C4CE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY ENERGY
Community partner Smart Energy Expo 2024

COMMUNITY ENERGY CONGRESS

Fast Fair & Vital

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nations, and all Aboriginal people and lands that everyone is meeting on from across Australia.

VICTORIA State Government | Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Live streaming sponsored by the Victorian Goverment

Community Energy Icons

Chaired by
Anne Delaney, SwitchedON

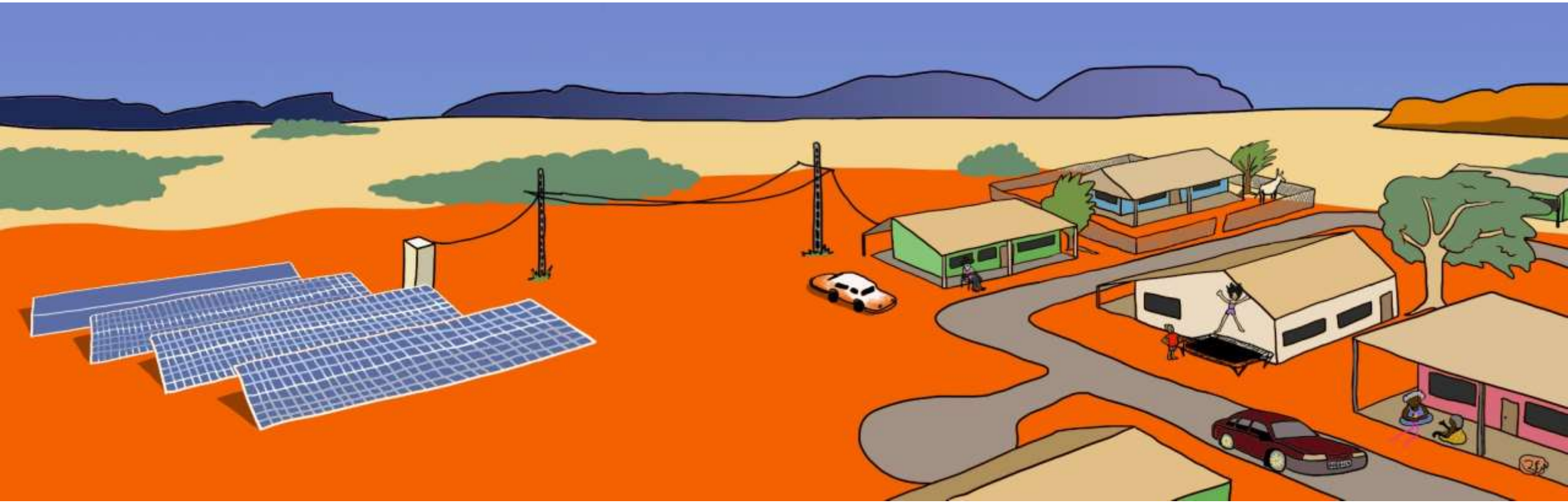
Saul Griffith
Rewiring Australia

Lauren Mellor
Scott McDinny
Original Power

Dr Sophie Scamp MP

Power to the People

A vision for a First Nations-led energy transition



ORIGINAL POWER

NGARDARA COOPERATIVE
BUILDING BLACK POWER

Australia's renewable energy transition

There is a global renewables transition underway. The new Federal Labor government has promised to create jobs, cut power bills and reduce emissions by boosting renewable energy as part of its Powering Australia plan and for Australia to become a renewables exporter to the world.

- Over a quarter of Australia's energy generation now comes from renewables
- Over 3 million households enjoy rooftop solar connection
- At this pace, Australia is set to surpass its renewable energy target of 50% by 2030.

This is driving a massive shift in Australia's energy system and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can and should benefit from this revolution, whether from small community-based projects to large scale, export focussed initiatives.

