

Caring for Country through the Circular Economy this NAIDOC week

Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme celebrates NAIDOC Week 2024 by highlighting the vital contribution that Indigenous Australians make to the scheme.

In the North Zone, operated by Visy, Indigenous-owned recycler Envirobank operates seven high-speed depots and pickup services on Wurundjeri Land, Dja Dja Wurrung Land and Taungurung Land.

The sites at Epping, Kilmore, Kangaroo Flat, Rowville, Nunawading, East Bendigo and Preston provide local communities with a site to return their containers and participate in the scheme.

Founder and proud Jagera woman Narelle Anderson says the scheme illustrates how modern recycling techniques can seamlessly merge with traditional Indigenous knowledge, enhancing environmental sustainability and cultural depth.

"Caring for Country transcends environmental conservation; it involves integrating the deep cultural insights of First Nations peoples into our daily operations," she said.

"This NAIDOC Week, we are committed to not only improving ecological health but also reinforcing and honouring the cultural connections that have sustained for millennia."

In the West Zone, operated by Tomra Cleanaway, two depots are run by the Indigenous organisation Kari on Wurundjeri Land in Melton and Coburg North.

80% of their staff across their whole business identify as Aboriginal.

VicReturn CEO Jim Round says they are proud to collaborate with Indigenous organisations across Victoria.

"NAIDOC Week serves as a powerful reminder to embrace and learn from the wisdom of Australia's First Peoples" he said.

"At VicReturn, we are privileged to work alongside Indigenous-run depots, honouring their traditions and knowledge in environmental stewardship."

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VicReturn is the Scheme Coordinator for Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic).