

Exports of Australian waste and recovered materials from January to March 2022

11 July 2022, Piya Nyunt and Joe Pickin

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Blue Environment is commissioned by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to analyse monthly exports of waste and recovered materials¹ and detail the results in monthly data workbooks and quarterly and annual reports. Monthly data is variable, and trends are best observed through the reports produced in this series. This report summarises monthly exports data from the third quarter (Q3) of the 2021-22 financial year. Comparisons are made with the previous quarter (Q2 of 2021-22) and quarterly averages from the previous financial year (2020-21).

The original exports data is provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and comprises monthly data and updates to previously reported data². The ABS data is transformed to account for issues such as trade codes covering a mixture of wastes and non-wastes, and for consistency with national waste data methods. On a tonnage basis nearly all these exports are materials recovered from waste streams for recycling³ or energy, but a small portion is hazardous waste sent for treatment.

Summary

In the third quarter of financial year 2021-22, Australia exported about 1.03 million tonnes of waste and recovered materials with a reported value of \$1,044 million⁴. This represents a decrease of 14% in tonnage and 8% in value compared to the previous quarter. The exports included 925,000 tonnes (90%) within the scope of national waste reporting ('core waste plus ash'), ranging from 87% to 92% in the three months of this quarter. Monthly exports in this quarter ranged from 306,000 tonnes (January) to 398,000 tonnes (March). The previous quarter exhibited less month-to-month variation, ranging from 369,000 tonnes (November) to 424,000 tonnes (December).

Comparison by destination

The top 10 recipients of Australian waste and recovered materials between July 2020 and March 2022, in descending order, were Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, China (including Hong Kong and Macau) and Pakistan. From January to March 2022, 88% by weight of Australia's exported waste and recovered materials were sent to these destinations.

Table 1 (overleaf) compares exports of waste and recovered materials to the top 10 destinations in January to March 2022 compared to the previous quarter, and includes each recipient's 2020-21 quarterly average. Exports to South Korea grew considerably and exports to Indonesia and Malaysia increased slightly, while all other destinations exhibited moderate to large decreases. South Korea's increase is attributed to imports of scrap metals, which have grown sharply across 2021-22 to date. The largest total decrease was to Vietnam, which received about 140,000 fewer tonnes in Q3 compared to the previous quarter, mostly due to a drop in metal exports. The largest quarter-to-quarter decrease in percentage terms was to Pakistan (67%), also due mostly to fewer metals exports.

Metals are the most common waste exported from Australia on a tonnage basis, and they were the sole or main export from January to March 2022 to Bangladesh (100%), Taiwan (98%), China (88%) and India (81%). The remainder of exports to China were mostly agricultural organics (3%) and plastics (3%), and India's remaining receipts were mostly tyres (12%). Indonesia mainly received paper and cardboard (64%) and metals (33%), similar to Malaysia, which mostly received paper and cardboard (46%), metals (37%) and

¹ The export codes mapped to waste and recovered materials in 2021-22 differ slightly from those in 2020-21. Details are given in the accompanying workbook (under 'Ref lists'). The historical data presented here has been updated.

² It cannot be guaranteed that exporters or agents reported the correct codes or values, so the data should be used with caution. Data may be revised for up to six months after initial publication as customs declarations are amended by individual traders, so there may be discrepancies between this report and its precedents. The data presented is gross weight, including packaging.

³ Some of these recovered materials contain a proportion of contamination (or 'off-spec' content) that may need to be extracted before the material can be used.

⁴ Dollar values in this report are in Australian dollars. Historical values are inflated based on the annualised consumer price index.