An unequal transition: First Nations energy challenges

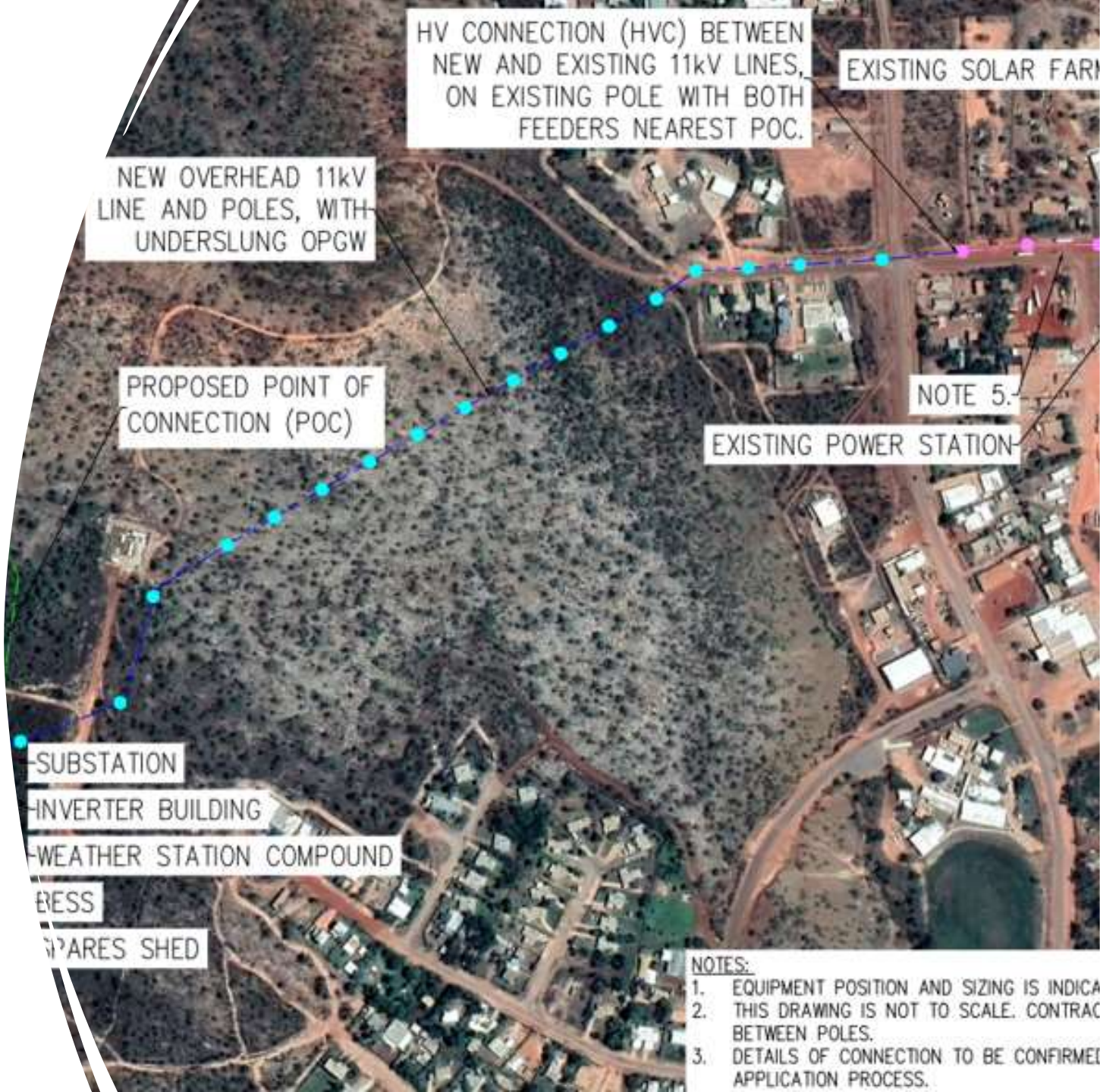
- The implications of the climate crisis and the urgent need to transition to clean energy presents both risks and opportunities for First Nations communities in Australia.
- Energy services for a majority of First Nations communities in the Northern Territory, West Australia, North Queensland and now the APY Lands in South Australia are still accessed through a mandated pre-paid meter system where you purchase credit to top up your meter. When credit runs out, homes automatically disconnect.
- With an absence of standard consumer protections for households in hardship, blackouts are common, and can last for days or weeks until residents can pool enough funds to reconnect.
- Upfront capital costs and an absence of local regulations codifying the ability to connect solar PV have long locked out these households from realising the benefits of energy transition, despite living in regions host to world class renewable energy generation potential.

Building the blueprint for community-centered energy

- Marlinja in the Northern Territory is set to become home to Australia's first 100% First Nations-owned and grid-connected solar microgrid.
- Located in the Barkly region, where temperatures reach mid-40s during summer and freezing in the Dry season, Marlinja is one of many remote First Nations communities in Australia experiencing extreme energy insecurity – exacerbated by overcrowded, poorly designed houses and now climate-induced warming.
- Community-led design and delivery has resulted in a 100kw solar array and 136kwh battery, set for commissioning in May 2024.

Borroloola's Ngardara Project - a case study in community energy

- 2.1 megawatt solar farm and 3.2megawatt batter to be integrated with the NT Government's Power and Water run diesel power station.
- A community-owned and operated project, with a long-term supply and revenue contract with government.
- Over **1 million litres of diesel** saved per year
- **Achieve over 70% Renewable Energy Fraction –** achieving diesel off mode at some times of the day.
- Reduction in **energy poverty** through a unique **community ownership and benefit sharing arrangement.**
- **Around 25 jobs in construction of the microgrid, and ongoing work in** operation and maintenance.




