



Powering solutions
to extremism
and polarisation

Overheated: *Mapping* *Climate and the Culture* *Wars Online*

EU DisinfoLab Summit

27 October 2021

Why Climate?



Climate as a new **hybridised threat**, merging traditional climate deniers/delayers with a broader universe of extremist and conspiracy movements, disinformation actors, 'outrage merchants' and right-wing media outlets.

Photo Credits: Heartland Institute/Net Zero Watch (centre); Fox News (top); Getty Images (right); Taktuell/Marc Gruber (bottom) Rick Loomis / Getty Images (left)

The Challenge

Build a system for real-time monitoring and analysis of climate debate across social media

What are the emerging narratives/tactics in the anti-climate space? How do they intersect with pre-existing movements, ideologies and information ecosystems online?

Quantify the volume and influence of anti-climate content

Is anti-climate messaging penetrating the mainstream? If so, how/where and can we evidence a through-line to key events or legislative agendas (e.g. German Federal Elections; COP26; Biden's 'Build Back Better' Bill)?

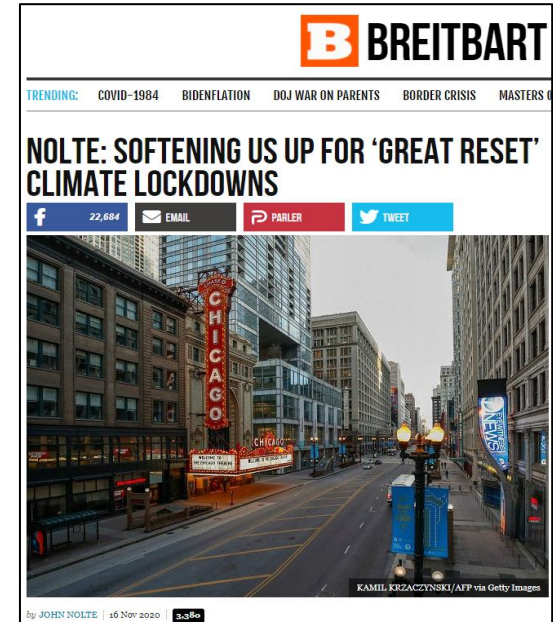
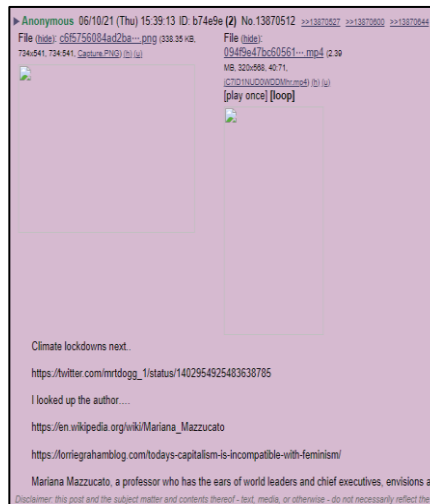
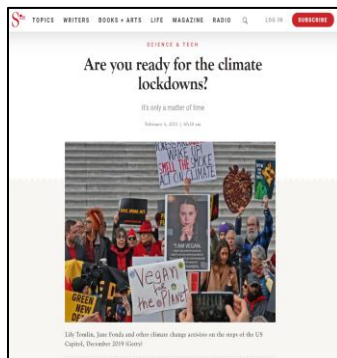
Support the climate sector to integrate data into their ongoing work (e.g. counter-comms; advocacy; public education; media outreach)

How can we action this live and ever-expanding body of evidence around anti-climate activity, amplifiers and impact? What are the related calls to action, and for whom?

