

Out of the shadows: Moving climate decision makers from private concern to public action

Radical Emissions Reduction Conference
Tyndall Institute and Royal Society, London
December 11, 2013

Dr. Lauren Rickards, Prof. John Wiseman and Prof. Yoshi Kashima
Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute
University of Melbourne



MELBOURNE SUSTAINABLE
SOCIETY INSTITUTE



Between the idea and the reality;

Between the motion and the act

Falls the Shadow

Between the conception and the creation;

Between the emotion and the response

Falls the Shadow

T.S. Eliot, The Hollow Men

What are the key barriers preventing senior government and business decision makers from providing the leadership and taking the decisive action needed to drive emergency speed emission reductions?



1. Effective communication of robust climate science evidence is an essential but not sufficient basis for decisive climate change action



- › The most direct link between bushfires and climate change comes from the long-term trend towards a hotter climate. Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of very hot days and driving up the likelihood of very high fire danger weather.
- › Changes in temperature and rainfall may also affect the amount and condition of fuel and the probability of lightning strikes.



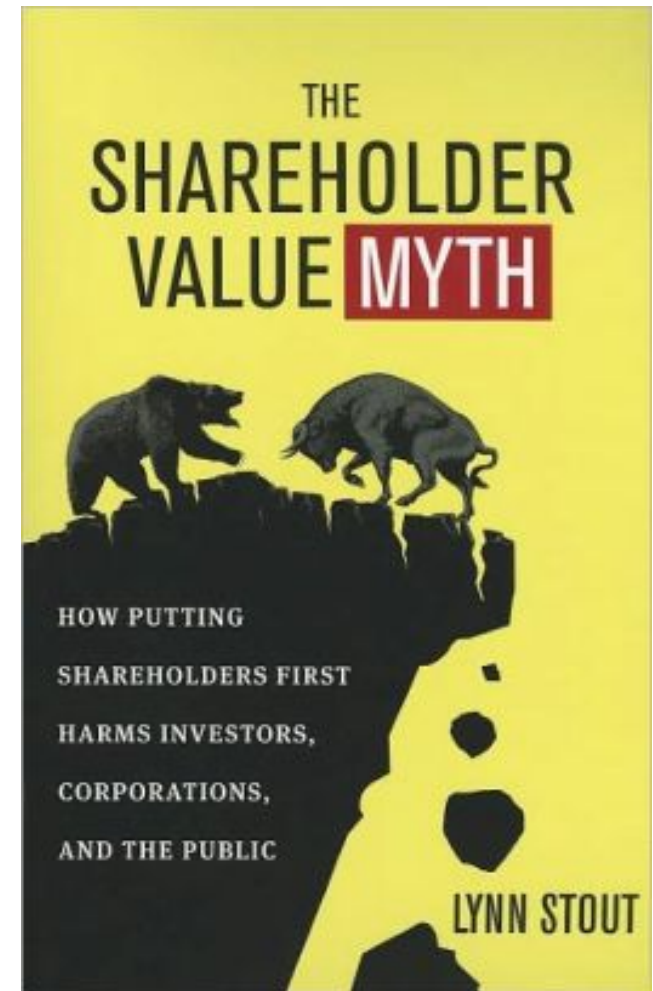
2. Individual factors limiting preparedness of decision makers to take decisive action on emissions reduction...

- Neo-classical and neo-liberal economic and political values
- Antagonism to egalitarian and ecological values and priorities
- Career risks more important than climate risks
- Low engagement with ethical implications of climate change
- High level of faith in technical solutions
- High sensitivity to peer group opinions and pressures



3. Organisational factors limiting preparedness of decision makers to take decisive action

- Access to high quality analysis of climate change risks
- Short term financial and electoral gains valued over longer term financial, reputational and ecological risks
- Lack of leadership in valuing and rewarding open and honest consideration of ethical and risk management issues



4. Societal factors influencing preparedness of decision makers to take decisive action on emissions reduction

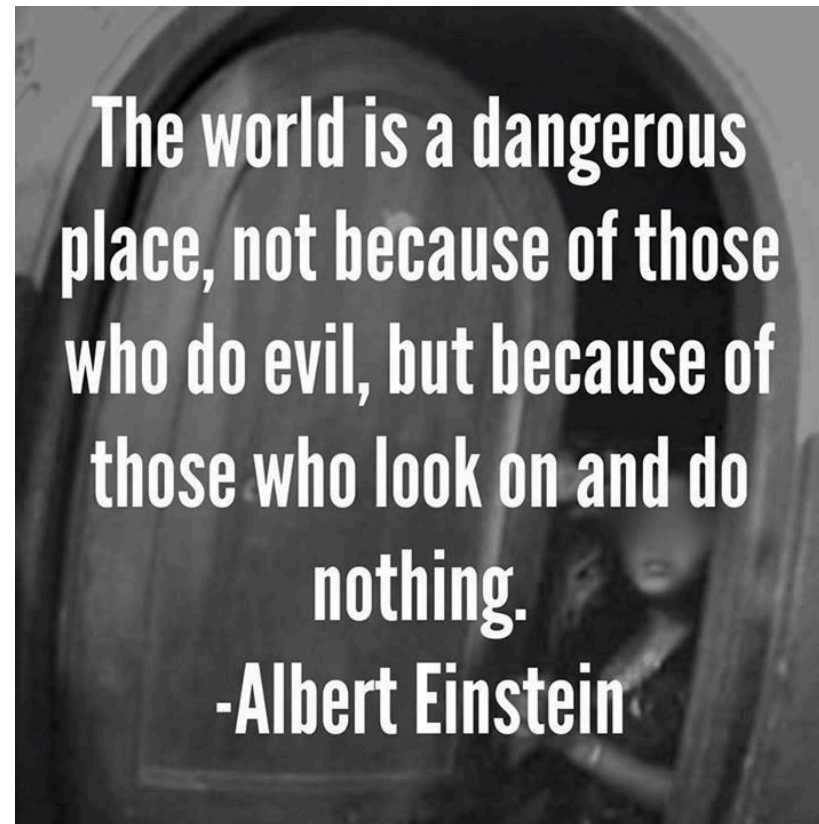
- Public opinion
- Strong, consistent legislation, regulation and policy signals
- Pressure from shareholders, customers, stakeholders, citizens, and advocacy organisations
- Policy settings enabling game changing decisions at moments of crisis



**DIVEST
NOW**
FOSSIL FREE

Out of the shadows: Moving senior decision makers from private concern to public action

- Individual honesty and courage
- Organisational leadership
- Clear policy signals
- Political mobilisation and pressure



“Unless we take action on climate change, future generations will be roasted, toasted, fried and grilled.”

IMF Managing Director, Christine Lagarde

