

Investigating the Efficacy of Social-Identity Based Environmental Campaigns in Regional Queensland

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1. Introduction

Australia is uniquely exposed to extreme climatic events and extreme policy jostling and Regional Queensland sits at the crossroads of that clash (Sengupta 2019, 3). In a year when the region experienced the most devastating drought on record, regional Queenslanders were also responsible for the election of a conservative party, known for its anti-environmental rhetoric, in what was “supposed to be Australia’s climate change election” (Cave 2019, 1).

Collective action is imperative to climate change mitigation since it applies inter-level pressures to change norms, behaviours and government actions. While considerable research has focused on how people *engage* with collective action, it is critical that we understand why those impacted by environmental disasters become *disengaged* with environmental policy (Pearson and Shuldt 2018,375).

Inaction on climate change is ordinarily attributed to scepticism (UNESCO 2019,2). The knowledge-deficit hypothesis assumes that scepticism of anthropogenic climate change develops when people are ill-informed about the scientific phenomena and its physical manifestations; and that this scepticism can therefore be resolved through the provision of accurate data (Hathaway 2019,7). However, continued resistance to the adoption of pro-environmental policy in spite of a global consensus of scientific evidence, suggests that knowledge is understood differently, by different individuals in different contexts (Hathaway 2019,7); and thus, the link between scepticism and resistance to mitigation responses must also be understood contextually (Rensburg 2015,4). Specifically, by scrutinising the relationship between people’s social identities and their willingness to participate in collective environmental action, we are able to develop a better understanding of how social dimensions interact with climate science to impede or expediate action on climate change.

The intersection of psychology and climate science has traditionally interrogated the flaws in the knowledge-deficit hypothesis by examining how individual motivation can be operationalised to promote more sustainable behaviours (McKeown, Haji and Ferguson 2016, 151). However, humans have both personal and group identities that may differentially affect their motivations, and individuals’ internal perspectives are generally resistant to change and remain constant (Steg, et al. 2014, 106). Thus, “interventions developed without due attention to group memberships ... neglect the frame of reference that is most likely behind the collective behaviour change needed to address climate change” (McKeown, Haji and Ferguson 2016, 152).

This study therefore sought to investigate the efficacy of social-identity based strategies for the promotion of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours in Regional Queensland, with a particular focus on the use of ingroup messengers as spokespeople for net-zero emissions targets.

1.1 The Social Identity Approach

The Social Identity Approach explains how inter-group relations, and intragroup dynamics influence our cognition in particular contexts. Importantly it recognises that humans have both personal and social identities, which are neither singular nor static (McKeown, Haji and Ferguson 2016, 150). It is theorised that these group identities when activated in particular intergroup interactions will differentially affect our cognition as their incumbent norms and values influence attitudes and behaviours in that context (Fielding and Hornsey 2016, 2).

By explaining how humans alter their behaviours and attitudes to align with the salient values and norms of the groups with which they identify, and by specifying that information processing is a “context-dependent outcome of self-categorisation processes” (McKeown, Haji and Ferguson 2016,152), the Social Identity Approach helps us to develop a more nuanced understanding of the social influences that underpin responses to climate change, and how communication strategies can be optimised in light of these influences.

1.2 Using ingroup messengers as a social-identity based strategy to promote pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours

There are numerous social-identity based strategies including, but not limited to, the construction of binding superordinate identities, and the framing of environmentalism in terms of ingroup norms. However, the present study will focus on the use of ingroup messengers and the mechanisms that make them particularly effective spokespeople.

1. *Ingroup messenger's prime social identification*

Leaders who demonstrate their ingroup status through prototypical behaviours are able to shift individuals from a personal to a collective level of self-identity and prime their social identification with that specific group and its incumbent norms and values (Shamir, House and Arthur 1993,586). The activation of this group-level of self-categorization is instrumental since social identification is an antecedent of social change. Indeed, Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears (2008,504) argue that collective identity is not just an important component of the Social Identity Model of Collective Action, but also that this social identification augments our perceptions of collective injustice and efficacy. A sense of collective efficacy which is necessary for social change, can therefore be understood not just as the sum of the self-efficacy of group members, but as an emergent concept which covaries with social identification and predicts collective action (Mummendey, et al. 1999,229) (Bandura 1997,478). To this extent, ingroup messengers' abilities to prime social identification strongly contributes to their efficacy, particularly in the context of climate change activism in which there is an exceptional need for cohesive action.