'Climate Lockdown'

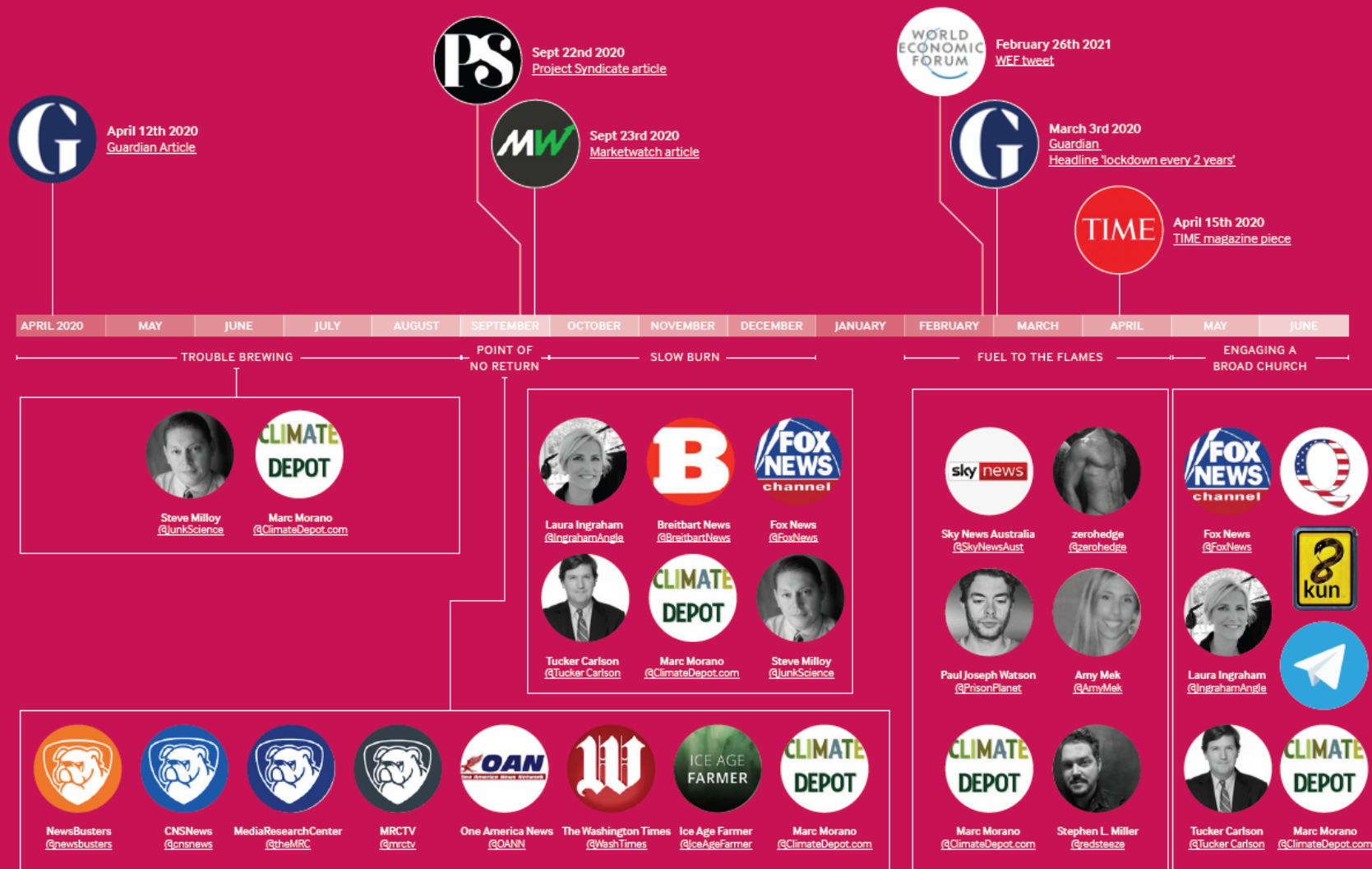
The Birth of a New Conspiracy

A new type of disinformation that claims government overreach / 'green tyranny' will be enforced under the pretext of climate change to strip people of civil liberties, using language explicitly linked to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Timeline of Major Events and Key Actors

'Climate Lockdown' and the Culture Wars:
How COVID-19 sparked a new narrative against climate action