NGARDARA
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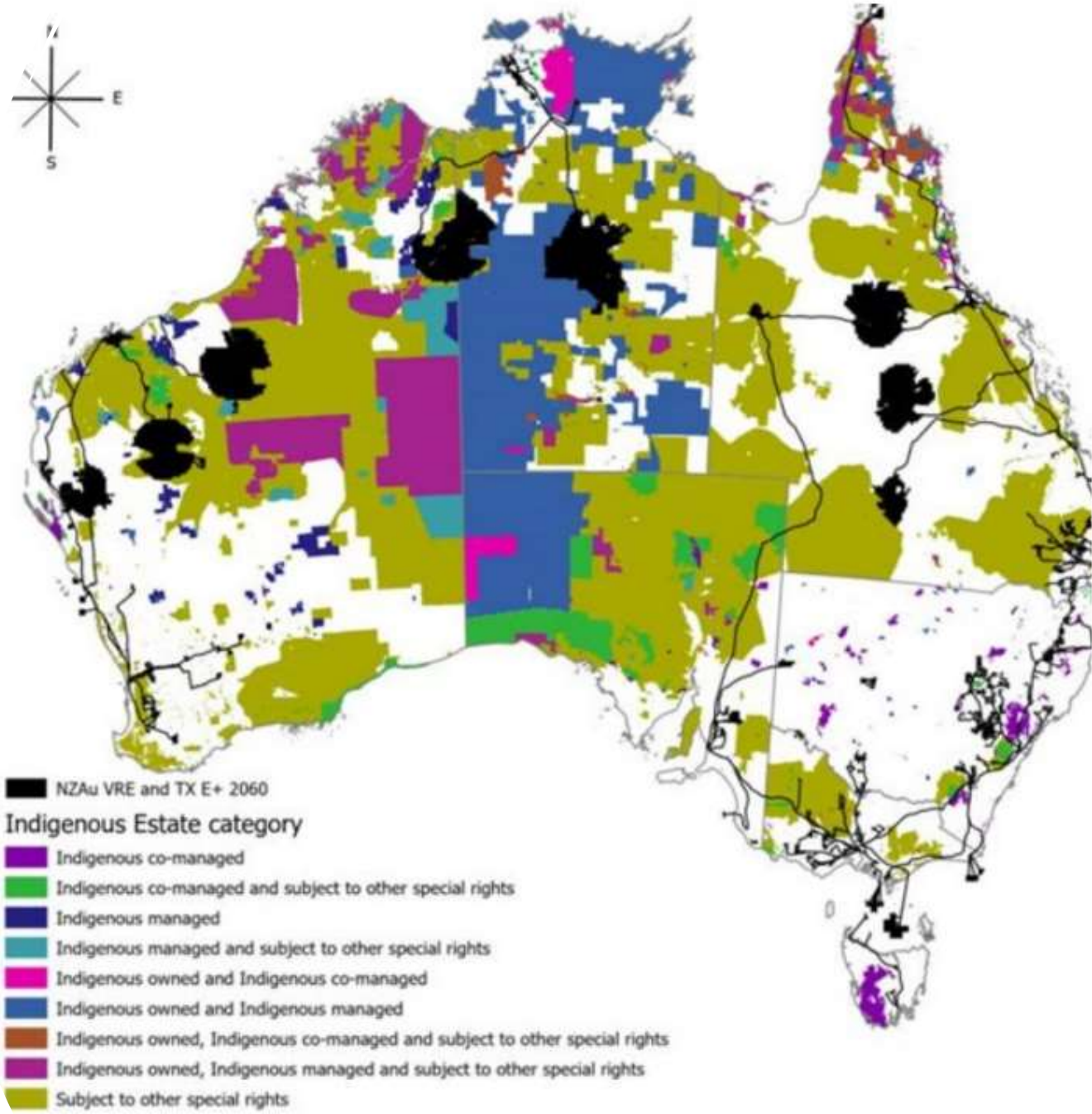
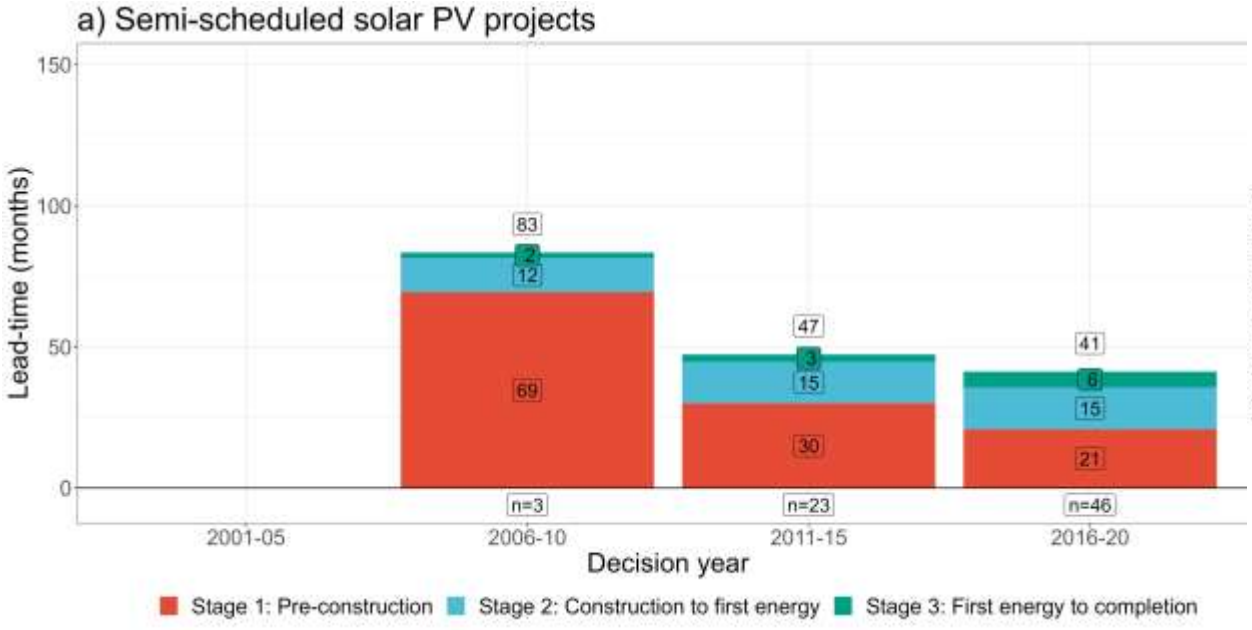
The “Indigenous Estate”

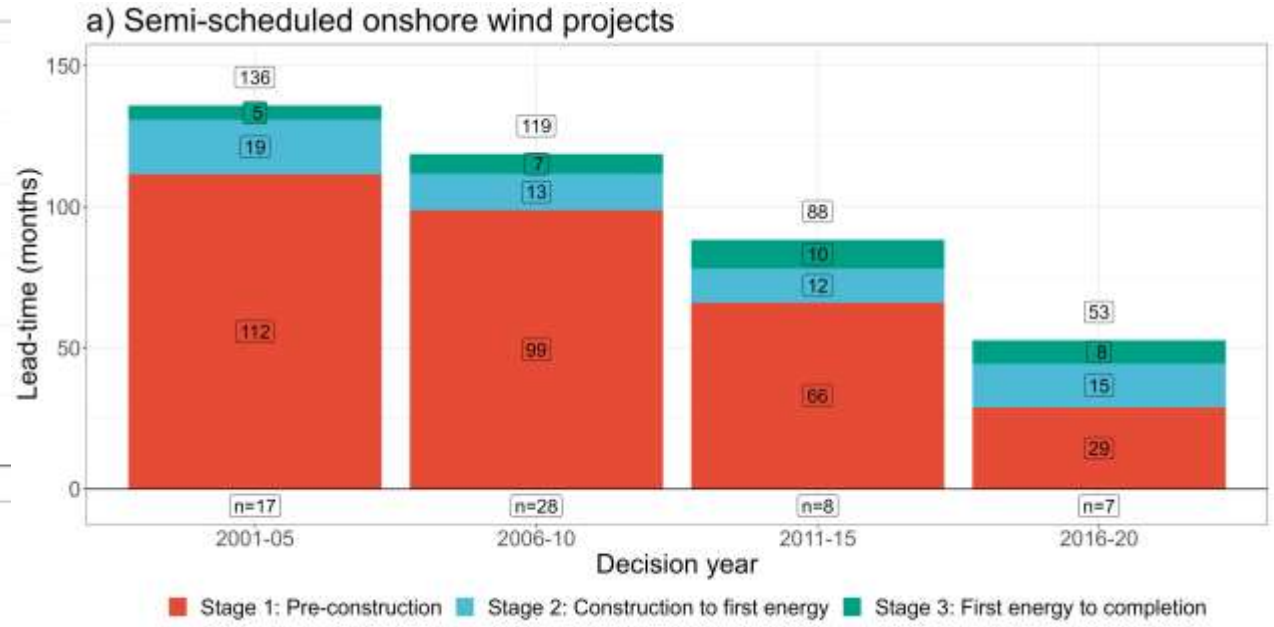


The Albanese Governments' co-designed First Nations Clean Energy Strategy aims to remove regulatory and policy barriers and incentive partnerships and investment in First Nations clean energy initiatives

We are working towards:

- Household renewable energy access and efficiency gains
- Incentives for Industry who follow best practice
- Additional federal grants for First Nations projects and changes to granting guidelines to include community benefits and partnerships
- Finance arrangements - supporting the capacity of Traditional Owners to become project proponents at all scales and mandating a percentage of First Nations ownership in new projects
- Currently negotiating new regulation to protect heritage
- Ensure Sea Rights are protected in offshore wind legislation for more sustainable projects
- Developing a package of education and training. Australia will need an estimated 500,000 new workers to fill critical renewable energy skills gaps.





This study investigates the determinants of lead-times for 170 onshore wind and solar PV projects completed in Australia between 2000 and 2023. We track multiple project stages and estimate the impacts of changes in ownership, experience, approval processes, rule changes, and a commissioning process that differs by size of generation. Australia has had a notable improvement in lead-times. Solar projects that commenced before 2010 had an average lead-time of 83 months (min: 63, max: 102). This decreased to 41 months for solar projects (min: 19, max: 75) that commenced after 2016. Onshore wind projects took longer to develop. Project lead-times were 136 months (min: 50, max: 200) when they commenced before 2005. This decreased to 53 months (min: 20, max: 85) for projects starting after 2016.

