

ISD

Powering new
generations
against extremism

Anti-Climate Lobby:

How fossil fuel interests torpedo climate action and what to do about it

Europe Calling

5 June 2023

Why Now?



Climate Mis- and Disinformation vs. Other Issue Sets

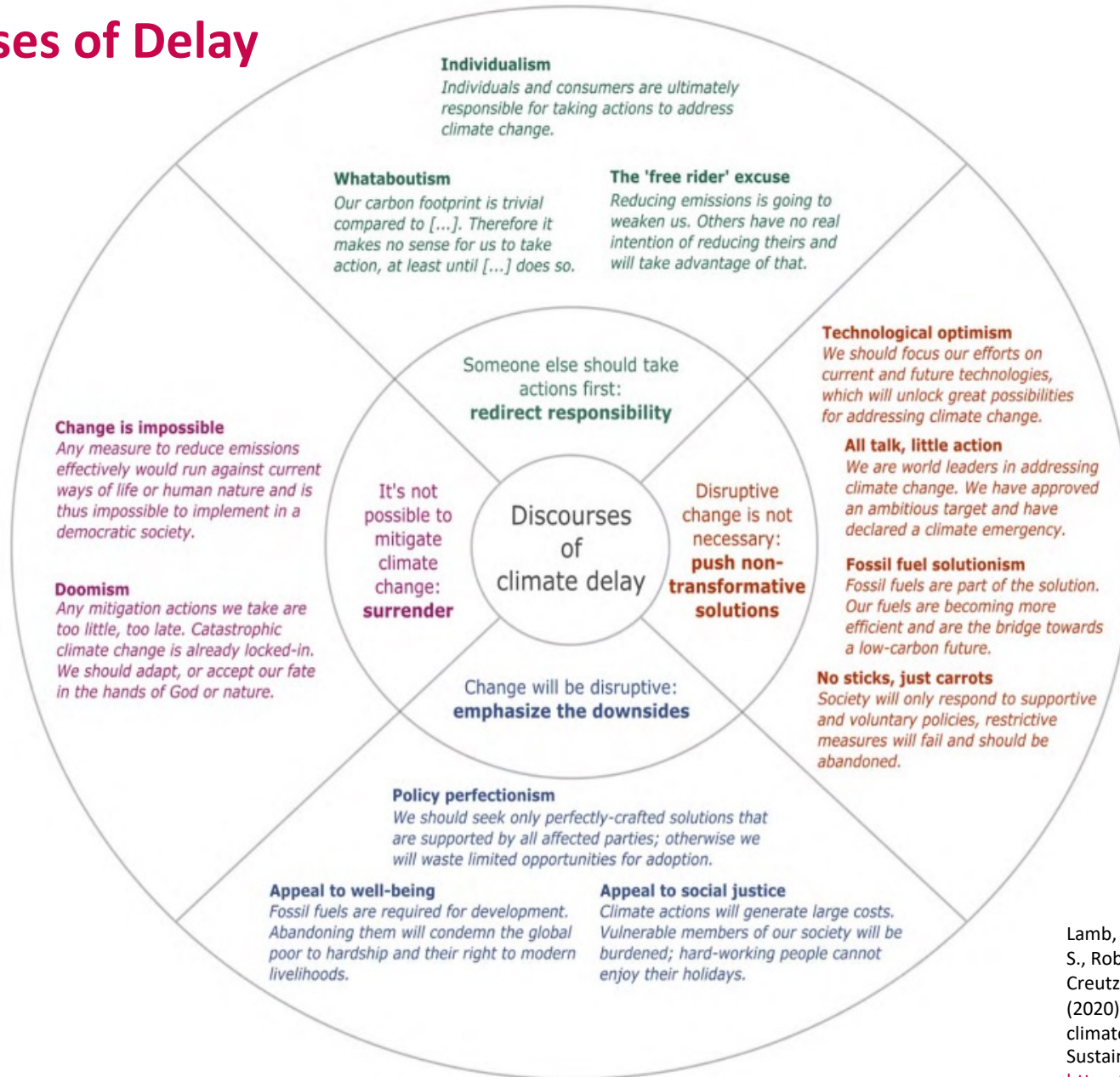
Differences

- Historically more professionalised - including front, PR and lobby groups plus paid and traditional media
- Billions of dollars invested by industry each year
- Established set of think tanks and commentators
- More financial stakeholders (e.g. relative to anti-migrant or anti-LGBTQ+ disinformation)

Similarities

- Increasingly decentralised and organic
- Co-opted into the 'culture wars' and posted alongside other false or misleading content (e.g. elections, vaccines, migration, racial justice)
- Growing use of memes and video
- Focus on scapegoating individuals (e.g. Greta Thunberg, George Soros)
- Importance of catchphrases, repetition and astroturfing
- **Underlying central theme: mistrust of institutions and 'global elites'**

