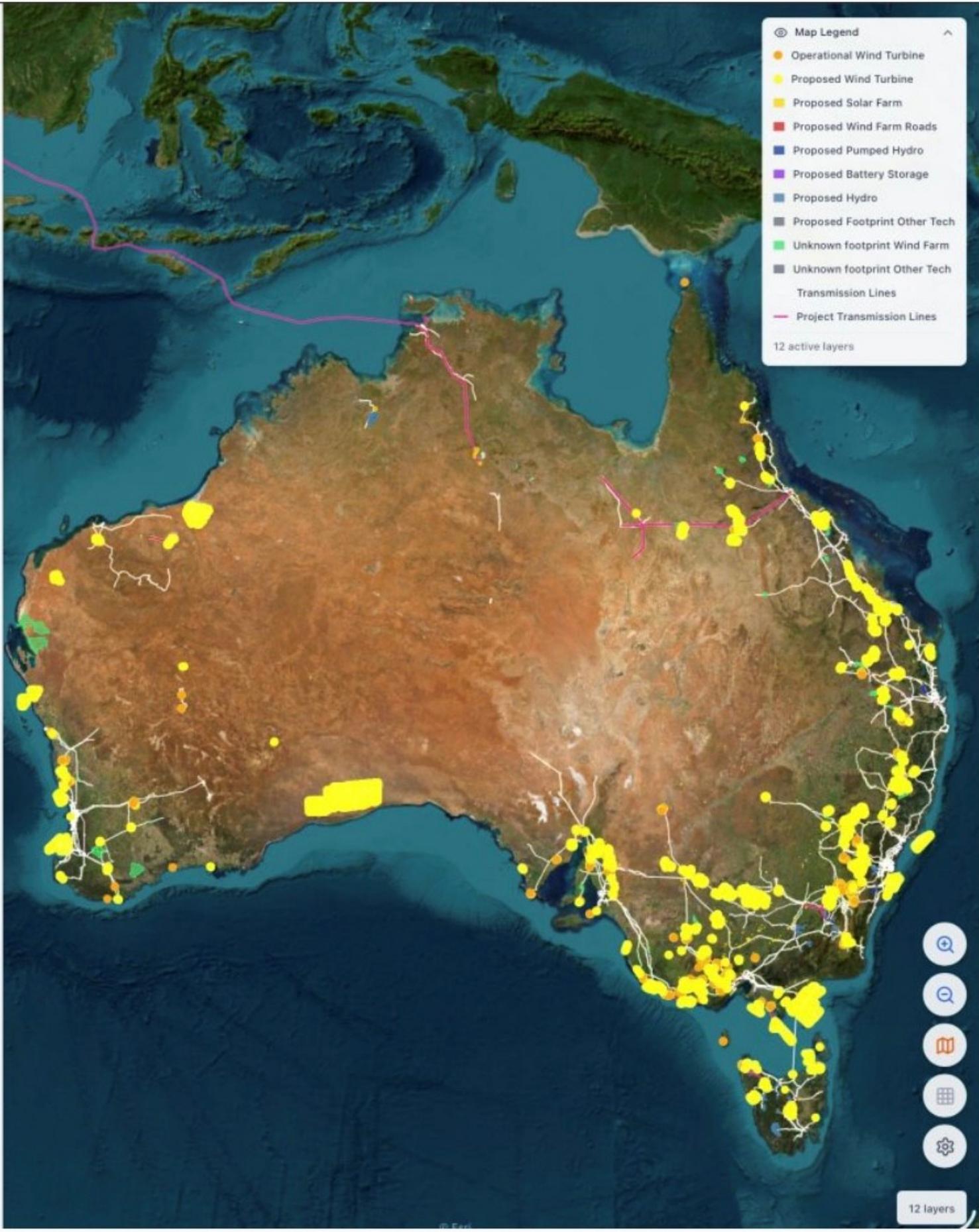




Map Legend

- Operational Wind Turbine
- Proposed Wind Turbine
- Proposed Solar Farm
- Proposed Wind Farm Roads
- Proposed Pumped Hydro
- Proposed Battery Storage
- Proposed Hydro
- Proposed Footprint Other Tech
- Unknown footprint Wind Farm
- Unknown footprint Other Tech
- Transmission Lines
- Project Transmission Lines