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ENERGY CONSUMERS AUSTRALIA

Community Energy Congress

Dr Brendan French
CEO

EQUITY

I pay a **fair share** of the energy transition

COST

I pay **less** for energy

AGENCY

I can make **optimal energy decisions**

OWNERSHIP

I **benefit** from the energy transition

CONTROL

I can **manage** my energy consumption

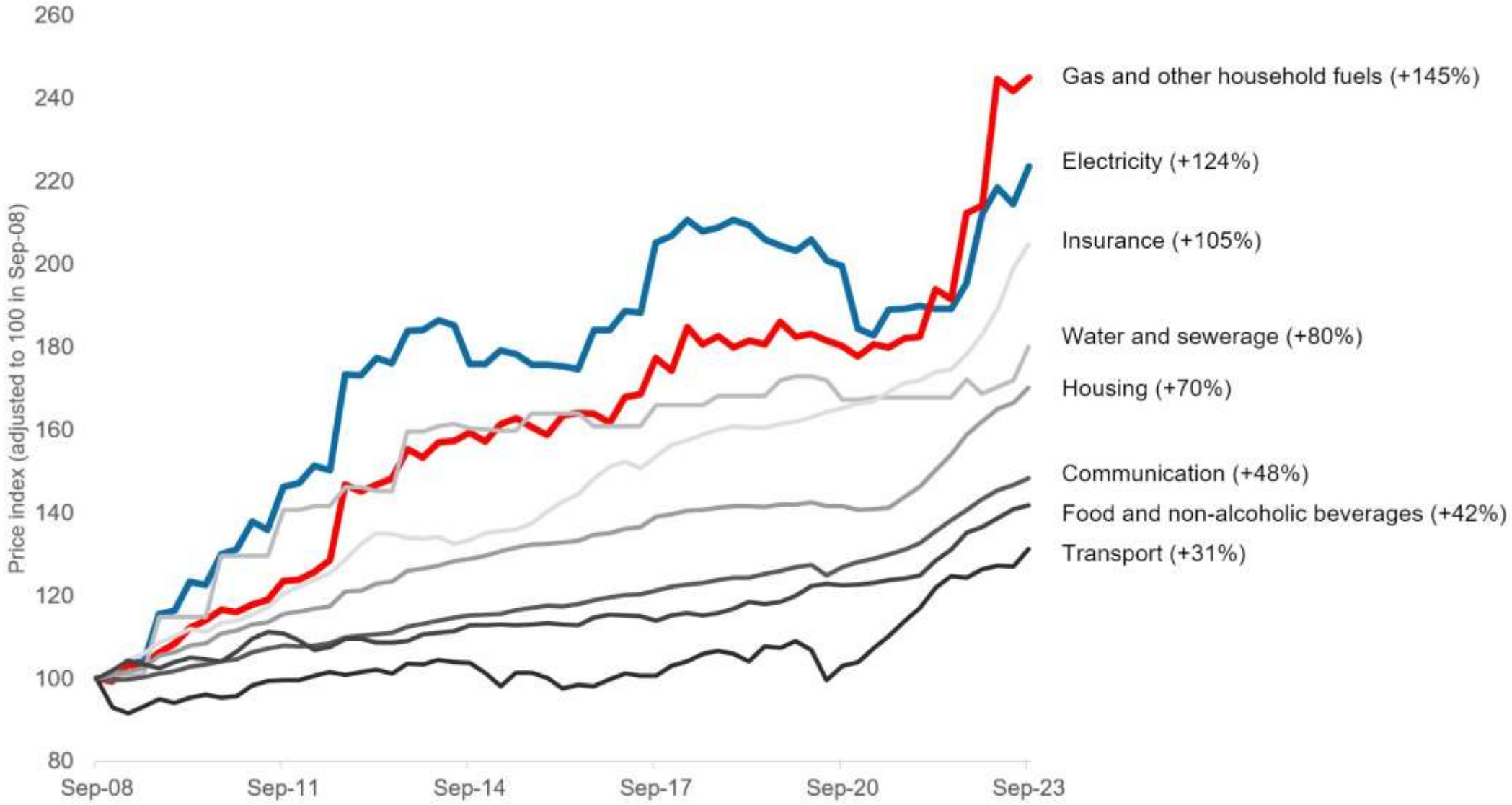
JUSTICE

I have the energy **I need**

REPRESENTATION

I have **powerful advocates** working for me

Energy prices have increased more than other essential services



ECA Analysis of ABS Consumer Price Index Data

The energy divide continues to grow, with those on the lowest incomes paying 13.6% of their income on energy

Source: ECA, Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey, Dec 2023

Observations

Consumers don’t know where to get support, are confused by what they find, and increasingly don’t trust what they see.

