

Policy Title	
<b>CP No.</b>	CP08
<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Location</b>	Applies to all Nodes
<b>Policy/Procedure Link</b>	<a href="#">Australian Government statement on disinformation and misinformation</a> CSOP in draft
<b>Approved by</b>	Centre Executive Committee
<b>Date Approved</b>	31.07.2023
<b>Date Effective</b>	31.07.2023
<b>Next Review Date</b>	July 2024
<b>Contact for Assistance</b>	<a href="mailto:plantsuccess@uq.edu.au">plantsuccess@uq.edu.au</a>

## 1.0 Purpose

To describe the Centre’s commitment to undertaking and upholding evidence based science.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Centre in the course of conducting Centre business.

## 3.0 Definitions

Disinformation	The Australian Government defines disinformation as the intentional creation and dissemination of wholly or partly false and/or manipulated information that is intended to deceive and mislead audiences and/or obscure the truth for the purposes of causing strategic, political, economic, social, or personal harm or financial/commercial gain.
Misinformation	The Australian Government defines misinformation as the creation and dissemination of wholly or partly false information, spread unwittingly, by error or mistake. Such information has the potential to mislead or deceive but is neither created nor transmitted with the intention of doing so or causing harm.

## 4.0 Key Controls

### 4.1 Background and Context

The CoE is committed to open and transparent dialogue on key issues facing our planet and its people and biodiversity. Accordingly, science has a significant contribution to make in terms of providing evidence-based resources for decision making. We recognise that such evidence is only part of the information that individuals and Governments alike need in order to make decisions.

As important as evidence is, sometimes the required science has not been completed, is unclear or equivocal. On top of this, different peoples have different connections to each other and to country and to the physicality and spirituality of the myriad of forms of life. All of these things are important in decision making and to knowledge sharing. Moreover, the discussion ethics itself is obviously not purely a scientific endeavour and yet is critical for science and scientists. We at the CoE are committed to enabling difficult and challenging conversations and debate at the intersection of science with law, social science and politics.

We believe that the way forward to enable challenging conversations and debate is to make sure that clarity is available and transparent on *what* is science based. Science in the vast majority is relatively easy to qualify and quantify. Processes are in place to hold scientists to account and to continually review and reassess what is known as knowledge. This is exactly why knowledge changes and improves. The process of doing this in science is evidence-based. Hence for aspects of information which are science-based they are also evidence-based. We at the CoE believe it is absolutely essential that science remains evidence-based and that to speak of science is to refer to, and to rely on, evidence. To divert from this is to move into other forms of argument which may, for example, be spiritual, social or political. Scientists need to accept that these other arguments are an essential part of decision making in the broad community.

It is the scientist's task to be sure and clear about how science and what science is evidence-based. To the extent that science forms part of a decision-making process, it needs to be relied upon and have a clear chain of evidence. Scientists and those proposing to use science-based arguments should avoid false claims of evidence and should always correct prior knowledge that is false or unable to be substantiated or repeated.

We must be clear on how to foster reliable science. Accordingly, the CoE has core values of integrity, inclusion and international excellence and an established ethics plan and behaviours inventory that emphasises respect, honesty, rigor, transparency and accountability. For this reason we seek to avoid misinformation and disinformation. We must to use evidence-based approaches in planning and retrospectively to identify and restore any contributions to or from the CoE that involve misinformation and disinformation.

The Australian Government has recognised that disinformation and misinformation can limit the independent decision making of governments and the private sector, affect economic prosperity, damage social cohesion, and undermine national security and sovereignty.

## 4.2 Policy Statement

- 4.2.1 The aim of science is to explain the natural world on the basis of reliable, evidenced based information.
- 4.2.2 The Centre is committed to the promotion of reliable, evidence based information developed by scientific research and its use in evidence based policy.
- 4.2.3 The Centre will not promote, support or distribute information that is known to be:
  - wholly or partly false, or
  - manipulated information that is intended to deceive and mislead audiences and/or obscure the truth.

## 5.0 Monitoring and Review

This CP will be reviewed annually.

## 6.0 Recording and Reporting

N/A.

## 7.0 Appendix

N/A.