2. *Prototypical ingroup messengers are able to manipulate the groups norms and values*

Prototypical ingroup members are able to frame intergroup contexts and construct intra-group norms in order to influence group behaviour (Haslam, Platow and Reicher 2011). By positioning sustainability as a feature of group membership, ingroup messengers can therefore be effective in promoting climate positive behaviours as a manifestation of ingroup prototypicality (Fielding and Hornsey 2016,8).

3. Ingroup messengers benefit from ingroup favouritism which makes them seem more influential:

According to Social Identity Theory we evaluate our self-esteem, and group esteem by comparing ourselves to others (Fielding and Hornsey 2016,2). Given our desire for positive esteem there is, therefore, an innate tendency to perceive the ingroup as being superior to the outgroup as a means of justifying our biases and maintaining positive esteem (Fielding and Hornsey 2016,2). Indeed, ingroup members are seen as more trustworthy (Giessner and Knippenberg 2008,14), likeable (Marques, Robalo and Rocha 1992,331) and credible (Hornsey, Oppes and Svensson 2002,293) than outgroup members. In this way it is argued that the traits that make a spokesperson seem influential may not necessarily be the products of their individual character, but instead may be the artefact of that individual's ingroup status and the favouritism that status imbues.

1.3 Empirical evidence for the use of ingroup messengers to advance pro-environmental outcomes

The efficacy of ingroup messengers is evidenced by Schultz and Fielding's (2014,296) study which found that the prototypicality of the messenger influenced people's attitudes towards drinking recycled water in South-East Queensland. Participants who strongly identified with the regional identity of the messenger, were more accepting and positive about drinking recycled water compared to the control group. Furthermore Fielding, Hornsey, Anh Thai & Toh (2020,181) found that Republicans showed greater support, more positive attitudes and stronger behavioural intentions towards a proposed carbon tax when these policies were endorsed by Republicans, thereby demonstrating the efficacy of using ingroup members as spokespeople for pro-environmental policies.

1.4 The present study

Whilst there is an increasing volume of theoretical literature concentrated on the efficacy of ingroup messengers as advocates for environmentalism, the inherently disparate nature of social identities across regional and temporal contexts, prohibits widescale empirical studies. To this end, the present study sought to focus on Regional Queenslanders given both their divergent opinions on climate change and their strong political influence in federal elections (Cave 2019,2), to determine how effective ingroup messengers could be in this context.

2. Investigating the content of Regional Queensland Identity

Prior to conducting this experimental research, it was necessary to analyse the content of Regional Queensland's collective identity and the way in which group members characterised the difference between ingroup and outgroup members. At the time of writing, there was limited prior research published on this topic (Colvin 2020,2) and so the present study performed a qualitative content analysis of 21 primary sources that pertained to Regional Queensland identity. However, given that identity may present differently in different contexts and is neither static nor homogenous (McKeown, Haji and Ferguson 2016,150), this study bases its results on data drawn from three open letters published in mid 2019 which represent the views of farmers (Somerset 2019), miners (North Queensland Business Community 2019) and First Nations people (Wangan and Jagalingou People 2019).

This content analysis of publicly available materials was preferred over interviewing community members since the content and salience of particular social identities can change in inter-group contexts, and therefore may be distorted by the presence of an "out-group"

interviewer (Nandi and Platt 2017,154). This study also analysed independently published open letters, given concerns that texts published in right-wing media outlets which predominate in the region, could present a biased representation of the group and its attitude towards environmentalism (Colvin 2020,9).

The study coded each open letter for mentions of:

- a) Intergroup dynamics and the characterisation of the outgroup,
- b) Intragroup values; and
- c) Collective goals.

All coding was conducted by the same researcher, thus whilst this study could not validate the results with measures of inter-coder reliability, the analysis of primary sources was supplemented with a review of previous scholarship on Australian regional and mining identities.

2.1 Results - Intergroup Dynamics

Metropolitan Queenslanders and Australians from Southern states employed in white-collar professions were characterised as the outgroup. Intergroup relationships were also moderated by whether an individual's abstract values aligned with those of the group. For farmers this concentrated on the value of mateship, for miners this concentrated on loyalty, and for Wangan and Jagalingou people this concentrated on respect for the land (See Appendices A, B & C).

