alternative end markets to avoid this recycling stream going to landfill. Globally there is a push for new and better end markets to be the focus, to achieve optimal social, environmental and economic plastics sustainability where the material is recaptured as a resource in its "afterlife" of its intended first use.

“China's actions have disrupted the scrap plastics market, placing pressure on businesses upstream. If you have been relying on export markets to take your mixed plastics, it is time to rethink this trading business and create true circular economies where the resources are processed and as much



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as possible where they are created”, said Doug Woodring, Founder of the Plasticity Forum.

In China, commodity traders and industry insiders have tipped this policy to shift processing and manufacturing plants. Some are moving to other SE Asian countries, but there is growing speculation that the policy will encourage processing to be done in the originating country of those resources.

[Plasticity Sydney](#) – The Forum for Examples, New Programs, Collaborations and Scaled Solutions

The 9th global Plasticity Forum - the only global conference truly focused on upstream plastic sustainability across companies and the cities we live in - will be held in Sydney on 31 October 2017. The one day conference brings innovators, entrepreneurs, financiers, plastics recovery experts and brand owners together to share ideas and inspire plastics circular economies. Since Plasticity's launch in Rio de Janeiro, it has been held in Hong Kong, New York, London, Portugal, Shanghai, Dallas and Los Angeles.

“Plasticity Sydney is the perfect forum for industry and diverse stakeholders to identify opportunities resulting from the Chinese “National Sword.” With the heightened awareness of recycling issues being a growing focus of mainstream media, it is important for industry to be proactive and engage in this big conversation on resource recovery. There are a lot of success stories out there, and sharing this knowledge will benefit everyone, said Trish Hyde, Director Plasticity Sydney.

“From my time as CEO of the Australian Packaging Covenant, I know only too well the complexities in creating viable circular economies. Commercial realities and individual interests can cloud the discussion. It is time for a grown-up, solutions-focused conversation – and that’s what Plasticity Sydney offers.”

With plastic pollution becoming more widely understood, and with an impact in almost every community due to the use of this highly useful material, it's recapture as a resource is increasingly important. China's expanded import restrictions on recycled material will help to spur the types of innovations and expanded best practices on plastic sustainability which exist, but have not yet become the norm in our communities. Plasticity Sydney offers an excellent opportunity for brands, business owners, innovators and policy makers to be part of a new era in thoughtful procurement, circular economy design, and product stewardship. Plasticity Sydney is a one-day business forum which is part of the three-day [Beyond Plastic Pollution](#) conference from October 30th - November 1st, in Sydney's Darling Harbour.

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Douglas Woodring  
Plasticity Forum  
+852-9020-3949



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