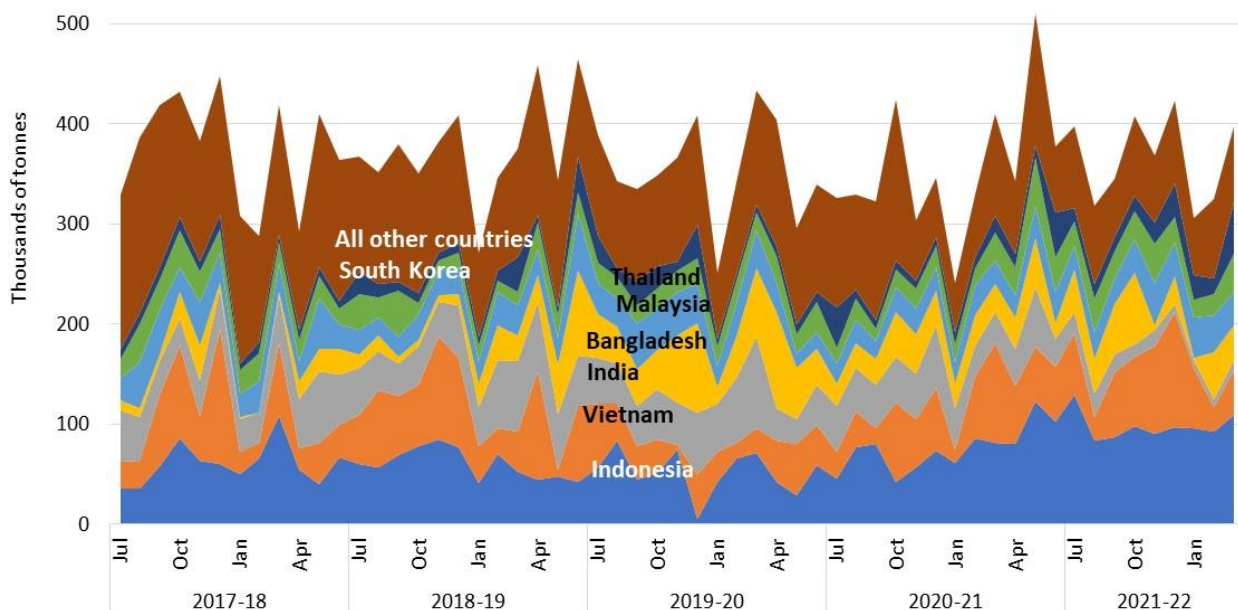
plastics (9%). South Korea mainly received metals (66%) and agricultural organics (21%), while Vietnam mostly received metals (47%), paper and cardboard (33%) and agricultural organics (20%). Pakistan received a mix of metals (60%), textiles (28%) and paper and cardboard (12%).

Table 1 Comparison of quarter-to-quarter exports of waste and recovered materials by destination

Export destination (ranked by tonnes since July 2020)	Jan-Mar '22 (tonnes)	Oct-Dec '21 (tonnes)	Jan-Mar '22 to Oct-Dec '21 (% change)	2020-21 quarterly average (tonnes)	Jan-Mar '22 (\$ mil)	Oct-Dec '21 (\$ mil)	Jan-Mar '22 to Oct-Dec '21 (% change)	2020-21 quarterly average (\$ mil)
1. Indonesia	298,000	286,000	4%	228,000	\$143	\$145	-2%	\$79
2. Vietnam	129,000	271,000	-52%	152,000	\$61	\$141	-57%	\$69
3. Bangladesh	84,000	105,000	-20%	92,000	\$57	\$70	-19%	\$39
4. India	26,000	37,000	-30%	129,000	\$52	\$63	-18%	\$95
5. Malaysia	111,000	108,000	2%	74,000	\$68	\$91	-25%	\$54
6. Thailand	77,000	94,000	-18%	70,000	\$80	\$78	3%	\$38
7. South Korea	92,000	70,000	32%	48,000	\$166	\$150	11%	\$94
8. Taiwan	55,000	63,000	-13%	50,000	\$43	\$48	-11%	\$27
9. China	20,000	23,000	-11%	55,000	\$99	\$130	-24%	\$88
10. Pakistan	9,000	27,000	-67%	36,000	\$9	\$9	-2%	\$18
Top 10 total	901,000	1,082,000	-17%	935,000	\$777	\$925	-16%	\$600
Total	1,029,000	1,200,000	-14%	1,066,000	\$1,044	\$1,140	-8%	\$833

Figure 1 presents the trend in tonnes of exports of waste and recovered materials from Australia by destination between July 2017 and March 2022. Monthly exports are volatile and no overall trend is evident over the 57-month timeframe. In recent months, exports of waste and recovered materials to Indonesia and Malaysia appeared to increase, while exports to India fell.

Figure 1 Monthly exports of waste and recovered materials from Australia by destination



The reported value of exports from January to March 2022 was \$1,104 million, down from \$1,140 million in the previous quarter, but still significantly exceeding the quarterly averages for 2020-21 (\$883 million), 2019-20 (\$742 million), 2018-19 (\$813 million) and 2017-18 (\$740 million). The proportional fall in value this quarter was less than the proportional fall in tonnage, reflecting strong value per tonne for most waste and recovered materials. Monthly values ranged between \$325 million to \$389 million across January to March 2022.

Comparison by material

Table 2 compares, by material type, waste and recovered material export tonnages and values for January to March 2022, October to December 2021, and quarterly averages for the 2020-21 financial year.

