

Submission  
No 32

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

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Partially  
Confidential

I welcome the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into Proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) Facilities. In my role as a \_\_\_\_\_, I work every day with the challenges of managing municipal waste, improving recycling, and helping our community transition toward zero waste.

\_\_\_\_\_ has adopted a Zero Waste Strategy that follows the waste hierarchy: avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy, and only then disposal as the last resort. This strategy places clear emphasis on the upper levels of the hierarchy, with recycling and Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) as central pillars. In recent years, \_\_\_\_\_ has rolled out a successful FOGO service, expanded recycling opportunities, and invested in community education. These initiatives have already delivered strong diversion results and built public trust in sustainable waste practices.

However, even with best-practice resource recovery, a portion of residual waste will remain. EfW provides an opportunity to manage this fraction responsibly. By converting otherwise unrecoverable waste into energy, EfW reduces reliance on landfill, cuts methane emissions, and aligns with the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, which identifies EfW as a suitable pathway for residual materials.

While I support the introduction of EfW in New South Wales, I emphasise that FOGO and recycling must always remain the first priority. EfW must not undermine the gains already made in composting and recycling, nor create incentives for recoverable materials to be redirected to incineration. Residual waste—after FOGO, recycling, and reuse have been maximised—should be the only input for EfW facilities. Protecting this principle is essential to maintaining community confidence, safeguarding the environment, and progressing toward genuine zero waste outcomes.

The benefits of EfW, when correctly positioned in the hierarchy, are clear:

It complements, rather than competes with, FOGO and recycling.

It reduces methane emissions from landfill and provides controlled, monitored energy recovery.

It helps extend landfill life and reduce long-term liabilities for councils.

It offers regional areas fairer access to advanced waste infrastructure that would otherwise be out of reach.

It provides greater financial certainty for the future management of waste.

For EfW to succeed, it must be delivered with world-leading technology, rigorous emissions monitoring, and transparency to communities. Education and engagement are also essential so that residents understand EfW is not a replacement for recycling or FOGO, but an additional tool to deal with unavoidable residuals.

In my professional view, EfW is an important and necessary step to support the State's 2041 Strategy and to help \_\_\_\_\_ achieve the vision of zero waste. However, it must always be framed within the waste hierarchy, with FOGO and recycling as the priority, and EfW only addressing what cannot otherwise be recovered.

Energy from Waste has the potential to deliver significant environmental, social, and economic benefits for New South Wales if it is implemented correctly. I strongly support this initiative and encourage the Committee to ensure it is delivered to the highest standards, with fairness for regional communities,

and with clear protections to ensure composting and recycling remain at the forefront of waste management.

Martin Canteros Paz