2.2 Results - Intragroup Values

Political autonomy and economic self-sufficiency were seen to be important as the group's ability to provide for themselves and others was a critical determinant of regional self-esteem. Hard work and stoicism were therefore characterised as prototypical group behaviours, alongside mateship; although importantly, this altruistic behaviour had to be directed towards or demonstrably benefit ingroup members. Furthermore, while the nature of farmers, miners and first nations people's relationship to the land differed, all demonstrated significant, inter-generational place attachment, reflecting how their identities are intrinsically linked to the land (See Appendices A, B & C).

2.3 Implications for pro-environmentalist communications

The heterogeneity of the sources analysed demonstrate the diversity of Regional Queensland identity and the subgroups which exist within it (Ogden 2012,172). However, while "subgroup identity threat is the greatest obstacle to social harmony" (Hornsey and Hogg 2000,143), the common values and goals identified in this study allow for the construction of a cohesive regional identity while still retaining a level of subgroup individuality. Furthermore, this social-identity focused research suggests that the region, and more specifically the region's miners' opposition to decarbonisation policies, may be driven by their significant place attachment, pride in productivity, and pursuit of autonomy.

Regional Queenslanders' have a highly dependent relationship to the land, as the resources it provides, be they agricultural, material or cultural, sustain their existence and by extension the existence of their identity. However, this internalised place attachment has the potential to impede emissions reductions goals, since from the perspective of miners, a defence of coal extraction equates to the defence of the group's social identity. Thus, as is argued by Bosca

and Gillespe, future campaigns would be “better served by exploring ways in which the intangible associations with place attachment can be maintained at the community level in the face of material changes” (2018,740). For example, encouraging the expansion of the fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) model, could help miners to detach their identity as employees of a mining company from their broader community identities (Eklund 2014, 186). Over time this could alleviate opposition to emissions reductions targets by minimising inter-generational place attachment to the mining industry, and the perceived identity that decarbonisation poses.

It is also pertinent to consider how Regional Queenslander’s self-esteem is linked to productivity, as the group’s pride emanates from their economic strength. So, in the same way that the federal government and fossil fuels industries have typified Australia as a “global energy superpower” (Rosewarne 2016,31), the “super” status that mining brings to Regional Queensland at a domestic level, and therefore the contribution that mining provides to the group’s self-esteem, may also explain their resistance to emissions reductions targets.

As an entitlement of this productivity, Regional Queenslanders also “want to self-determine their future” and (Colvin 2020,8) therefore must feel like they are in control of the transition itself. It is therefore hypothesised that the use of prototypical ingroup messengers to promote net-zero emissions targets may be particularly useful since they not only benefit from ingroup favouritism but are also able to restore a sense of autonomy by reframing environmentalism as a manifestation of the group’s own interests, rather than a directive simply imposed on them by condescending ‘*southern activists*’.

3. Hypotheses

H₁ = Ingroup messengers will be more effective than outgroup messengers at improving participants i) support, ii) attitudes and iii) behavioural intentions in favour of a 2050 net-zero emissions target.

H₂ = The efficacy of ingroup messengers will be moderated by their perceived prototypicality. The more prototypical the messenger is perceived to be, the more effective they will be at improving support, attitudes and behavioural intentions in favour of a 2050 net-zero emissions target.

H₃ = The efficacy of ingroup messengers will be mediated by their perceived likeability, trustworthiness and credibility and the extent to which they activate participants social identification with Regional Queensland and their perception of the group’s collective efficacy.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

A total of 400 male and female adult participants, will be recruited using random sampling through an online survey company, and will be randomly assigned to either the ingroup or outgroup messenger condition with even gender and age ratios in each condition. Participants directly involved with pro or anti-environmental activism will be excluded from the study.

4.2 Procedure and Design

The survey will be administered through Qualtrics taking 15 minutes to complete. Participants will be provided with a consent and information sheet, but to eliminate demand characteristics, participants will be told that the study is about information processing of media articles. Following the completion of the experiment, demographic information regarding participants' age, gender, postcode, and affiliation with Regional Queensland will be collected, and participants will read a debrief informing them of the actual focus of the study.

4.3 Pre-measures

Using a sliding scale, participants will be asked to indicate their support for 10 socio-political issues (-50 = strongly disagree, +50 = strongly agree). To avoid inadvertently priming participants to the environmental focus of the study, eight of these will be distractor questions (see Appendix D) and two will be focal pre-measures of participants concerns about climate change, and levels of support for a net-zero emissions target (See Appendix D).