12 active layers



12 layers



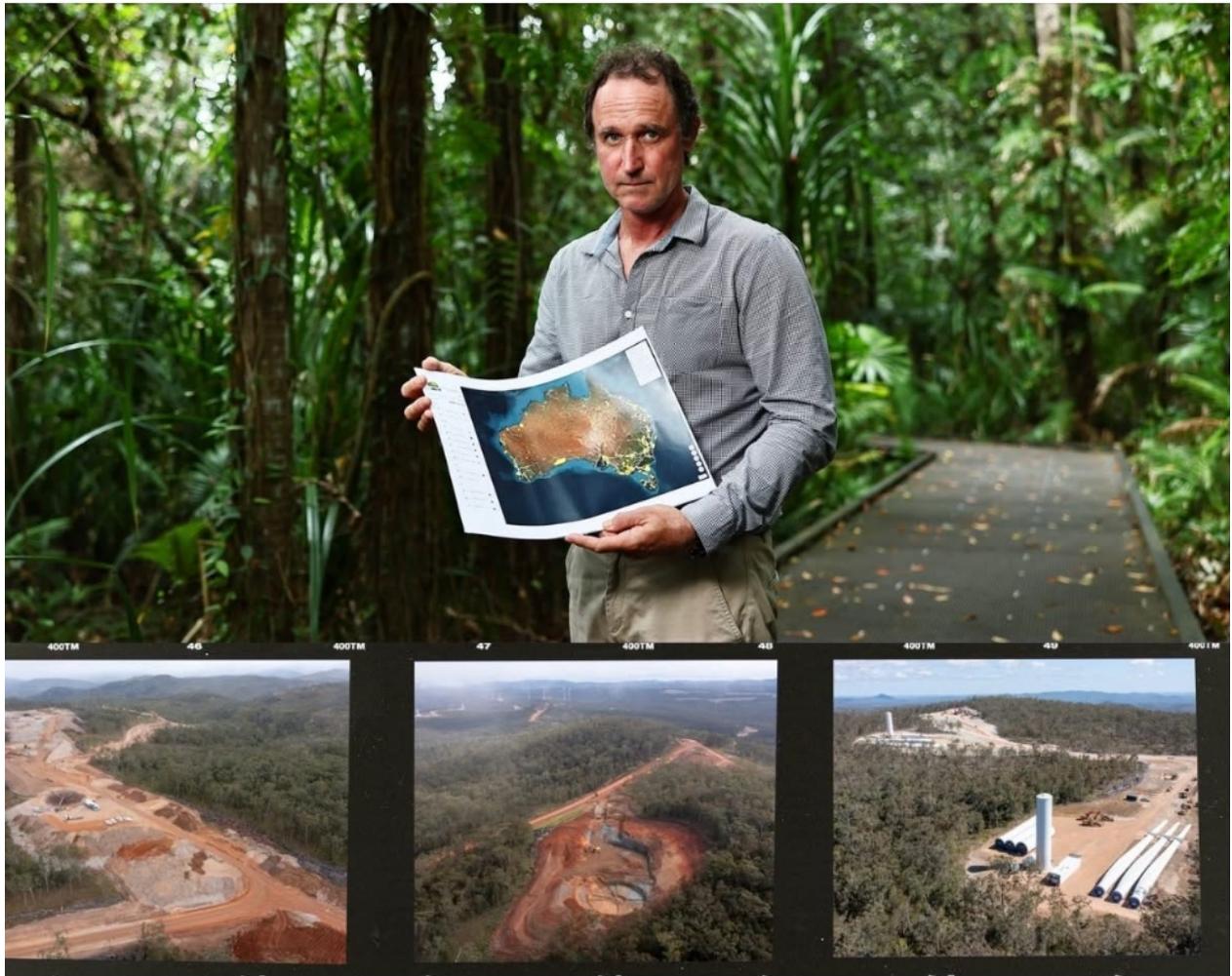
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3h · 

A Queensland photographer has launched a new map pinning the site of almost every Australian renewable energy project after watching bulldozers clear about '400ha in a couple of weeks for green energy'.