Australians increasingly believe energy may well become unaffordable.

There is eroding confidence that the market operates to the benefit of consumers and that renewables should even be pursued. In the absence of a national narrative, misinformation is growing.

There is demonstrable inequity in regulatory protections across the country.

Demand-side attention/investment must grow rapidly for behavioural assumptions to work. Consumer generation/storage/demand management must have equal footing and be fairly rewarded.

The future of consumer gas must be decided and communicated soon.

Many Australian homes have the energy efficiency of a tent.

Misinformation is rife

Donald Trump and dead whales: What's behind misinformation on wind farms?

There's no evidence wind turbines cause any harm to whales or other animals, but misinformation is s
federal government spruiks its plans for wind farms off the coas

Rising Power: In Australia, Nuclear's Now More Popular Th
Not

5 Ugly Truths And 5 Dirty Lies About Electric Cars

etter.

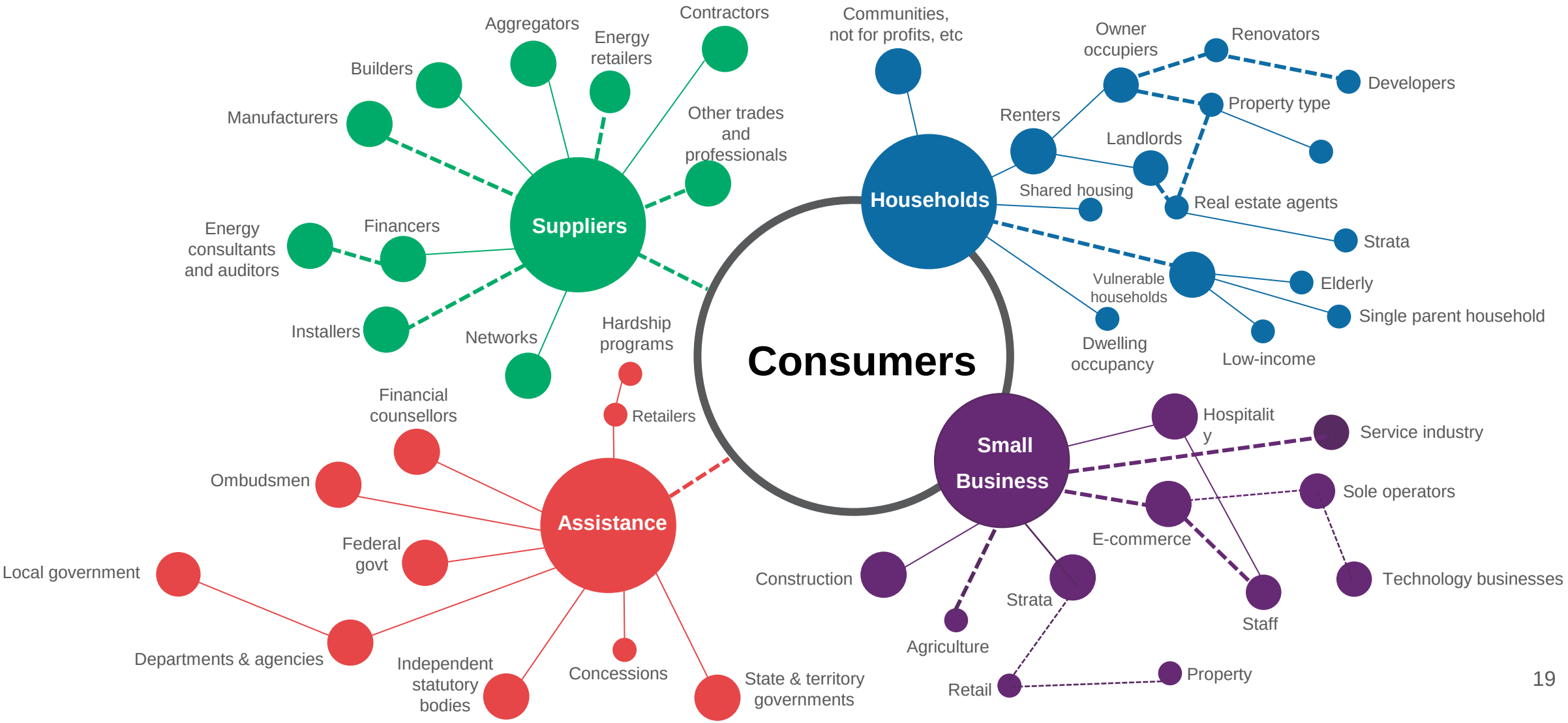
AEMO slams Murdoch media campaign that claims renewables are not low cost