4.4 Independent variable

This experiment will adopt a one-way between-subject design, with two levels. The independent variable will be the ingroup or outgroup status of the messenger.

4.5 Stimulus materials

Participants in both the ingroup and outgroup condition will be asked to read a hypothetical media article supporting the implementation of a net-zero emissions target by 2050 (See Appendices F & G). Whilst both articles give identical explanations and arguments for the policy, the regional identity of the messenger will be manipulated between conditions to characterise them as either an ingroup or outgroup member (see Appendix E).

4.6 Manipulation check

To ensure that participants properly read the media article and recognise the manipulation, they will be asked to identify where the messenger was from. Those who respond incorrectly will be excluded from the study.

4.7 Dependent variables

The effect of the stimuli on participants attitudes and behaviours towards a net-zero emissions target will then be quantified using three distinct self-reporting measures: i) support ii) attitudes and iii) behavioural intentions towards the policy (Fielding, Hornsey and Thai, et al. 2020,186).

- 4.7.1 **Support:** Participants will be asked to indicate their support for 2050 net-zero emissions target using a sliding scale (-50 = strongly oppose, +50 = strongly support) (Fielding, Hornsey and Thai, et al. 2020,186).
- 4.7.2 **Attitudes:** Participants' attitudes towards the policy will be measured using five semantic differential scales: beneficial/harmful, effective/ineffective, appropriate/inappropriate, ethical/unethical and good/bad (e.g. 1 = extremely beneficial, 10 = extremely harmful). These results will be averaged to create a reliable scale (Fielding, Hornsey and Thai, et al. 2020,186).
- 4.7.3 **Behavioural intentions:** Classical attitude-behaviour models suggest that the relationship between attitudes and behaviours is mediated by behavioural intentions which may be less idealistic than reported attitudes (van Zomeren, Postmes and Spears 2008,510). To ensure that the results of this study most accurately predict real life outcomes, participants will indicate on a sliding scale (1 = extremely unlikely, 7 = extremely likely) whether they intend to a) sign a petition for a net-zero emissions target, b) talk positively about the policy with friends and family, and c) vote for a political candidate who supports the policy (Fielding, Hornsey and Thai, et al. 2020,186).

4.8 Moderator variables

To measure how prototypical participants perceive the messenger to be, they will be asked to indicate on a sliding scale (1 = not at all to 7 = completely) whether the messenger a) embodies what Regional Queenslanders stands for; b) is representative of Regional Queenslanders; c) exemplifies what it means to be a Regional Queenslander; and d) epitomizes what it means to be a Regional Queenslander (Steffens, et al. 2013,608).

4.9 Mediating variables

To understand the causality behind the efficacy of ingroup messengers, this study will measure how a) likeable; b) trustworthy and c) competent, participants thought the spokesperson was (1 = not at all, 7 = competent). The strength of participants' social identification with Regional Queensland and their perceptions of the Regional Queenslanders' collective efficacy will also be measured following the reading of the stimulus materials.

5. Future Research

This study has ethical approval and data collection is expected to commence in December 2020 once further funding has been acquired. This research has been presented to academics at the University of Queensland and I hope to continue a collaborative relationship with them, as these results will help environmentalists to optimise their campaigns and develop an essential roadmap for emissions reductions in Regional Queensland.

Word count: 2997

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Appendix A: Data drawn from qualitative content analysis of “Stand Up for Regional Queensland” (Agricultural Force, 2019)

<p>Intergroup dynamics</p>	<p>Identifies differences between metropolitan and regional Queenslanders but calls for cohesion by identifying common challenges including experiences with floods and food/water scarcity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Feeling that there are people out there pitting mate against mate and city against country.”</i> • <i>“We’re all in this together”</i> • <i>“...if regional Queensland suffers, we all suffer”</i>
<p>Intragroup values</p>	<p>Providing for yourself and others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“They love providing for their families, for their communities and for all of the millions of Queenslanders”</i> • <i>“If farmers can’t grow the crops for our cereal and curries and stir-fries, we all suffer.”</i> <p>Stoicism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“this isn’t a whinge” just want a “fair go”</i> • <i>“Some people in our great state think farmers are looking for a handout ... they’re not.”</i> <p>Mateship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“It was the Queensland spirit of mateship and togetherness that helped people through it.” “helping each other out”</i>
<p>Collective goals</p>	<p>Improve poor infrastructure and political representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Having to live in conditions more reminiscent of third-world countries”</i> • <i>“lack of connectivity, poor roads and other infrastructure”</i> • <i>“Relentless tide of red-tape and legislation”</i> <p>Natural disasters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The drought, and the floods ... devastatingly affected those in the north-west of the state. The problem is these issues aren’t over”</i> <p>Acquire support for bush communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Stand up for Regional Queensland”</i>