‘Cancelled’
photographer
unveils renewables
‘truth map’

There's Misinformation. Disinformation. And then there is Chrisinformation.

MINISTER FOR MATHS DENIAL

On Sep 30 The Australian reveals the scale of the nation's planned renewables rollout, including solar panels covering the equivalent of more than the Sydney metropolitan area.

Energy Minister Chris Bowen releases a video (below) attacking the conservationists who compiled the data on the land mass affected, claiming: 'It's about 12 per cent of what's in the paper'

His evidence:

Bowen ducks repeated questions from The Australian asking for his data.

Backgrounding against the environmental group begins.

Anyone who has legitimate concerns or real issues he just shrugs off

CONSERVATIONIST STEVEN NOWAKOWSKI

AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER TODAY

PRO NUCLEAR ACTIVISTS

DOESN'T STACK UP

EXCLUSIVE

MATTHEW DENHOLM
SARAH ISON

Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen is accused of misrepresenting a group that has mapped Australia's accelerating renewables rollout and of misleading the public about its landmark data.

In a social media post, Mr Bowen accused conservation group Rainforest Reserves Australia of vastly over-estimating the footprint area of renewables projects proposed for Australia

and of being "anti-renewable, pro-nuclear activists".

"Guess what? It doesn't stack up," he said in a video taken in his office. "When you read claims by people who love nuclear but hate renewables, it always pays to check the facts."

RRA vice-president Steven Nowakowski said he and his group stood by the data, which had expanded to include a further 120 renewable projects that had emerged since its report was featured in The Australian.

"Our data represents the most comprehensive compilation of existing and proposed projects, for a whole country, ever put together," Mr Nowakowski said. "It has taken us over four years to research and find the existing projects as well as those being proposed. If Chris Bowen has better data perhaps he would like to share it with us. From our experience, governments are certainly not making it easy for the general public to see what is coming."

"The Integrated System Plan, which Chris Bowen often quotes, states we will need 60GW of installed capacity of utility solar – big solar farms. This figure is nearly double the total capacity of solar mapped by Rainforest Reserves."

While Mr Nowakowski said he had made no secret of his belief

that nuclear energy needed to be part of the transition away from fossil fuels, he supported renewables that were "in the right places".

"The Energy Minister should be engaging with us and being constructive, but he's basically just fobbing us off as being pro-nuclear," he said. "Anyone who has legitimate concerns or real issues he just shrugs off."

The group's mapping – the first Australia-wide glimpse into the potential scale of the renewables rollout – has been hailed by conservationists, including former Greens leader Christine Milne, who are demanding better planning and safeguards to stop projects that destroy biodiversity.

Outgoing Wilderness Society national campaigns director Amelia Young recently warned that the "renewables revolution threatens nature in many of the same extractive and colonial ways that the industrial revolution did."

The Australian Conservation Foundation and WWF are among conservation groups calling for better planning, including renewables no-go zones and a focus on using degraded land.