Spread of misinformation is a big threat to civil society

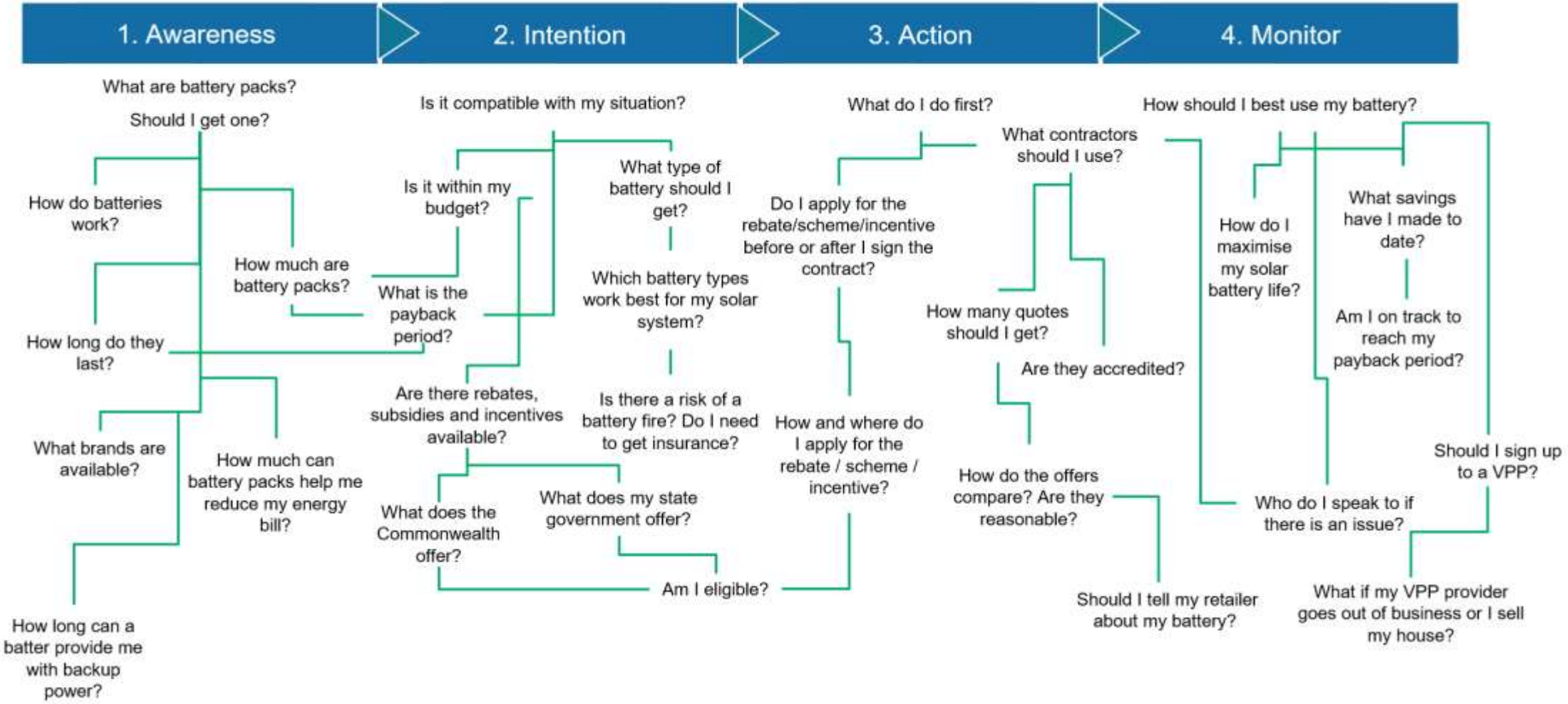
Bizarre Simpsons link to controversial issue in Australian politics