Table 2 Comparison of export tonnage and value by material

Material	Jan-Mar '22 (tonnes)	Oct-Dec '21 (tonnes)	Oct-Dec '21 to Jan-Mar '22 (% change)	2020-21 quarterly average (tonnes)	Jan-Mar '22 (\$ mil)	Oct-Dec '21 (\$ mil)	Oct-Dec '21 to Jan-Mar '22 (% change)	2020-21 quarterly average (\$ mil)
Glass	700	600	26%	100	\$0.1	\$0.3	-73%	\$0.1
Hazardous (excl. tyres)	8,600	10,400	-17%	10,400	\$117.6	\$116.9	1%	\$97.7
Metals	520,100	727,200	-28%	615,000	\$686.5	\$817.1	-16%	\$584.8
Paper and cardboard	323,300	263,100	23%	261,000	\$100.0	\$77.4	29%	\$54.5
Plastics	28,800	26,500	8%	31,000	\$19.1	\$30.2	-37%	\$10.4
Textiles	30,500	24,900	23%	25,400	\$25.1	\$20.4	23%	\$21.2
Tyres	12,100	20,700	-41%	26,200	\$4.7	\$5.2	-9%	\$5.2
Other	105,100	126,300	-17%	97,000	\$90.4	\$72.2	25%	\$58.8
Total	1,029,000	1,200,000	-14%	1,066,000	\$1,044	\$1,140	-8%	\$833

Comparison with the previous quarter –

- Unprocessed **glass** waste exports have been restricted since January 2021. Low quantities of processed glass are exported from Australia, including about 700 tonnes from January to March 2022.
- Exports of **hazardous waste** (excluding tyres) dropped from about 10,400 tonnes to 8,600 tonnes, but this did not correlate to a drop in value. These exports were mostly lead waste and scrap (80%).
- Quarterly exports of scrap **metals** fell considerably from 727,000 tonnes to 520,100 tonnes. Still, metals remained Australia’s major exported recovered material, and in the latest quarter contributed over half of exported tonnes and about two-thirds of exported value. Scrap and non-scrap metal prices across 2020-21 have been very strong, shadowing high international prices for iron ore. It is possible that the drawdown and exhaustion of stockpiles has led to the drop in exported scrap metal tonnes in this quarter compared to last. Scrap metal exports were widely distributed, including to Indonesia (19%), Bangladesh (16%), South Korea (12%) and Vietnam (12%).
- Exports of scrap **paper and cardboard** grew from 263,100 tonnes to 323,300 tonnes, led by strong prices, which have trended upwards across the last two years. Increased prices have been driven by high demand, particularly in South East Asia, since China stopped accepting imports of recovered fibre in 2020⁵. The average value of scrap paper and cardboard across all grades reached \$322 per tonne in February 2022, the highest observed across the analysis period. The main recipients were Indonesia (59%), Malaysia (16%) and Vietnam (13%).
- Exports of scrap **plastics** rose by 8%, from 26,500 tonnes to 28,800 tonnes, and were almost entirely polyethylenes (98%). No mixed plastics have been exported since this was banned in July 2021. For

⁵ IndustryEdge (2022) [Recovered paper export prices at record levels](#);

comparison, Australia previously exported an average of 18,500 tonnes of mixed waste plastics per quarter in 2020-21. However, since the introduction of regulation that phased out lower grade mixed product, the reported average value per tonne of \$600-700 per tonne across 2021-22 is about double the 2020-21 average of \$337 per tonne. Scrap plastic exports from January to March 2022 were mostly sent to Malaysia (36%) and Indonesia (24%).

- Exports of waste **textiles** increased by 23%, from 29,400 tonnes to 30,500 tonnes. These were almost entirely exports of worn clothing and other worn textile articles. Waste textiles were mostly sent to the United Arab Emirates (68%) and Malaysia (13%). Their value has remained stable since July 2017.
- Exports of waste **tyres** fell by 41%, from 20,700 tonnes to 12,100 tonnes⁶, following the restrictions on waste tyres exports that commenced in December 2021. Exports of tyre scrap (intended for use as tyre-derived fuel or otherwise) fell by 6,800 tonnes in this quarter compared to last. Waste tyres were widely distributed, including to India (26%), USA (22%), Malaysia (20%) and South Korea (12%).
- Exports of **other** waste fell from 126,300 tonnes to 105,100 tonnes, attributable mainly to recovered timber. Exports under this category were a mix of agricultural organics (84%) and timber (14%).

Comparison with the 2020-21 quarterly average – Exports in the quarter covering January to March 2022 were 3% lower than last year’s quarterly average by tonnage but 25% higher by value. This reflects decreased exported tonnes for certain key materials, notably metals, but maintained or strengthened market values for most materials, including metals, paper and cardboard, tyres and textiles.