Discourses of Delay



Lamb, W., Mattioli, G., Levi, S., Roberts, J., Capstick, S., Creutzig, F., Steinberger, J. (2020). Discourses of climate delay. *Global Sustainability*, 3, E17. <https://doi.org/10.1017/su.2020.13>

Discourses of Delay



6. NO STICKS, JUST CARROTS

"My approach is that I want more options, rather than bans. Banning – that's the Green's approach, they want to prescribe how people should travel. There will be no paternalism and tax increases with me. (...) I expect much from incentives (...). [The possibility of mass protests like the French Yellow Vest movement in Germany] is exactly what worries me. Politicians in Berlin toy around with ideas that are far removed from people's daily lives outside of the capital. People are angry about it, and they stand up to it. They want climate action and clean air, but don't want vehicle bans, motorway speed limit reductions or tax increases. They want to live free"



Andreas Scheuer, (CSU)

for reasons of climate protection as

Summary:

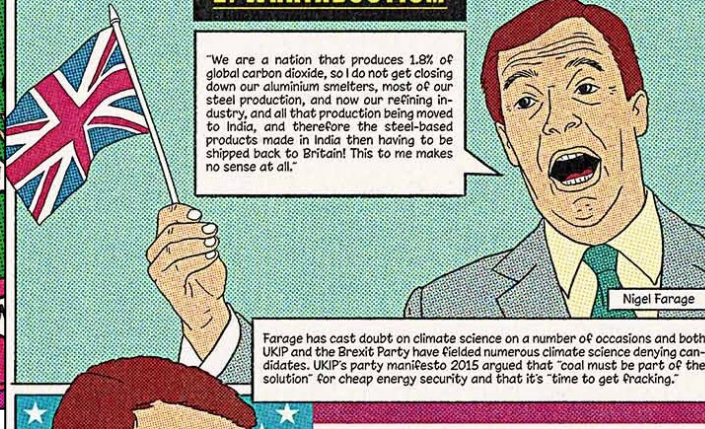
Our carbon footprint is trivial compared to [...]. Therefore it makes no sense for us to take action, at least until [...] does so. Also known as the "But China" or the "we're just 2% argument".

Strategy:

Whataboutism focuses attention on distant perpetrators of climate harm over which the discursive agent and audience have limited control (such as China, or difficult to mitigate industries). This discourse often exploits confusion between aggregate levels of emissions and per capita emissions. For instance, it is common to claim that a country represents only (e.g.) 2% of total global emissions, and therefore has limited responsibility, despite high per capita or historical emissions. The strategy also works for industries and the carbon intensity of activities, for instance when used to play down the importance of aviation.

2. WHATABOUTISM

"We are a nation that produces 1.8% of global carbon dioxide, so I do not get closing down our aluminium smelters, most of our steel production, and now our refining industry, and all that production being moved to India, and therefore the steel-based products made in India then having to be shipped back to Britain! This to me makes no sense at all."



Nigel Farage

Farage has cast doubt on climate science on a number of occasions and both UKIP and the Brexit Party have fielded numerous climate science denying candidates. UKIP's party manifesto 2015 argued that "coal must be part of the solution" for cheap energy security and that it's "time to get fracking."

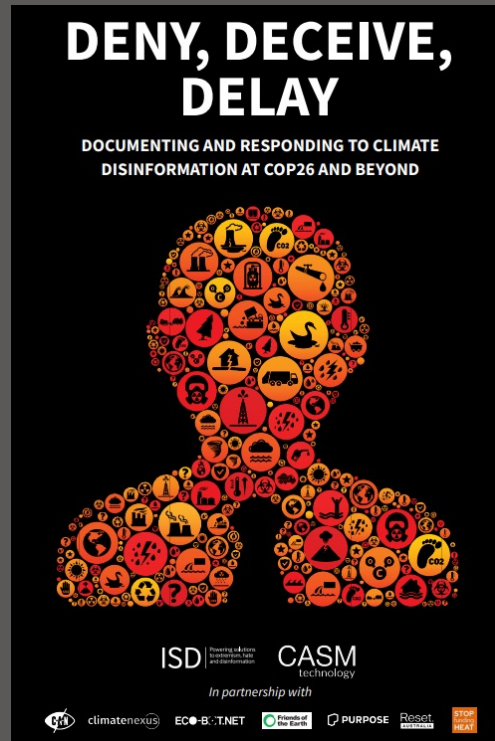
Comic version
(Cecile Keller)