Who's behind the latest effo 'save the whales'? The fossil industry

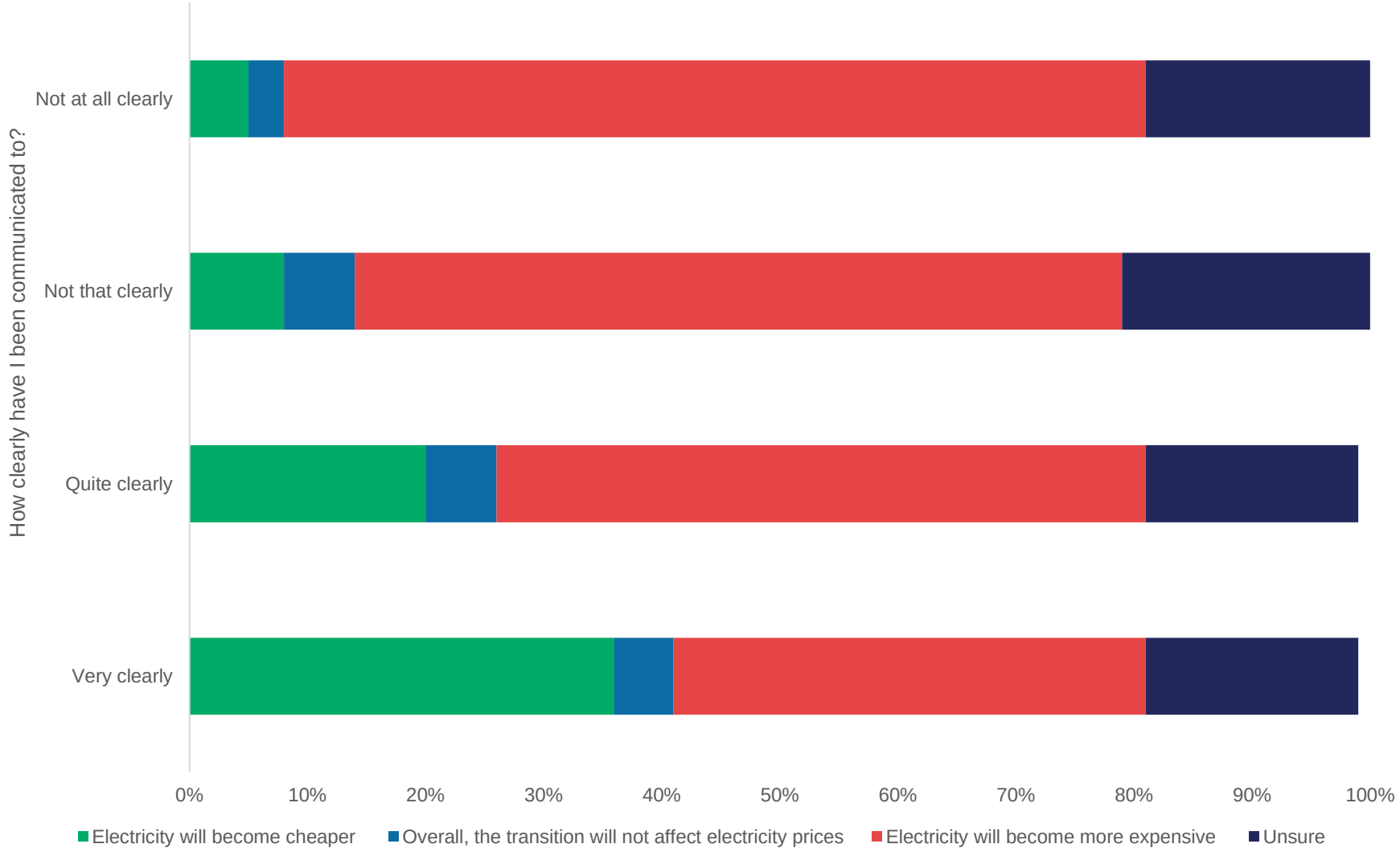
Consumers have to navigate a complex and confusing web of decisions and organisations



Making just one decision – like buying a battery – is daunting and confusing



Clarity: consumers who feel they have been communicated to clearly about the energy transition feel more positive about the future



What would help consumers?

1. A national narrative on the transition

There is **no roadmap** for the energy transition for household and small business energy consumers.

Market communications about energy are **not cutting through**.

More than

3/4

of households feel they **haven't received clear communication** from government or industry on what the transition means for them.

1/2

of household consumers haven't even begun **looking for information** on energy.

3/5

of households say they **haven't seen or heard anything** about energy or ways to reduce energy use in the last 12 months.

Source: ECA, Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey, Dec 2023 and Household Energy Consumers Information Research, 2023

2. A comprehensive One Stop Shop would be a trusted voice

Perform an energy audit.

Find a trusted installer.

Understand my smart meter data.

Prepare for outages.

Make the most of time-of-use prices.

Learn about flexible exports.

Find help if something goes wrong.

Find the right EV for me.

Access rebates and incentives.

Explain my bill.

Find the right solar and battery for me.

Upgrade my appliances.

Get off gas.

Learn about low-cost financing.

Choose a retailer and energy plan.

Learn about solar feed-in-tariffs.

3. Consumer protections must be adequate – and equal

Energy is an essential service and spoken of as a human right, yet **consumers in financial stress are still being disconnected.**

Consumers in regional and remote areas, particularly First Nations consumers, do not have access to the full range of consumer protections.

Certain supply arrangements – eg embedded networks, prepayment meters – don't provide protections others enjoy – and can't get CER.

4. We need a national plan to get consumers off gas

There is no nationally-agreed support for electrification of homes and small businesses

New residential and small business consumers will keep connecting to the distribution network in some jurisdictions

Customers are not replacing their old / defunct gas appliances with electric ones

Gas distribution networks are still incurring large amounts of capital expenditure leading to growing regulatory asset bases

The way gas distribution network costs are recovered may no longer be fit for purpose, or equitable

5. Australian homes and offices must become energy efficient

Energy inefficient homes and businesses are **driving up bills and emissions.**

Consumers see energy **efficiency upgrades as a luxury** and struggle to find the information they need for decision-making.

Energy inefficient homes cause **poor health outcomes.**

Fragmented policy and regulatory frameworks are **creating poor outcomes** for consumers.

A PO Box A989, Sydney South NSW 1235
T 02 9220 5500
W energyconsumersaustralia.com.au

@energyvoiceau
/energyconsumersaustralia
/energyconsumersaustralia

ABN 96 603 931 326

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Dr. Sophie Scamps MP

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