In the video posted to social

Continued on Page 4

COMMENT P4
EDITORIAL P10

PULLING APART BOWEN-HEADED LOGIC



Climate Change Minister Chris Bowen in question time on Wednesday

September 30

The Australian publishes a report based on a two-year Rainforest Reserves Australia study that reveals, based on current and proposed projects:

- Large-scale solar panel coverage is due to expand from 74 million panels covering an area of 27,176ha to 250.6 million panels covering 433,572ha;
- The number of wind turbines to increase from 4552 to 30,226.
- Rainforest Reserves Australia releases maps plotting every current and proposed renewable energy project around Australia.
- As part of its coverage of the report, The Australian maps the accumulated area of all current large-scale solar projects nationally and the total proposed area in circles over the Sydney metropolitan area. The Australian does the same with wind turbines – onshore and offshore combined – based on recommended guidelines on minimum separations of turbines and maps it on Brisbane. The wind calculations are likely very conservative, given that many wind farms don't have ideal layouts on even land.
- Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen releases a video on social media showing The Australian's maps and claiming the actual area to be covered by renewables is 12 per cent of The Australian's maps. He says the figures are based on calculations by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner.

October 7

- 2.04pm: After establishing that the NSW Agriculture Commissioner's report only covered NSW coverage, The Australian sends an email asking Bowen to explain the 12 per cent claim and raises responses from RRA that it is 'unsupported, vague, unclear' and appears to mix up NSW-only data with RRA's national data.
- 2.11pm: Bowen's senior press secretary sends a 959-word response with four attributable quotes that in no way address any of The Australian's questions followed by a long section of background material.
- 2.54pm: The Australian emails again to point out that 'none of that addresses the points

to which I've sought a response'.

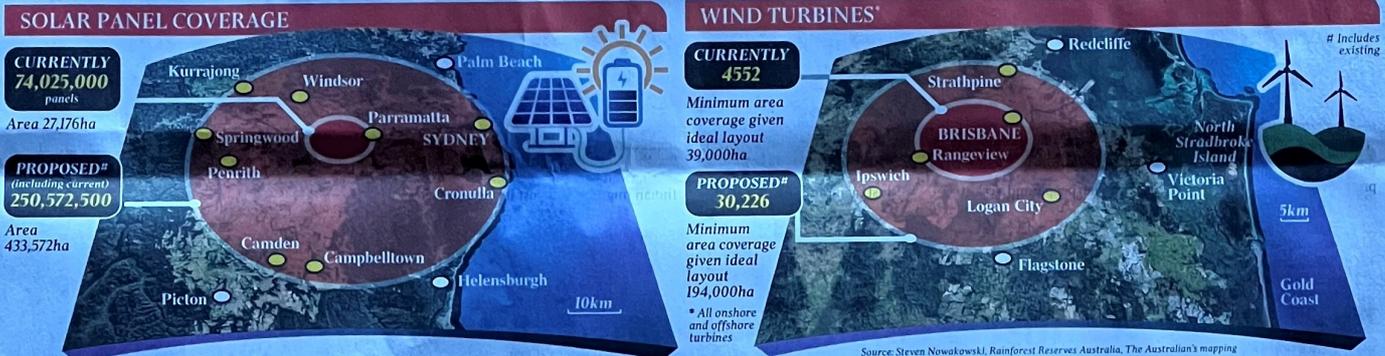
- 3.12pm: Government sources provide details of five wind projects and one solar project that are not proceeding as an explanation of why The Australian's maps were 'inaccurate'.

- 4.46pm: The Australian emails asking 'What underpins the minister's assertion' that the coverage area is only 12 per cent of that asserted by RRA? The Australian asks: 'Has he confused/conflicted NSW and national data, as it appears, and if so, will he apologise to RRA/The Australian?'