Trends in tonnage and unit value –

Figure 2 presents the monthly trend in exports of waste from Australia in tonnes by material between July 2017 and March 2022. Scrap metal exports are volatile but consistently high. Exports of paper and cardboard declined until the start of 2020-21, but have slowly risen since. Exports of scrap plastics dropped at the start of 2019-20 and have remained at lower levels since. Scrap tyre exports have been volatile in 2021-22 so far and were low in recent months⁶. Exports of glass have been very low since the start of 2020-21.

Figure 2 Exports of waste and recovered materials from Australia by material, July 2017 to March 2022

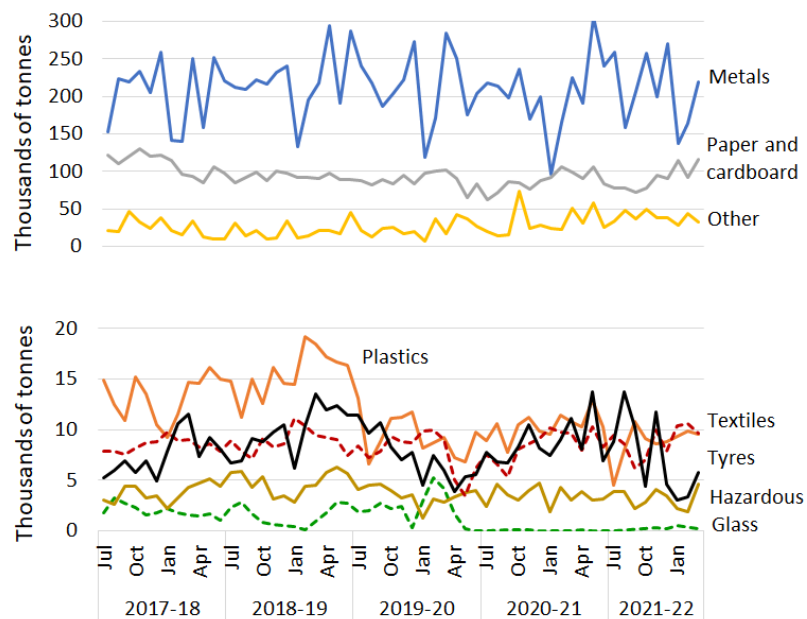
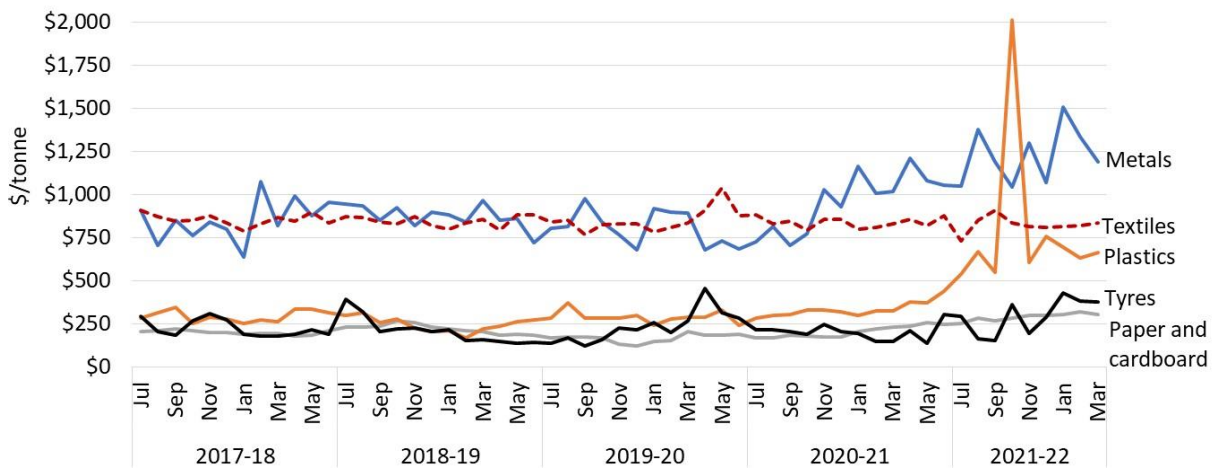


Figure 3 presents trends in the average reported value per tonne of key materials from July 2017 to March 2022. Reported values for:

- metals are volatile but overall have trended upwards for about two years
- textiles have remained relatively level over time
- plastics have risen since a 2018 drop due to China’s import restrictions; an anomalous spike in October 2021 is believed to be caused by a misreported value
- tyres surged in late 2019-20, then declined before an uneven upwards trend across 2021-22
- paper and cardboard had been gently declining but have risen steadily since December 2020.

