



## **Forrest hits back after Minderoo dragged into ExxonMobil defamation row**

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**Highlight:** Andrew Forrest has come out swinging in defence of his charity, Minderoo, after it became embroiled in a defamation suit levelled by ExxonMobil.

### **Body**

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Mining billionaire Andrew Forrest has come out swinging in defence of his charity, Minderoo, after it became embroiled in a defamation suit levelled by ExxonMobil, lambasting the oil and gas giant for a pursuit he deemed to be "right out of the industry playbook".

According to court filings, Exxon launched a defamation suit against California Attorney General Rob Bonta and several environmental groups in Texas on Monday, demanding damages and a retraction of claims about the oil company's advanced plastics recycling initiative.

[Link to Image](#)

AFR.

Exxon has accused Bonta of colluding with US law firm Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP and a swath of environmental groups, including the Intergenerational Environment Justice Fund.

In the suit, the company claims the defendants made false statements about its recycling technology which have since cost it contracts and damaged its future business prospects.

While Forrest, his iron ore miner, **Fortescue**, and multibillion-dollar charity, Minderoo, are not named as a party to the action, Exxon has claimed the Intergenerational Environment Justice Fund is controlled by Minderoo.

Further, the oil and gas company accused **Fortescue** of orchestrating litigation against Exxon to gain a competitive advantage in the energy transition sector, an assertion the miner also flatly rejected.

Minderoo and **Fortescue** have maintained they operate independently of the fund, something corroborated by the IEJF in a statement to this masthead.

Forrest has since launched a defence of himself and his empire, claiming he was "delighted" by news of the lawsuit, and branding the pursuit evidence that the industry was desperate to retain its "toxic grip on society".

## Forrest hits back after Minderoo dragged into ExxonMobil defamation row

The WA billionaire reiterated his commitment to spearheading Minderoo, **Fortescue** and his investment vehicle, Tattarang, in a way that would allow it to be rid of fossil fuels by 2030, and insisted any accusation of commercial benefit was "completely false".

"This lawsuit is no surprise and right out of the oil and gas industry playbook," he said.

"I am personally delighted Exxon has walked themselves into the court and opened themselves up to cross-examination.

"[The oil and gas industry's] only priority is to maximise their profits and produce as much oil and gas as possible.

"My conflict is that I am dedicated to steering the world away from a future reliant on fossil fuels.

"The fossil-fuel industry know they are on borrowed time and that technological solutions exist to phase out fossil fuels."

Forrest has been vocal in his criticism of oil and gas producers, which included poring over [\*Woodside chief executive Meg O'Neill's history as an ExxonMobil executive in an interview on Perth radio and accusing her of "peddling poison"\*](#).

A spokesperson for the California Department of Justice said the defamation action was another attempt by ExxonMobil to deflect attention from its "own unlawful deception".

The lawsuit is the latest twist in the ongoing battle between environmental groups and the fossil-fuels industry.

Bonta launched legal action against Exxon in 2024, claiming the company had engaged in deception about the limitations of recycling and called on the court to hold Exxon to account for its role in rampant plastic pollution.

Minderoo made national headlines just last month [\*over its backing of a Global Plastics Treaty to curb the production and use of polymers\*](#), touting the need for a plastics levy.

**With Reuters**

## Graphic

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WA billionaire Andrew Forrest launched a defence of his iron ore company, **Fortescue**, and his charity, Minderoo, in the wake of the lawsuit.

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