October 8

- 10.52am: The Australian emails again, stating: 'We're still very keen to get an explanation of how that 12pc figure is derived.'
- Rainforest Reserves Australia reveals that since it finalised its two-year report, it has updated its numbers to reveal the area of current large-scale solar projects is 29,600ha and the total including proposed projects has grown to 483,444ha – 12 per cent more than in its report.
- The Australian establishes that the one solar project not proceeding that was highlighted to explain the claimed 'inaccuracy' covers only about 350ha – or 0.08 per cent of the RRA total. The five wind projects combined cover about 4000ha – or 2 per cent of the total that The Australian conservatively calculated from the RRA data.
- 2.48pm: The Australian again seeks clarity from the minister, emailing: 'Just to repeat: can the minister pls clarify how he came to the conclusion that the total renewables area (existing and proposed) in Australia is 12 pc of the area shown in our graphic (the one he criticised in his video)?'
- 3.24pm: Bowen's office responds by email saying the minister's video was 'based on initial news reporting of the map, which was not publicly or readily available'. 'Now that the report has been publicly released, we have had the opportunity to see the report is replete with factual errors and are even more concerned about its misleading nature,' it said.

The maps The Australian published on September 30 showing the proposed national footprint size of all solar panels and wind turbines



Misinformation ... and there's Chrisinformation

Continued from Page 1

media, Mr Bowen claims the area to be covered by renewables is 12 per cent that revealed in the RRA data and featured in graphics in The Australian relating their overall footprint to metropolitan Sydney and Brisbane. He said the 12 per cent figure was based on calculations by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner of "how much land renewables will take, based on the plans of the Australian Energy Market Operator".

Mr Bowen declined to justify his claim, or to explain how he derived the 12 per cent figure, when repeatedly asked to do so over the course of two days. "The response was based on initial news reporting of the map, which was not publicly or readily available," was all a government spokesman would say. "Now that the report has been publicly released, we have had the opportunity to see the report is replete with factual errors and are even more concerned about its misleading nature."

Following The Australian's reporting, pro-renewables sources raised the spectre of vested interests playing a role in the RRA's advocacy, arguing the group's donations had tripled while grants for environmental work declined.

'Listen to concerns, Mr Bowen, and you will learn something'



MATTHEW DENHOLM COMMENT

The biggest threat to the renewables rollout is not the pro-nuclear mob or even the fossil fuel industry. It is the ongoing failure of the Albanese government to plan for a socially and environmentally acceptable rollout.

And it is not aided by Chris Bowen's belligerence and play-the-man, shoot-the-messenger approach. These are not just my observations; they are shared by

The Australian was also pointed to Mr Nowakowski appearing "at political events" opposing some renewable energy projects, with government sources suggesting his decision to talk at such

some conservationists and Greens, who can see the decarbonisation push losing its social licence because of a lack of planning and safeguards.

Rainforest Reserves Australia has done what the government should have done years ago: map the rollout of wind, solar and other energy projects nationally. The RRA work – praised by the likes of former Greens leader Christine Milne – reveals the scale of the rollout thus far, in terms of existing and proposed projects. It also reveals where multiple projects – often considered in isolation in the assessment and planning process – are proposed for a single region.

It appears about five of the projects RRA have mapped have been withdrawn. This is five of 843 proposed projects; hardly a major flaw, while RRA argues that wind farms are often withdrawn and later resubmitted in amended form.

events also attended by Coalition MPs raised questions.

The NSW Agriculture Commissioner's work appears only to show the area required in NSW – not nationally, which was the

Bowen has sought to attack and undermine the RRA by playing the nuclear card and making claims – that he has been unable or unwilling to substantiate – that the true footprint is only 12 per cent of the area indicated in the mapping.

He would do better to acknowledge the real and genuine concerns across regional Australia about poorly placed renewables, and ensure his government does more to address them.

A read through the EPBC portal will tell you that projects are being approved despite an acknowledgment by the federal government that they will have a "significant" impact on threatened species and vegetation types.

These are often tolerated by the federal environment minister, or their delegate, on the basis of offsets – such as providing cash to conservation

focus of the RRA mapping and The Australian's graphic. Mr Nowakowski said it appeared the minister was confusing NSW projections with actual, real-time mapping of all existing and pro-

and breeding programs – and mitigation measures such as bird and bat management plans.