<https://www.celinekeller.com/discourses-of-climate-delay>

ISD

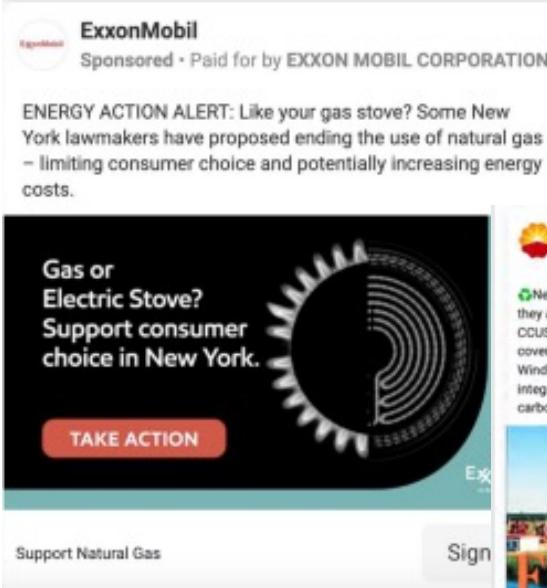
Powering solutions
to extremism, hate
and disinformation

Deny, Deceive, Delay Vol. 1 & 2



Greenwashing Techniques: *Deny, Deceive, Delay* Vol. 2

- From January to September 2021, just **16 companies** ran over **1700 sponsored ads** containing climate mis- or disinformation on Facebook and Instagram. This generated upwards of **\$4.8 million in revenue** for Meta Inc.
- In 2022, **3,781 ads** were active from fossil fuel-linked entities in the months before and during COP27, earning **\$3-4 million** for Meta Inc.



ExxonMobil
Sponsored · Paid for by EXXON MOBIL CORPORATION

ENERGY ACTION ALERT: Like your gas stove? Some New York lawmakers have proposed ending the use of natural gas – limiting consumer choice and potentially increasing energy costs.

Gas or Electric Stove? Support consumer choice in New York.

TAKE ACTION

Support Natural Gas

Sign



The American Petroleum Institute
Sponsored · Paid for by The American Petroleum Institute

We've reduced CO2 emission levels to the lowest in generation.

AP




Shell
Sponsored · Paid for by Shell

Meet Rational Middle: Net Zero – a docuseries that explores ways to decarbonize. Watch the films & join the conversation.

WWW.RATIONALMIDDLE.COM · Join the net-zero conversation

Watch more



CNPC
Sponsored
ID: 47470667129272

Negative carbon emissions, smart technologies, and green energies... they are the future of CNPC oilfields. CCUS technologies are being adopted to build a brand-new industrial chain covering carbon mitigation, sequestration, replacement and utilization. Wind and solar energies are also being tapped to advance the further integration of traditional and new energies. Together, let's power a low-carbon future! #greenCNPC #SDGs

Let's power a low-carbon future!

Future CNPC oilfield

Saudi Green Initiative
Sponsored

17 new nature-focused initiatives were launched today at the #SGIForum, focused on restoring natural greenery and protecting against the impacts of climate change.

Get the latest updates from the Forum:
<https://www.greeninitiatives.gov.sa/sgi-forum>