⁶ Tyre exports in the ABS data have generally been lower than tonnages reported by industry sources. Significant miscoding is likely.

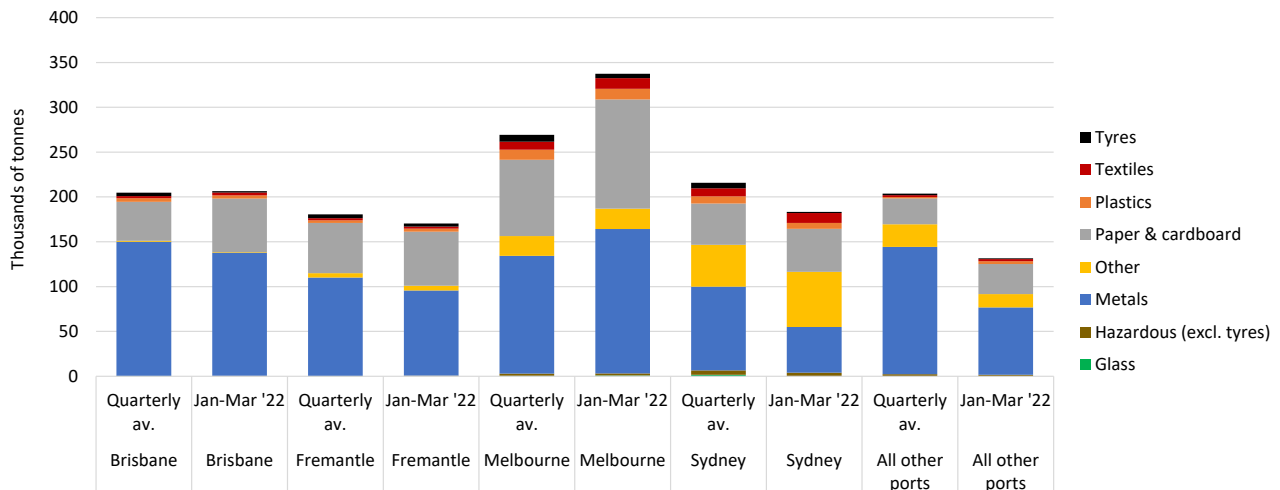
Figure 3 Comparison of unit values by material (in \$/tonne), July 2017 to March 2022



Port of loading and state of origin

Between January 2020⁷ and March 2022 about 82% of Australia’s waste and recovered materials were exported from four ports: Melbourne (26%); Sydney (20%); Brisbane (19%); and Fremantle (17%). Figure 4 compares the tonnes exported from January to March 2022 with the average quarterly tonnes exported between January 2020 and December 2021, by material group, from each of the top four ports and from all other ports combined. Exports from Brisbane and Melbourne exceeded the average this quarter, but this was not the case for Fremantle and Sydney. Increases compared to the average were attributable to high metal and paper and cardboard exports from Melbourne and high paper and cardboard exports from Brisbane. For the other two main ports, as well as ‘all other ports’, falls compared to the quarterly average were mostly due to lower tonnes of exported scrap metals.

Figure 4 Quarterly exports by material from port of loading – latest quarter compared with average



Most waste and recovered materials are exported from a port in the jurisdiction where they are generated, except for Tasmania, where generally about half of materials are sent to Melbourne. It is understood that exported materials generated in the Australian Capital Territory are typically exported from Sydney.

⁷ Earlier data were unavailable.

Australian waste export restrictions

A March 2020 meeting of the then Council of Australian Governments agreed to a timetable for implementing restrictions on exporting waste glass, paper, plastics, and tyres not processed into a value-added material. These restrictions were legislated under the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020*, and several have been implemented to date:

- Export of unprocessed **glass** waste has been restricted since January 2021. Australia has only exported low quantities of processed glass (e.g. furnace-ready glass cullet) since.
- Restrictions on the export of scrap **mixed plastics** commenced in July 2021, and Australia has not exported any mixed waste plastics since. Broadly, export tonnages of plastics have since trended downwards while plastic values are increasing, reflecting the shift from mixed plastic bales to higher grade single polymer streams. Restrictions on export of **sorted plastics** came into effect on 1 July 2022, but that date is subsequent to the data covered in this report so the effects are not yet apparent.
- Export of whole baled **tyres** or tyres in pieces larger than 150 mm have been restricted since December 2021. Exports of tyres have apparently declined significantly since the restrictions came into effect⁶.

Some hazardous wastes are also regulated for export under the *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989*.