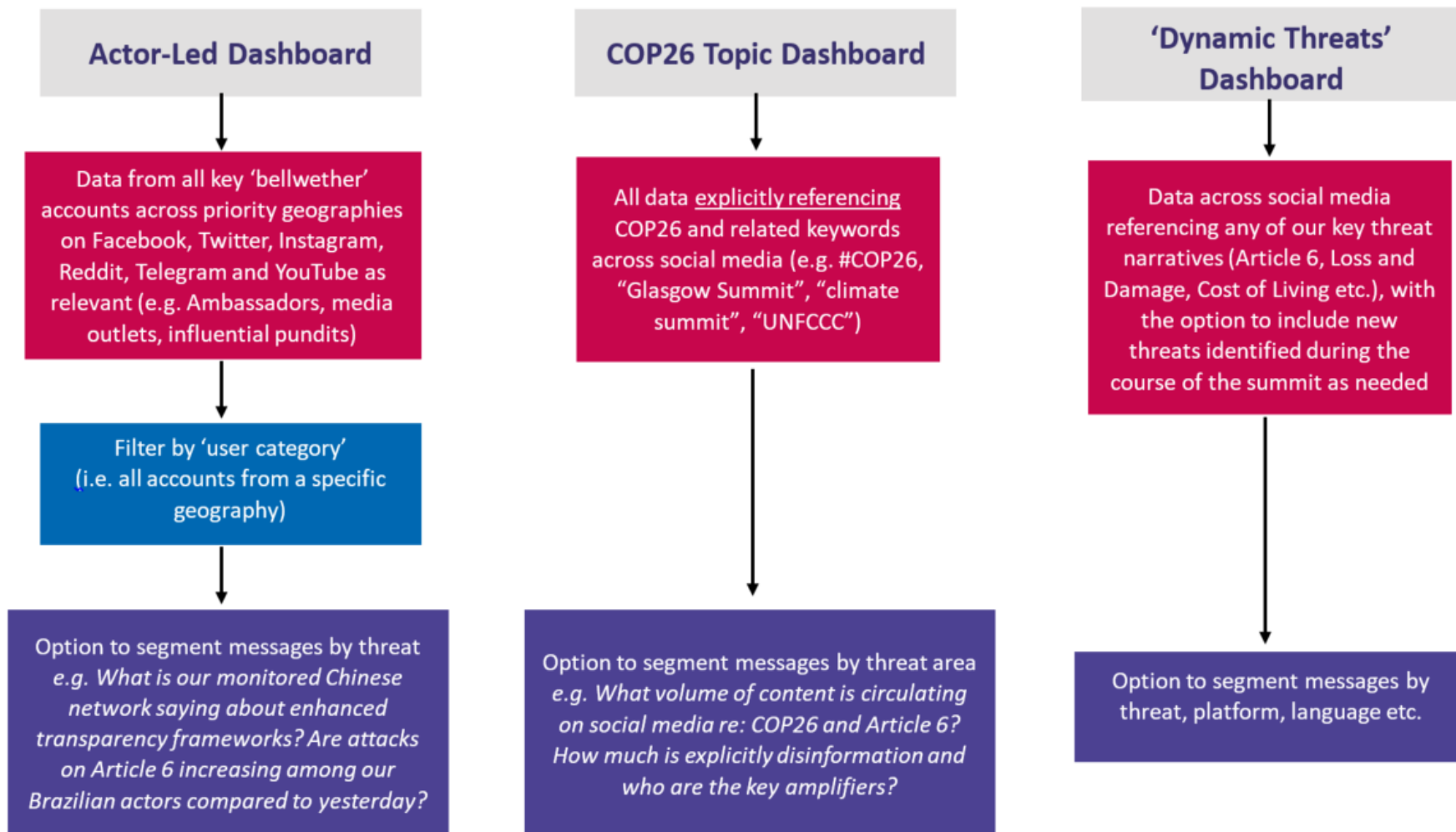
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Key Takeaways

- **Antagonism with a perceived ‘mainstream media’** can prove essential to kick-start a conspiracy and gain traction online
- Disinfo actors are incredibly **opportunistic and adept at coopting current affairs** to push a pre-existing idea into the mainstream
- Covid-19 language and related experiences are hugely powerful as a **launch pad for unrelated agendas**, disinformation campaigns and attempts to fuel social division
- There is a **growing convergence of diverse actors, issue sets and ideologies** under a broad ‘anti-government’ frame
- **Current Terms of Service and enforcement mechanisms** on social media platforms are wholly ill-equipped to tackle the level and velocity of climate mis- and disinformation

COP26 War Room

Rapid Response Unit - Monitoring Information Attacks



Thank you.

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