



## INDUSTRY CALLS ON 'BIG BOX RETAILERS' TO TAKE GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR BICYCLE WASTE

A new report by consumer advocacy organisation [Choice](#) highlights the need for greater responsibility by 'big box retailers' when it comes to the half million<sup>(1)</sup> bicycles sold by them each year, according to the Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) and the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence (PSCoE).

Choice commissioned the independent investigation through [Revolve ReCYCLING](#), a NSW based social enterprise that diverts bicycles from landfill through recovery and redeployment. The investigation compared two bikes from K-Mart with two mid-range, branded bikes from a bike shop. Four Sydney riders used the bikes in similar ways over six months, including for bike commuting.

Key findings included:

- Cheaper bicycles are lower quality and have a shorter lifespan
- A budget bike from a big-box store like Kmart may cost you more in the long run in repairs and maintenance
- The waste from inexpensive bicycles piles up yearly

"We estimate 150,000<sup>(2)</sup> 'big box retailer' bikes may go into the waste stream every year because they are of poorer quality and difficult to repair. Laid end to end, that **'waste on wheels'** would cover 306 kms or the distance from Sydney across the Blue Mountains and through to Orange," said Guido Verbist, General Manager of Revolve ReCYCLING.

"Cycling is great for the environment, as well as a sustainable transport option. However, better practices and policies for the waste generated from bicycles would add even more to their green credentials," said Guido

Policy experts agree that there is an opportunity for a better environmental approach by 'big box retailers' who import and sell two-thirds<sup>(3)</sup> of the nearly one million bikes purchased every year by Australians.

"Manufacturers, brands, importers and retailers should ensure the products they are putting out into the market have been designed to be durable, easily repaired and reused wherever possible," said Rose Read, Director, PSCoE.

"Australia is behind many countries when it comes to 'right to repair' legislation," said Read.

Revolve Recycling PTY LTD  
ABN 37 650 072 727

**M:** 0400 217 105

**E:** [info@revolverecycling.net](mailto:info@revolverecycling.net)

**W:** [revolverecycling.net](http://revolverecycling.net)





“This along with lack of sustainable product design and investment in product stewardship actions to conserve resources, prevent environmental harm and reduce carbon emissions are among the reasons why Australia’s reuse and recycling rates lag behind other countries,” Read added.

“Recycling bicycles is an important alternative when the product reaches its end of ‘first life’ and it’s great to see that sector is now being serviced. But it’s our understanding that the cost of recycling a bicycle is higher than the revenue for commodity materials from a bicycle.” said Suzanne Tombourou, CEO of ACOR.

“That’s why importers and retailers can make more of a contribution to their products’ sustainability. As with other sectors, such moves would no doubt be supported by consumers,” said Tombourou.

“We believe that more bicycles can be recovered, repaired, reused and recycled with the right policies and practices in place. We will be making the results of the investigation known to the Minister for the Environment, who has a Priority List for Product Stewardship, along with sharing with the ‘big box retailers’ who have an opportunity to meet consumer expectations about environmental performance,” said the three experts.

1. *source: research commission by Revolve ReCYCLING (2021)*
2. *source: Bicycle Industry Association*
3. *source: Bicycle Industry Association*

- RELEASE END -

**FOR MEDIA QUESTIONS AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS:**

Guido Verbist  
General Manager, Revolve ReCYCLING  
ph: 0459 999 110

Revolve Recycling PTY LTD  
ABN 37 650 072 727

**M:** 0400 217 105

**E:** [info@revolverecycling.net](mailto:info@revolverecycling.net)

**W:** [revolverecycling.net](http://revolverecycling.net)





## **ABOUT Revolve ReCYCLING**

Revolve ReCYCLING aims to be the primary platform in Australia to help riders, bike shops and other retailers, fleet operators, importers and others give new life to old rides.

Australians are buying and using two million plus PTVs every year – and that’s growing as part of the mobility revolution. It’s awesome – and we want to make sure that there’s a ‘sustainability solution’ for those personal transport vehicles when they reach the end of their ‘first life’.

To date we have diverted 98,546 kgs of metal from landfill and avoided 214,000 kgs of CO2.

**More about Revolve ReCYCLING at** <https://revolverecycling.net/>

## **About the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence**

The [Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence](https://stewardshipexcellence.com.au/) is an independent, not for profit charity, that seeks to reduce waste generation and create positive environmental and social outcomes through sustainable product design, resource conservation, product reuse and recycling. The Centre helps businesses, industry, product stewardship organisations adopt a product stewardship approach to deliver their ESG and circular economy objectives. It also provides independent advice on product stewardship priorities to the Australian government.

**More about the Centre:** <https://stewardshipexcellence.com.au/>

## **About the Australian Council of Recycling**

The Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) is the peak industry body for the recycling sector in Australia—a \$19 billion industry that provides over 94,000 jobs while also critically supporting the transition to a circular economy. ACOR’s membership is represented across the recycling value chain, and includes leading organisations in advanced chemical recycling processes, CDS operations, kerbside recycling, recovered metal, glass, plastic, paper, organic, tyre, textile and e-product reprocessing and remanufacturing, and construction and demolition recovery.

**More information about ACOR:** <https://acor.org.au/>

Revolve Recycling PTY LTD  
ABN 37 650 072 727

**M:** 0400 217 105

**E:** [info@revolverecycling.net](mailto:info@revolverecycling.net)

**W:** [revolverecycling.net](https://revolverecycling.net)