Restrictions for sorted plastics and paper and cardboard are described in Table 3, together with exported quantities from January to March 2022 and the preceding Q2. Overall, sorted plastics and paper and cardboard exports increased in Q3, although not for all plastic codes. Monthly tonnes for sorted plastic codes across Q3 and Q2 of 2021-22 were fairly level, but there were monthly variations for paper and cardboard. From January to February 2022, for example, exports of 'recovered (waste and scrap), unbleached, kraft paper or paperboard or corrugated paper or paperboard' fell from 72,300 tonnes to 52,100 tonnes.

Table 3 Material types facing export restrictions (yet to have commenced)⁸

AHECC code	AHECC description	Jan-Mar '22 exports (tonnes)	Oct-Dec '21 exports (tonnes)
Plastics Regulated as at 1 July 2022			
39151001	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of ethylene with a specific gravity of <0.94 (excluding those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	11,300	12,100
39151002	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of ethylene with a specific gravity of >0.94 (excluding those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	4,100	5,600
39152001	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of styrene expanded (excluding those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	80	-
39152002	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of styrene (excluding of polymers of styrene expanded and those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	190	60
39153001	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of vinyl chloride unplasticised (excluding single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	-	-
39153002	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of vinyl chloride (excluding those of polymers of vinyl chloride unplasticised and of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	-	-
39159093	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of ethylene terephthalate (excluding those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	12,700	8,200
39159094	Waste, parings and scrap of polymers of propylene (excluding those of a single thermoplastic material, transformed into primary forms)	400	540
	Total plastics	28,770	26,500
Paper and cardboard To be regulated from 1 July 2024⁹			
47071000	Recovered (waste and scrap), unbleached, kraft paper or paperboard or corrugated paper or paperboard	191,000	154,000
47072000	Recovered (waste and scrap) paper or paperboard, made mainly of bleached chemical pulp, not coloured in the mass	330	100
47073000	Recovered (waste and scrap) paper or paperboard, made mainly of mechanical pulp (for example, newspapers, journals and similar printed matter)	6,400	3,400
47079000	Waste and scrap paper or paperboard (incl. unsorted waste & scrap) (excl. unbleached kraft or corrugated (470710); that made mainly from bleached chemical pulp, not coloured in the mass (470720); or made mainly of mechanical pulp (470730))	125,000	105,000
	Total paper and cardboard	322,730	262,500

⁸ This table covers materials facing restrictions and does not include materials for which restrictions are already in place.

⁹ The legislative rules (including specifications and AHECC codes to be captured) around the regulation of paper and cardboard are still to be developed, ahead of regulations commencing on 1 July 2024.

Restrictions on waste imports – developments since July 2021

This section provides news on waste import restrictions since July 2021, picking up from the review included in the annual report for 2020-21.

By July 2021, Indonesia, which currently receives most of Australia’s exported waste and recovered materials, had set a contamination threshold of 2% for waste imports, particularly scrap paper and plastics¹⁰. India has had plastic waste import restrictions in place for several years, but in December 2021 reopened the import of polyethylene bottles for processing¹¹. Thailand has announced the phasing out of waste plastic imports via a staged reduction of 20% per annum before reaching a total ban in 2026¹². Malaysia’s delayed scrap metal¹³ and waste paper¹⁴ import restrictions came into effect on 10 January 2022. The new controls on scrap metal imports apply to ferrous, copper and aluminium scrap, and require a 94.75% primary metal concentration (e.g. ferrous scrap must comprise 94.75% iron and steel), a maximum threshold of 0.25% non-metallics (e.g. plastics) and no electronic content. Mixed paper and cardboard loads are no longer accepted by Malaysia, and all scrap metal and waste paper are now subject to inspection and will require a ‘certificate of approval’. In August 2021, Pakistan’s former Prime Minister called for a plan to reduce reliance on plastic waste imports¹⁵, suggesting that the Government may be considering restricting them.

Restrictions on waste import – overview

The current status of import restrictions in Australia’s top 10 waste export destinations is summarised in Table 4, while Table 5 provides details of the import restriction policies, their dates and potential impacts.

Table 4 Summary of import restrictions by material and top 10 destinations

Restricted	Restrictions are in place
Announced	Restrictions announced but not yet implemented
Considering	Restrictions are under consideration

Destination	Plastics	Paper and cardboard	Metals	Tyres	Glass	Haz. waste (excl. tyres)	Textiles
Indonesia	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	
Vietnam	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted				
Bangladesh	Restricted						
India	Restricted		Considering	Considering			
Malaysia	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted				
Thailand	Restricted						
South Korea	Restricted	Announced		Announced			
Taiwan	Restricted	Restricted					
China	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted				
Pakistan	Considering			Restricted			

¹⁰ Minister of Trade, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Minister of Trade Industry and Head of State Policy, Republic of Indonesia (May 2020) [Implementation of import of non-hazardous and toxic material waste as raw material industry](#). Unofficial translation.