ANNOUNCED AT THE SGI FORUM 2022

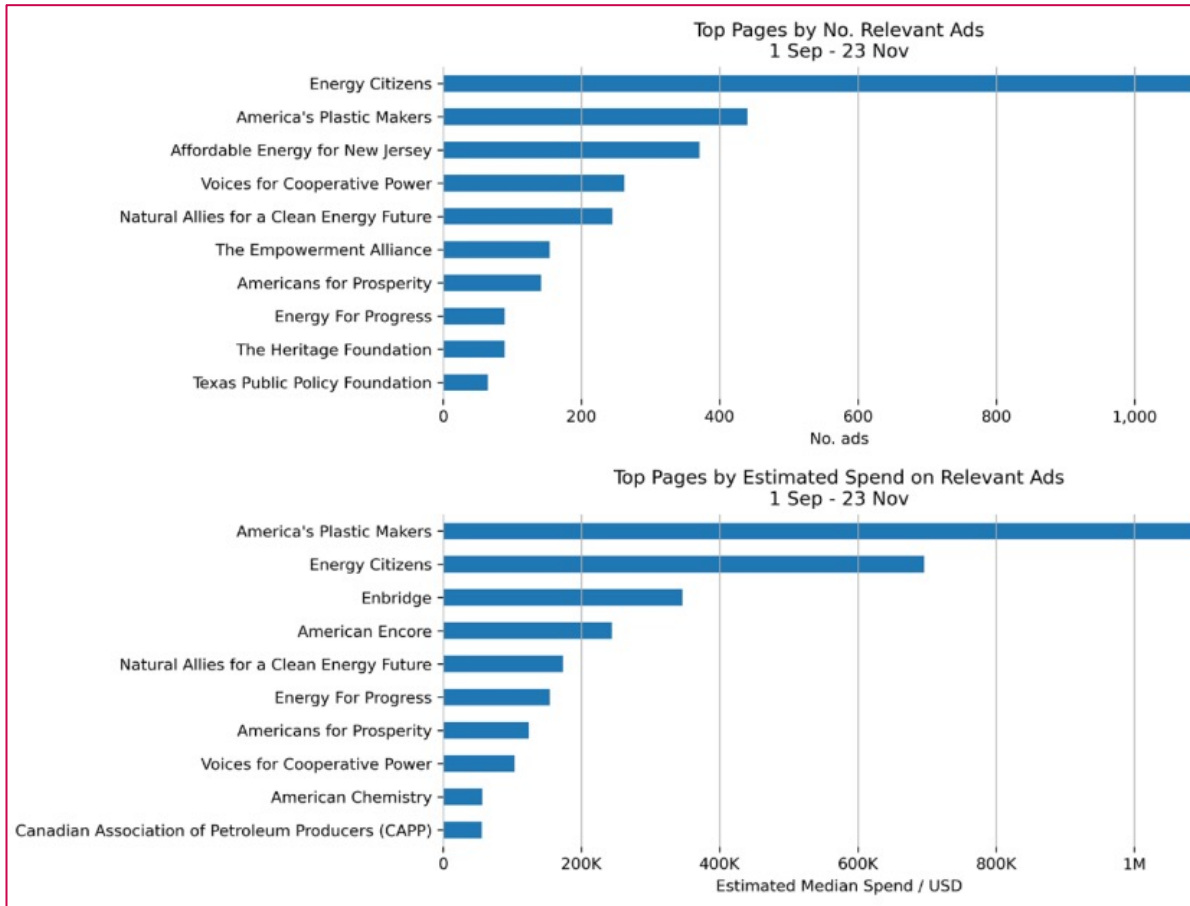
17 new nature-focused initiatives

Saudi Green Initiative

Learn more

Hidden in Plain Sight: PR, Front and 'Citizen-Led' Groups

In our COP27 dataset, the **top 10 pages** for ad volume or spend were almost all linked to the fossil fuel industry – *how many would you have spotted?*



Active
Started running on 16 Nov 2022
Platforms: Facebook, Instagram
Categories: [unclear]
Estimated audience size: >1M people
Amount spent (USD): \$2K-\$2.5K
Impressions: 200K-250K
ID: 1293880068115756
See ad details

Heartland Institute
Sponsored - Paid for by The Heartland Institute

New poll debunks the 97% consensus claim about #climate change. Only 59% of climate scientists surveyed think global climate change will cause "significant harm" to the "living conditions for people alive today." That is far short of the 97% "consensus."

NEW YORK POST
Big Tech censorship on climate change only hurts the nation

What's In a Word?

The vocabulary of greenwashing is evolving and finding new gatekeepers to convince the public

The New York Times

The New Soldiers in Propane's Fight Against Climate Action: Television Stars

An industry group is spending millions of dollars to push back against efforts to move heating away from oil and gas.

Give this article | Share | Bookmark | 105 Comments



Joe Scarnici/Getty Images

There's something different about the new gas stove influencer

A celebrity chef is blaming the user — not the product — for any health concerns.

By Rebecca Leber | @rebleber | rebecca.leber@vox.com | Mar 10, 2023, 7:00am EST

f t SHARE



The propane industry is working with Dean Sheremet, the host of Fox's My Kitchen Rules, to combat gas stoves' public image problem. | NBCUniversal via Getty

Mother Jones DONATE

ENVIRONMENT

The Gas Industry Is Paying Instagram Influencers to Gush Over Gas Stoves

Not pictured: toxic fumes.

REBECCA LEBER
JUNE 17, 2020



Broad Search Key Phrase	No. Results
American energy	3584
energy independence	2162
energy security oil gas	1519
natural gas most affordable	812
Freedom gas	575
natural gas most reliable	530
natural gas need long term	197
new oil investments	153
natural gas most efficient	85
human flourishing	83
natural gas transition fuel	74
energy security fossil fuel	74
natural gas economic growth	64
investment necessary gas industry	60
energy dominance	56
ethical oil	56
fossil fuels are necessary	55
investment growth gas sector	37
new fossil fuel investments	33
Keystone XL	33

An Actor-Based Approach to Advertising

If a company only invests 5% in renewable energies versus 95% in fossil fuels, should it be allowed to advertise its support for wind and solar or call itself a 'climate champion'?

Is this consumer fraud?