Appendix B: Data drawn from qualitative content analysis of “It’s Time to be Upfront on the Galilee Basin” (North Queensland Business Community, 2019)

<p>Intergroup dynamics</p>	<p>Intersection of geographic and occupational dimensions that delineate ingroup from outgroup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography: <i>“southern activism and lawfare”</i> • Locals become the outgroup when <i>“Instead of action, we see politicians bending to Southern activism and lawfare”</i>
<p>Intragroup values</p>	<p>Efficiency and hard work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“it’s time to get on with it”/“no more weak words”</i> <p>Economic self-sufficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“This call to action is about jobs for North Queenslanders now and for generations to come” “helping to fund more schools, hospitals and public services”</i> • Since the mines in <i>“the Galilee Basin are an important part of our economic future”</i> their presence is integral to their identity. The mines are on their <i>“doorstep”</i> <p>Ideological autonomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration at <i>“politics once again telling North Queenslanders how to live their lives”</i> • <i>“It’s the job of our local politicians to stand up for our community”</i>
<p>Collective goals</p>	<p>Seeking the opening of the Galilee Basin to generate regional wealth to address the inequalities between regional and metropolitan Queenslanders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“These are jobs and services North Queensland families desperately need”</i> • <i>Being at the whim of “southern” policy makers “represents a long-term risk to not just the Galilee Basin but the North Queensland economy”</i> • <i>“stand up for the community because we have had enough”</i> • <i>“These mining projects would generate more than 15,000 direct jobs and up to \$40 billion in taxes”</i>

Appendix C: Data drawn from qualitative content analysis of “Our Fight” (Wangan & Jagalingou Family Council, 2019)

<p>Intergroup dynamics</p>	<p>Distinction made according to one’s relationship with the land. This is emphasised by the repetition of “we”/”our” versus “they” pronouns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“We know that many other people who care deeply about conserving natural places ... share our concerns”</i> • <i>“We will PROTECT and DEFEND our Country”</i> • <i>We do hereby firmly REJECT a Land Use Agreement with Adani for the Carmichael mine on our traditional lands”</i> • <i>“We are gravely concerned about the push by Adani and the Queensland and Federal Governments to open up the Carmichael Mine on our traditional lands. Our traditional lands are an interconnected and living whole”</i>
<p>Intragroup values</p>	<p>Custodianship rather than ownership of the land, which emphasises an intergenerational connection to the land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Care for the land and pass on our culture”</i> • <i>“Spirits of their ancestors dwell in the land indefinitely”</i> <p>Identity is intrinsically linked to the land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Our culture is in the law of the land and is the expression of who we are as a First Nation.”</i> • <i>“The sacred beliefs of our culture, our religion, is based on where the song lines run through our country”</i>
<p>Collective goals</p>	<p>Ensure environmental conservation since the degradation of the land by extension, equates to the degradation of their identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“...protect our land, water, people, history and totems”</i> • <i>“When our moieties, our totems, our reference points in Country are destroyed, we can no longer be who we are as the people from the land”</i> • <i>“Our connection to our sacred water, the essence of our being and livelihoods in Country, is severed by coal extraction and climate change”</i> • <i>“As First Nations people we are adversely affected by the local and the global impacts of coal mining. We are on the frontlines of extraction and experience, first hand, the destruction of the land we’ve been in for thousands of generations”</i> • <i>“Burning the coal mined from our land accelerates global heating and threatens our connection to Country. Massive coal projects in the Galilee Basin destroy our way of life and cultural rights.</i> <p>Regain autonomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“mines are imposed upon us and we are denied our right to say no”</i> • <i>“We DO NOT consent to the Carmichael mine on our ancestral lands”</i>

Appendix D: Pre-measures of participants attitudes towards socio-political issues, including the severity of climate change, and the implementation of a net-zero emissions target

Using the sliding scales, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements (-50 = strongly disagree, +50 = strongly agree).