¹¹ The Hindu (2022) [Three years after plastic waste ban, Environment Ministry allows imported PET bottles for processing](#).

¹² Bangkok Post (6 August 2021) [Plastic waste imports are 'unwanted'](#).

¹³ Ministry of International Trade and Industry (2022) [Guidelines for Importation and Inspection of Metal Scrap, January 2022](#).

¹⁴ Ministry of International Trade and Industry (2022) [Guidelines for Importation and Inspection of Waste Paper, January 2022](#).

¹⁵ Gulf News (5 August 2021) [Pakistan PM calls for bolstering recycling capacity and waste import ban](#).

Table 5 Status of waste import restrictions

Destination	Scope of restrictions	Announced and/or implemented	Associated types	Associated tonnes (2020-21)	Associated tonnes (Jan-Mar '22)	Impact on imports from Australia
Indonesia	On 27 May 2020 the Indonesian Government published a decree on import restrictions for non-hazardous and toxic material waste ¹⁶ . This limits contamination of imported scrap plastics and paper to 2%. It is understood that the threshold is not strongly enforced by the Indonesian Government ¹⁶ . The head of the Centre for Green Industry, Standardization and Industrial Service Policy noted the importance of the recycling industry to Indonesia's economy and the necessity for imports to provide sufficient feedstocks ¹⁷ .	Imp.: Nov-19, with further restrictions on May-20	Plastics, paper and cardboard, metals, glass, hazardous waste, tyres, other	911,700 (227,900 per quarter)	298,300	Imports reduced from 181 to 157 kilotonnes (kt) per quarter from 2018-19 to 2019-20. They have since risen – the 2020-21 quarterly average for associated types was 228 kt.
Vietnam	On 24 September 2020 Vietnam published ¹⁸ 'Promulgation of the list of waste permitted for import as production materials', overriding previous regulations. Unsorted scrap paper imports and granulated slag from iron and steel manufacture are to be banned by the end of 2021. This builds on a range of 2018 restrictions that allow waste imports only if shipments meet environmental standards and processing capacity is demonstrated. The earlier restrictions covered scrap metals, plastic, paper, glass, and blast furnace slag dust ¹⁹ . Under new national standard <i>QCVN 32: 2019/BTNMT</i> , import of e-waste plastics (e.g. TVs and computers) would be forbidden ²⁰ . Scrap metal waste needs to be 99% metal to be allowed in ²¹ .	Imp.: Dec-21 (building on existing restrictions from 2018)	Plastic, paper, metals	421,000 (133,800 per quarter)	103,000	Imports reduced from 183 to 157 kt per quarter from 2018-19 to 2019-20, after the initial restrictions. Imports rose to 134 kt per quarter in 2020-21, but have fallen in this quarter.
Bangladesh	The Bangladesh Ministry of Commerce Import Policy Order 2015-2018 includes details of waste import regulations ²² . Plastics are restricted, metals and glass are allowed for bona fide industrial units, paper and	Imp: 2016	Plastics	0	0	None.

¹⁶ Sustainability Victoria (2022) [Recovered Resources Market Bulletin, February 2022](#).

¹⁷ AntaraNews (2021) [Recycling industry processing just one-third of nation's waste: govt.](#)

¹⁸ Prime Minister of Vietnam (24 September 2020) [Promulgation of the list of waste permitted for import as production materials](#). Unofficial translation.

¹⁹ Vietnam - National Technical Regulations on Wastes (18 November 2019) https://www.cciclondon.com/portal/article/index/cat_id/35/id/286.html.

²⁰ Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2018) [Vietnam to ban imports of plastic from used electronics](#).

²¹ S&P Global Platts (2019) [Vietnam's Jan scrap imports plunge amid stricter government rules](#).

²² Ministry of Commerce, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2016) [Import Policy Order 2015-2018](#).

