**RELEASED: Tuesday 5th June, 2018**

**ABC wages new battle in War on Waste**

ABC’s ***War on Waste,*** the landmark series that sparked action across the country to cut Australia’s staggering waste levels, returns Tuesday, July 24, at 8.30pm, with host Craig Reucassel tackling new targets including plastic water bottles and straws, e-waste, furniture waste as well as going deeper on previous topics like food waste and the recycling crisis.

In 2017, *War on Waste* reached 4.3 million viewers across Australia[[1]](#footnote-1) and was the ABC’s most successful social media campaign, highlighted by a video on dumping edible bananas that attracted more than 20 million views.[[2]](#footnote-2)

David Anderson, ABC Director of Entertainment & Specialist, said: “*War on Waste* highlights the ABC’s unrivalled capacity to spark national conversations and drive

community action and social change that impacts the daily lives of Australians. The distinctively ABC series empowers people to take immediate steps to reduce their consumption of plastic and electronic goods, and wastage of coffee cups and food. Waste is a universal issue, it impacts everyone.”

The AACTA winning and Logie-nominated series, which also won the prestigious Gold Banksia Sustainability award, revealed that size shouldn’t matter when it comes to buying bananas, encouraged viewers to BYO coffee cups, confronted politicians with a giant ball of plastic bags, challenged state parliaments to ban single-use plastic bags and revealed why fast fashion is not fashionable at all.

The series showed Australians how they can take steps to reduce waste in their daily lives and encouraged big business and politicians to rethink the waste issue, with some inspiring outcomes.

* Responsible Cafes, which promotes reusable coffee cups, went from having 420 cafes on board to having 1050 the week following broadcast up almost overnight (that number is now over 3600);
* The Keep Cup company website crashed and sales rose 400% after the series highlighted issues around disposable coffee cups[[3]](#footnote-3);
* Woolworths and Coles (both in the series) announced lightweight plastic bag bans;
* Following the War on Waste, Foodbank had waiting lists for volunteering, to the point that NSW, Victoria and WA were fully booked through to the end of the year.

But the war is far from over…

The new series reveals our unhealthy reliance on plastic,especially single-use plastic items such as plastic bottles and straws that damage our waterways, oceans and marine life.

Craig also exposes the effects of e-waste, one of the fastest-growing types of waste[[4]](#footnote-4). Tonnes of discarded laptops, mobile phones and electronic goods cause high toxicity levels in landfill, which leaches into the soil and water. While food waste remains a massive issue in Australia and not just because of what we throw out at home, Craig goes undercover to expose the shocking amount of food we waste when we eat out and shows exactly why this is so bad for the environment.

Rallying younger viewers to join the war on waste is ABC ME’s ***Project Planet****,* a new eight-episode series that demonstrates how everyone can help the environment by making a meaningful contribution to sustainability.

Screening Wednesdays and Thursdays at 4.30pm from July 25th, *Project Planet* showcases a group of dynamic young people from three diverse classrooms across the country who are ready to shake things up. Over 8 weeks, these Waste Warriors take on a huge mission to transform their schools from being eco wastelands to waste-wise wonderlands. They will make lasting and dramatic changes that will make a real difference to the way all of us can reduce waste in all its forms.

This is an Australia-wide challenge featuring Taroona High School from Tasmania, Berry Springs Primary School from the Northern Territory, and Fremantle College from Western Australia. Led by ABC ME host Lawrence Gunatilaka, our Waste Warriors will start saving the Earth, one school at a time!

Small actions can spark big changes. It's time for Australians to collectively change the way we think about rubbish by continuing the war on waste.

***War on Waste* production credits: A Lune Media Australia Production for ABC. Principal production investment from Screen Australia and ABC. Financed with the assistance of Create NSW.  Directors Jodi Boylan and Sandra Welkerling. Executive Producer Jodi Boylan, Leonie Lowe and David Galloway.  ABC Commissioning Editor Stephen Oliver, ABC Head of Factual Steve Bibb.**

***Project Planet* production credits: An Emerald Films and Metamorflix Production in association with the ABC, Screenwest, Screen Tasmania and Lottery West. Creator and Executive Producer Sally Browning. Executive Producer Renee Kennedy. ABC Commissioning Editor: Amanda Isdale.**

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1. OzTAM & Regional TAM consolidated 28 data; reach counts 5 minutes consecutive viewing [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Facebook Insights May 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.smartcompany.com.au/startupsmart/advice/startupsmart-growth/keepcups-founder-crazy-400-increase-sales-fuelled-abcs-war-waste-program/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Australian laws lag on electronic waste management (2016) [*The University of New South Wales Newsroom*](http://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/science-tech/australian-laws-lag-electronic-waste-management) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)