1. "The COVID-19 crisis has been handled well in Queensland"
2. "Climate change is a serious issue that demands immediate action"
3. "Australia should decrease the number of immigrants who are allowed into the country"
4. "All religious groups in Australia should have equal rights to worship"
5. "Sex-education should not be taught in schools"
6. "Private schools should stop receiving government funding"
7. "Australia has a serious problem with the levels of Aboriginal deaths in custody"
8. "The Queensland Government should implement a 2050 net-zero emissions target"
9. "The federal government should allocate more money from the budget to defence spending"
10. "Australia should decrease its reliance on China as a trading partner"

Appendix E: Manipulations of the messenger’s regional identity in the media articles to characterise them as ingroup or outgroup members

	Ingroup Condition	Outgroup Condition
Title	“Regional Queenslanders Endorse Target”	“Sydneyiders Endorse Target”
Introduction	<p>“Well-respected Queenslander”</p> <p>“Worked in and around the mines his whole life”</p> <p>“He’s a proud member of the community and has a deep connection to the land as a fourth-generation Queenslander”</p>	<p>“Well-respected businessman”</p> <p>“Worked in professional white-collar industries his whole life”</p> <p>“He’s a proud member of the metropolitan Sydney community”</p>
Illustration	Outback Queensland scene	Sydney Opera House
Quote by-line	“Local Clermont resident, Shane Jones, endorses a net-zero emissions target”	“Sydney man, Shane Jones, endorses a net-zero emissions target”
Colour of title and quote	Maroon ¹ (Pearn 2012)	Blue (Pearn, 2012)

¹ Maroon is Queensland’s official colour and the results of the National Trust of Queensland’s 2006 survey ranked maroon as the most familiar item of significance in the cultural history of the state.

Appendix F: Stimulus Materials (Ingroup Condition)

Regional Queenslanders Endorse Target of Net-Zero Emissions by 2050

Clermont resident, Shane Jones is a well-respected Regional Queenslander who's worked in and around the mines his whole life. He's a proud member of the community and has a deep connection to the land as a fourth-generation central Queenslander; however, he's become increasingly concerned about the dangers global warming presents to our way of life.



When asked about what actions he thinks need to be taken he asserted that “setting a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 would be the best way to protect livelihoods and the land”. A net-zero emissions target would not prohibit all emissions, but instead require that any emissions made would have to be balanced, by carbon capture and storage measures that draw down greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. The policy is designed to respond to the need to reduce emissions in order to stop climate change and ensure that temperatures do not rise beyond 1.5 °C.

“Setting a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 would be the best way to protect livelihoods and the land”. – Shane Jones, local Clermont resident endorses a net-zero emissions target

As Jones points out, a failure to stop this warming would be “catastrophic” and “lead to longer and more frequent droughts”. Whilst he appreciates that a net-zero target could be seen as a real double-edged sword for Queensland communities, he emphasizes how the initiative would give confidence and certainty to the private sector, drive investment and innovation across the local economy and make sure we’re well prepared and actually actively involved in the transition to a net-zero emissions economy”

With this target already being set across Australia and the world, Jones is encouraging his fellow Queenslanders to “support the initiative to protect our future”.

Appendix G: Stimulus Materials (Outgroup Condition)

Sydneysiders Endorse Target of Net-Zero Emissions by 2050

NSW resident, Shane Jones, is a well-respected businessman and a proud member of the metropolitan Sydney community. He's worked in professional white-collar industries his whole but has become increasingly concerned about the dangers global warming presents to our way of life.



When asked about what actions he thinks need to be taken he asserted that “setting a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 would be the best way to protect livelihoods and the land”. A net-zero emissions target would not prohibit all emissions, but instead require that any emissions made would have to be balanced, by carbon capture and storage measures that draw down greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. The policy is designed to respond to the need to reduce emissions in order to stop climate change and ensure that temperatures do not rise beyond 1.5 °C.

“Setting a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 would be the best way to protect livelihoods and the land”. – Sydney Man, Shane Jones endorses a net-zero emissions target

As Jones points out, a failure to stop this warming would be “catastrophic” and “lead to longer and more frequent droughts”. Whilst he appreciates that a net-zero target could be seen as a real double-edged sword for Queensland communities, he emphasizes how the initiative would give confidence and certainty to the private sector, drive investment and innovation across the local economy and make sure we're well prepared and actually actively involved in the transition to a net-zero emissions economy”

With this target already being set across Australia and the world, Jones is encouraging Queenslanders to “support the initiative to protect our future”.

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