The patent inadequacy and leap of faith involved in some of these "strict conditions" of approval is the reason conservationists, such as Steven Nowakowski and Milne, are opposing some projects. It certainly explains why groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation and WWF are pushing for the rollout to be focused on degraded land, with biodiversity hotspots declared no-go zones.

After making queries to Bowen's office, The Australian was contacted by the Clean Energy Corporation. After discussing withdrawn projects with the CEC, The Australian received a comment on the very same from Bowen's office.

Coincidence? Maybe. Either that, or there's a very close relationship between the two.

mapped off satellite imagery and are accurate to a high level of confidence. Our total today, for all solar in Australia including proposed and existing projects, stands at 483,444ha, and counting."

A November 2022 NSW Agriculture Commissioner report on the rollout of renewables in NSW calls for better mapping of where projects are likely to go. It recommends the state government "prepare and display high-level indicative mapping that identifies areas that are potential transmission routes or suitable for solar and wind developments".

Mr Nowakowski said that, in the absence of mapping, his group was seeking to "show where these projects are ... regardless of what stage of the approvals process they're in".

Critics of the mapping point out that five of the 843 proposed new projects it includes have been withdrawn. Mr Nowakowski said these were left in because it was common for withdrawn projects to be revised and resubmitted.

National leader David Littleproud accused Mr Bowen of "puerile politics". "Mr Bowen – fails to acknowledge the trail of destruction Labor's all-renewables approach will leave behind," Mr Littleproud said.

THE AUSTRALIAN

Bowen keeps public in the dark on renewables rollout

Stakeholders must be told what wind and solar projects will cost

Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen does not like to be contradicted or challenged. With trillions of dollars and the national economy at stake in the transition to renewable energy, the public interest requires he be held to account. But Mr Bowen sometimes prefers to shoot the messenger, as he did on social media when he took aim at a front-page article in *The Australian* last week, "Droughts, flooding rains and a solar panel eclipse". It is not good enough for him to whinge. He needs to answer questions and doubts with facts.

In the original article, Matthew Denholm detailed the scale of the nation's renewables rollout – 1000 projects costing \$1.3 trillion, including 25,000 more wind towers with 45,000km of associated roads and 250 million solar panels on 434,000ha. As the rollout expands, solar panels will occupy an area equivalent to "almost all of metropolitan Sydney, parts of the lower Blue Mountains and beyond Richmond and Campbelltown", based on data that years of research by Queensland conservationist Steven Nowakowski and Rainforest Reserves Australia showed. The organisation is concerned about the impact of a poorly planned renewables rollout on rural land and wild places. It is a legitimate inquiry concern that should be pursued.

Mr Bowen dismissed the report as the work of "anti-renewables, pro-nuclear activists", accusing Rainforest Reserves Australia of vastly over-estimating the renewables footprint in Australia. On the other hand, the group's mapping – the first national glimpse into the potential scale of

the renewables rollout – has been welcomed by conservationists such as former Greens leader Christine Milne who want better planning and safeguards to protect biodiversity. Outgoing Wilderness Society national campaigns director Amelia Young has warned the "renewables revolution threatens nature in many of the same extractive and colonial ways that the industrial revolution did".

While claiming the area to be covered by renewables was 12 per cent of that shown in the mapping presented in the article, Mr Bowen, unfortunately, did not back his argument with facts. He needs to do so by producing maps to show how much land, and where, will be affected. But RRA vice-president Mr Nowakowski stood by the group's data on Wednesday. Since the article was published, he said, the area to be covered by renewables had expanded to include a further 120 projects.

"If Chris Bowen has better data perhaps he would like to share it with us," Mr Nowakowski said. "From our experience, governments are certainly not making it easy for the general public to see what is coming." Australians in all parts of the continent are entitled to know and be told the cost to their bills and to the budget.

Under Mr Bowen, the energy transition has swung for and against green hydrogen, and initially against gas as a transition fuel and now strongly in favour. Households and businesses cannot afford to be in the dark about renewables. Tell us what we're up for, minister. Or is the truth politically unpalatable?