



BROWN

October 27, 2025

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson  
Select Committee on Information Integrity on Climate Change and Energy  
Senate of Australia  
PO Box 6100, Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Whish-Wilson:

I am writing in response to your invitation to submit testimony on the recent report “*The Manufacture of Consensus: Astroturfing, Information Control, and the Fabricated Narrative of Net Zero*” by Rainforest Reserves Australia and its potential misuse of our academic work. This report cites two of my publications:

- Brulle, R.J. (2014) “Institutionalizing delay: foundation funding and the creation of U.S. climate change counter-movement organizations,” *Climatic Change*, 122(4), pp. 681–694.

This paper analyses the funding sources for conservative think tanks in the United States.

- Brulle, R.J. and Dunlap, R.E. (2020) “Climate change and society: Sociological perspectives,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science*. Oxford University Press.

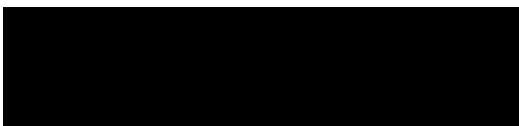
**There is no such article.** While the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science* does exist, I have not published in that encyclopedia. For purposes of commentary, I have assumed that this citation refers to my 2015 book with Riley E. Dunlap, *Climate Change and Society*, an edited volume of thirteen essays covering a range of topics related to climate change. The correct citation is:

- Dunlap, R. E., & Brulle, R. J. (Eds.). (2015). *Climate change and society: Sociological perspectives*. Oxford University Press.

The report cites these works on thirteen separate occasions. Following is a list of quotes from the report in which the citations are used and my comments on their appropriateness. As you will see, nine out of thirteen of the citations represent inappropriate use of this research in that **the papers cited do not address, much less support, the topic of the report**. Four of the citations seem potentially appropriate but, lacking specific page citations, their accuracy is impossible to ascertain.

Overall, the report’s citations of our peer-reviewed research to bolster its arguments is misleading at best and seems to attempt to provide a veneer of legitimacy to statements that our work does not address or support.

Sincerely,



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Inappropriate Citations of Authors' Work or Nonexistent Papers in Rainforest Reserves Australia Report "The Manufacture of Consensus: Astroturfing, Information Control, and the Fabricated Narrative of Net Zero"

Page 2

*Instead of reflecting full ecological costs, the Net Zero narrative relies on partial truths, concealed trade-offs, and systemic undercounting of carbon, waste, and biodiversity destruction (Brulle, 2014; Oreskes and Conway, 2010).*

My 2014 paper does not address the topic discussed in this citation.

Page 2

*Evidence shows that vested interests and media platforms shape public perception through selective reporting, suppression of critical voices, and amplification of narrow economic arguments (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020; Michaels, 2020).*

This is possibly an appropriate inference from the 2015 book. However, without a specific page number it is difficult to verify its accuracy.

Page 5

*What is presented as an evidence-based "Net Zero" pathway often relies on incomplete science, policy capture, and the systematic omission of ecological costs (Brulle, 2014; Oreskes and Conway, 2010).*

My 2014 paper does not address the topic discussed in this citation.

Page 5

*At the core of this submission is the argument that the climate and energy debate has been distorted by vested interests, media manipulation, and political expediency. Instead of protecting biodiversity, water security, and democratic oversight, current strategies increasingly prioritise short-term economic gain and corporate influence (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020; Michaels, 2020).*

Our 2020 book does not address net-zero strategies.

Page 7

*These entities, through staged consultation processes, scripted submissions, and curated media messaging, **simulate consensus** around large-scale energy developments while excluding local opposition and scientific critiques (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020; Hughes, 2023).*

The accuracy of this statement cannot be determined without a specific page citation.

Page 9

*The Australian public is being subjected to a climate narrative that is not only heavily curated but is also grounded in **strategic omission** and **intellectually dishonest framing**. This narrative is being repeated by government departments, agencies like the CSIRO and ARENA, government-funded research institutes, and major media platforms, including the ABC. Claims such as "renewables are the cheapest form of energy," "wind and solar have zero emissions," or "we are on track to meet Net Zero by 2050" are often **reduced to slogans**, devoid of underlying context such as lifecycle emissions, energy storage costs, transmission upgrades, or systemic grid instability (Brulle & Dunlap, 2020).*

Our 2015 book, to which the citation presumably refers, does not address net-zero strategies and does not include any use of the term "net zero."

Pages 23 – 24

*Major players like BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street wield enormous influence through Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) scoring. These investment vehicles push Select Committee on Information Integrity on Climate Change and Energy capital away from carbon-intensive industries by pressuring companies to comply with Net Zero targets—regardless of practical or environmental consequences (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020).*

As indicated above, the book does not address net-zero strategies.

Page 24

*Many offset schemes have come under scrutiny for **nonadditionality**, poor land management outcomes, and failure to deliver true environmental benefit (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020).*

The accuracy of this statement cannot be determined without a specific page citation.

Page 25

*For example, the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States was found to have adopted climate education resources drafted with heavy involvement from corporate sponsors, leading to questions about neutrality and scientific integrity (Brulle, 2014).*

My 2014 paper does not address EPA climate education activities.

Page 28

*One high-profile case is the infiltration of climate discourse by philanthropic foundations that actively fund “grassroots” groups, while also lobbying government for specific energy transitions. Brulle (2014) documented that such foundation funding was instrumental in shaping U.S. climate advocacy networks, creating a cycle where government, media, and industry all drew legitimacy from the same financial sources.*

My 2014 paper does not examine interactions between government, media, and industry.

Page 30

*Battery installations, such as those promoted under the **Rewiring the Nation** program, require highly polluting lithium, nickel, and cobalt mining—materials that are often extracted under exploitative and environmentally destructive conditions overseas. These **imported emissions are invisible** under Australia’s current regime (CSIRO, 2024; Brulle and Dunlap, 2020).*

This topic is not addressed in our 2015 book.

Page 63

*While governments channel billions in taxpayer subsidies toward favoured industries, they fail to account for the full carbon, waste, and toxic impacts of so-called “green” technologies—ranging from PFAS contamination to microplastic shedding and unmanageable end-of-life waste streams (CSIRO, 2024; Brulle & Dunlap, 2020).*

This topic is not addressed in our 2015 book.

Page 64

*As Brulle (2014) highlights in his study of climate misinformation campaigns, the institutionalisation of selective narratives corrodes both public trust and scientific integrity. When misinformation is allowed to dictate public policy, citizens lose faith in institutions, environmental protections are eroded, and the democratic process itself is compromised (Brulle and Dunlap, 2020).*

This is an appropriate inference from my 2014 paper. However, the citation regarding my 2015 book is possibly appropriate. However, without a specific page number it is difficult to verify its accuracy.