Destination	Scope of restrictions	Announced and/or implemented	Associated types	Associated tonnes (2020-21)	Associated tonnes (Jan-Mar '22)	Impact on imports from Australia
	cardboard is unrestricted, and textiles are allowed with some restrictions.					
India	In 2016 India banned the import of scrap plastics with an exemption for 'special economic zones' and 'export-oriented units'. In August 2019 ²³ the ban was expanded to cover these zones, but on 27 January 2021 the expansion was revoked, meaning scrap plastics can again be imported to these areas. In December 2021, India reopened permitted importing of PET bottles. India also has a contamination limit of 1% for recovered paper ²⁴ . India has proposed a new policy seeking to increase local scrap metal processing and reducing reliance on imports ²⁵ .	Imp.: 2016	Plastics	400 (100 per quarter)	0	Waste plastics imports to India are low, and were nil in the latest quarter.
Malaysia	Malaysia has restricted waste plastic imports since July 2018. In January 2022, the country implemented restrictions for scrap ferrous metals, copper and aluminium ¹³ and waste paper ¹⁴ . The restrictions for metals require a 94.75% primary metal concentration, a maximum threshold of 0.25% non- and no electronic content. Mixed paper and cardboard loads cannot be imported to Malaysia. All scrap metal and waste paper are now subject to inspection and require a 'certificate of approval'.	Imp.: Plastics – Jul-18 Metals and paper and cardboard – Jan-22	Plastics, metals, paper and cardboard	242,000 (60,500 per quarter)	102,000	Imports have increased in this quarter compared to last year's rate. Impacts may become evident in coming months.
Thailand	Thailand has restricted plastic waste imports since August 2018. It intends to implement a total ban on plastic waste imports by 2027, via a phased reduction by 20% per annum across 2022 to 2026 ^{12,12} .	Imp.: Aug-18 Ann.: Jan-20 (total ban)	Plastics	4,000 (1,000 per quarter)	0	Imports reduced from 2.8 to 1 kt per quarter from 2018-19 to 2020-21.
South Korea	On 6 January 2021, the Ministry of Environment announced bans or restrictions on their top 10 waste import materials ²⁶ . Total imports are to reduce by 35% by 2022 and 65% by 2025. Bans on plastics, mixed waste paper and waste fibre will commence in 2022, and on coal ash and tyres in 2023. Corrugated cardboard, dust and sludge will be	Imp.: Plastics – Jun-20	Plastics	1,000 (240 per quarter)	110	This quarter's waste plastic imports were 110 tonnes, lower than the 2020-21

²³ Business Today, (24 June 2019) [India bans import of plastic waste from August this year to curb pollution.](#)

²⁴ Waste Dive, (15 January 2020) [India to enforce 1% contamination rate on paper imports, conduct random inspections.](#)

²⁵ Bone C. (2021) [India mulls over self-sufficient future without imported scrap.](#)

²⁶ Business Korea (7 January 2021) [Waste import ban roadmaps to come out soon.](#)

Destination	Scope of restrictions	Announced and/or implemented	Associated types	Associated tonnes (2020-21)	Associated tonnes (Jan-Mar '22)	Impact on imports from Australia
	subject to restrictions in 2023 ²⁷ . A ban on imports of PET, PE, PP and PS came into force at the end of June 2020 ²⁸ .	Ann.: Jan-21 (mix plastics, paper, etc.)				quarterly average of 240 tonnes.
Taiwan	Import of waste plastics is banned. Exceptions are made to licensed local firms that import waste plastics originating from their own overseas production processes or are a single material, but not from original production processes ²⁹ . Paper imports are restricted to deinked paper, kraft paper, corrugated paper or cardboard that is not bleached. Import of waste newspapers and magazines banned.	Imp.: Oct-18	Plastics, paper and cardboard	5,200 (1,300 per quarter)	1,000	Imports fell from 4.4 to 1.3 kt per quarter between 2018-19 and 2020-21. Imports this quarter were low at 1.0 kt.
China	China banned the import of all solid waste from January 2021 ³⁰ . Certain high quality reprocessed materials are not considered waste under the legislation's definitions, including scrap metals and paper grade recycled pulp.	Imp.: Jan-21 (building on restrictions from 2018)	All solid wastes	220,000 (55,100 per quarter)	20,000	Imports fell after the first restrictions in 2018, and dropped again after the further 2021 bans.
Pakistan	On 25 September 2020 the Pakistan Government Ministry of Commerce banned the import of re-treaded tyres and used pneumatic tyres ³¹ . In August 2021, Pakistan's former Prime Minister called for a plan to reduce reliance on plastic waste imports ¹⁵ .	Imp.: Sep-20	Tyres	2,300 (600 per quarter)	0	Imports appeared to have fallen to zero.

²⁷ Inquirer.net (10 January 2021) [S. Korea to phase out industrial waste imports.](#)

²⁸ The Korea Times (2020) [Plastic waste imports banned in Korea amid mounting local trash.](#)

²⁹ Taipei Times (2018) [New waste plastic, paper import rules to take effect.](#)

³⁰ Ministry of Ecology and Environment, People's Republic of China (25 November 2020) [MEE Announcement No. 53 2020.](#) Unofficial translation.

³¹ Pakistan Government Ministry of Commerce (2020) [Import Policy Order 2020.](#)