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**Media release**

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## **Innovative packaging tool a finalist in Banksia Sustainability Awards**

A new packaging recycling evaluation tool developed by Planet Ark Environmental Foundation and GreenChip has been nominated as a finalist for Innovator of the Year in the highly-regarded national Banksia Foundation Sustainability Awards.

The Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP) is a world-first assessment tool that uses an innovative, straightforward approach to help packaging designers determine whether or not their products can be deemed 'recyclable' in Australian kerbside bins and ultimately reduce consumer confusion.

Developed with funding support from the Australian Packaging Covenant (APC), the PREP is the result of three years of extensive consultation with FMCG brand owners, local councils, resource recovery businesses and stakeholders throughout the broader Australian packaging supply chain.

The Banksia Foundation's Award Program raises the profile of the current sustainability issues facing Australia and recognises initiatives that make a positive environmental impact.

"We're honoured to be nominated as a finalist in this prestigious awards program," said Shaun Scallan, Business Development Manager - Environmental Solutions at Planet Ark. "Whether an item of packaging is recyclable is a question that confronts Australian consumers every day, yet recycling packaging rates have plateaued. This tool is helping brand owners to design product packaging that is clear and easy to understand."

At the heart of the PREP's innovation is software that yields a more accurate packaging recyclability assessment than any assessment tool previously offered in Australia. This assessment process takes into account the design considerations of a packaging item, such as size, shape and materials, and allows designers to test different packaging configurations to increase the likelihood that they will be recycled at the kerbside.

"Most product packaging has information on its recyclability but it may be confusing, incomplete or, on imported products, irrelevant to Australian kerbside recycling systems," explained Scallan.

The PREP will drive innovation throughout the packaging value chain by streamlining the packaging design process, increasing kerbside recycling rates throughout the country, reducing contamination in the recycling stream and recovering more recyclable material that had been previously sent to landfill.

Already, nine major FMCG companies are using the PREP to assess the recyclability of 400 packaging products. Major Australian brands Officeworks and Blackmores have taken the ultimate step and are using their PREP results to provide consumers with clear instructions using the new Australian Recycling Label (ARL), which was launched in August 2015.

For more information on PREP, please visit [www.prep.org.au](http://www.prep.org.au)

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