

# COP, LOOK, LISTEN

ISSUE 4 | Saturday 12 November

Hi,

Welcome to the fourth edition of **COP, LOOK, LISTEN**, a bulletin covering information attacks and anti-climate trends in and around COP27.

**We welcome requests from journalists, civil society and policymakers to provide evidence where relevant. If you have a lead regarding climate mis-/disinformation, malign influence operations or other suspicious activity, please email [contact@caad.info](mailto:contact@caad.info).** All requests will be reviewed from both an ethical and technical perspective, ensuring data is used responsibly to map and counter these threats.

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## HEADLINES

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*An overview of top opposition content across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, YouTube, Telegram and mainstream media – includes active disinformation, malign influence campaigns and*

*broader adversarial messaging around climate, which may require an immediate response from the sector.*

**Social media companies are failing to protect users from gendered harassment and hatred, including sexually violent rhetoric, with Greta Thunberg at the fore.**



## UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

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*A deeper look at anti-climate actors or phenomena impacting the public debate, who reveal something important about the disinformation playbook.*

**The fossil fuel industry is using a convicted fraud to sell gas for Africa at COP27.**

## HEADLINES: Pundits and Perverts Take Aim at Greta Thunberg

### OUR VERDICT:

**We must call on social media companies to improve enforcement of hate speech and gendered harassment policy now,** not only to protect climate activists but wider users. Big Tech also needs to tighten its response in reducing the spread of claims already debunked by primary sources - such content repeatedly goes viral, often at key moments such as COP, in turn stoking hatred towards individuals and inciting violence against affiliated groups or supporters.

Besides the harm posed to those targeted, and especially women, there is also a broader goal to distract and delay - by creating comic-book villains out of key figureheads, whether Greta, the WEF, climate scientists or world leaders, real debate

about policy gets lost in the noise. Of course no one is immune from criticism or scrutiny, but the coordinated harassment of certain individuals soon loses credibility, especially with a rapid descent into personal slurs, sexualised rhetoric and calls to violence.

From professionals like Mark Morano to the trolls on 4chan, Greta Thunberg is an ongoing target, and social media companies have done nothing to protect her from the constant torrent of abuse enabled via their products and services. The graphically sexual nature of much content reveals the toxic masculinity that has become endemic across platforms - both mainstream and fringe - and now pervades anti-climate communities already rife with petro-masculinity.

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## 'Climate versus Capitalism'



**Julia Hartley-Brewer** ✓  
@JuliaHB1



Greta Thunberg: I don't want to go into politics because it's too "toxic".

No [@GretaThunberg](#), you just want to be able to spout your hysterical, catastrophising eco-babble without being held accountable for the terrible costs of what you propose.





[bbc.co.uk](https://bbc.co.uk)

Greta Thunberg: I don't want to go into politics

The teenage activist says the world of politics is toxic and she never intended being the face of a global movement.

8:15 AM · Oct 18, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

1,137 Retweets   354 Quote Tweets   9,818 Likes



**PeterSweden**

@PeterSweden7

...

Greta Thunberg says that she wants to overthrow the Western capitalist system.

I always told you it was Climate Communism.

12:05 PM · Nov 6, 2022 · Twitter for Android

5,703 Retweets   198 Quote Tweets   28.2K Likes



**Michael Shellenberger** ✓

@ShellenbergerMD

...

Let's be clear about what occurred. The news media weaponized a teenage girl suffering from serious anxiety disorders in order to advance a radical, anti-capitalist agenda. That's textbook psychopathic behavior: lack of empathy, lack of control (panic), &

behavior, lack of empathy, lack of control (panic), and anti-social behavior.

3:02 PM · Nov 5, 2022 · Twitter Web App

280 Retweets 23 Quote Tweets 1,703 Likes



There has been a spike in activity targeted at Greta Thunberg, following comments made during her recent book promotion which triggered a spate of misogynistic and ableist content. Such attacks are far from new, but appear to be resurging with more extreme or conspiracist framing. Right-wing pundits have posted comments attacking the 19-year old, alleging that the green agenda is just a cover to overthrow the “whole capitalist system”.

**Disinformation spreaders like the [debunked](#) Julia Hartley-Brewer (presenter on TalkTV/TalkRADIO) blamed Greta's “[hysterical catastrophising eco-babble](#)” for economic harms, even linking her to conspiracies such as the **Great Reset**.**

This narrative was [dismissed by Thunberg](#) via her Twitter account on 2 November, but has not stemmed the tide of falsehoods. Instead, people like Michael Shellenberger [doubled down](#), while far-right pundit [PeterSweden](#) (who is also [still furiously posting](#) about his profile in the [Deny, Deceive, Delay](#) report - p. 64) garnered over 28k likes and 5.5k retweets a few days later.

Shellenberger also tweeted two long tirades on Thunberg, the [first of which](#) achieved the most engagement across our dashboard - it included claims around the Great Reset conspiracy and suggested her ‘war’ against gas and capitalism was driven by hatred for Western Civilization.

**The use of [visceral imagery](#) is combined with phrases that apportion direct blame for ‘mass psychopathy’, food shortages and energy crises to the teenager herself.** On [5 November](#), after Greta’s efforts to correct the record, Shellenberger posted a Substack blog and another thread suggesting she displays “*psychopathic behaviour*”, “*lack of empathy*” and “*lack of control*” - the first tweet alone

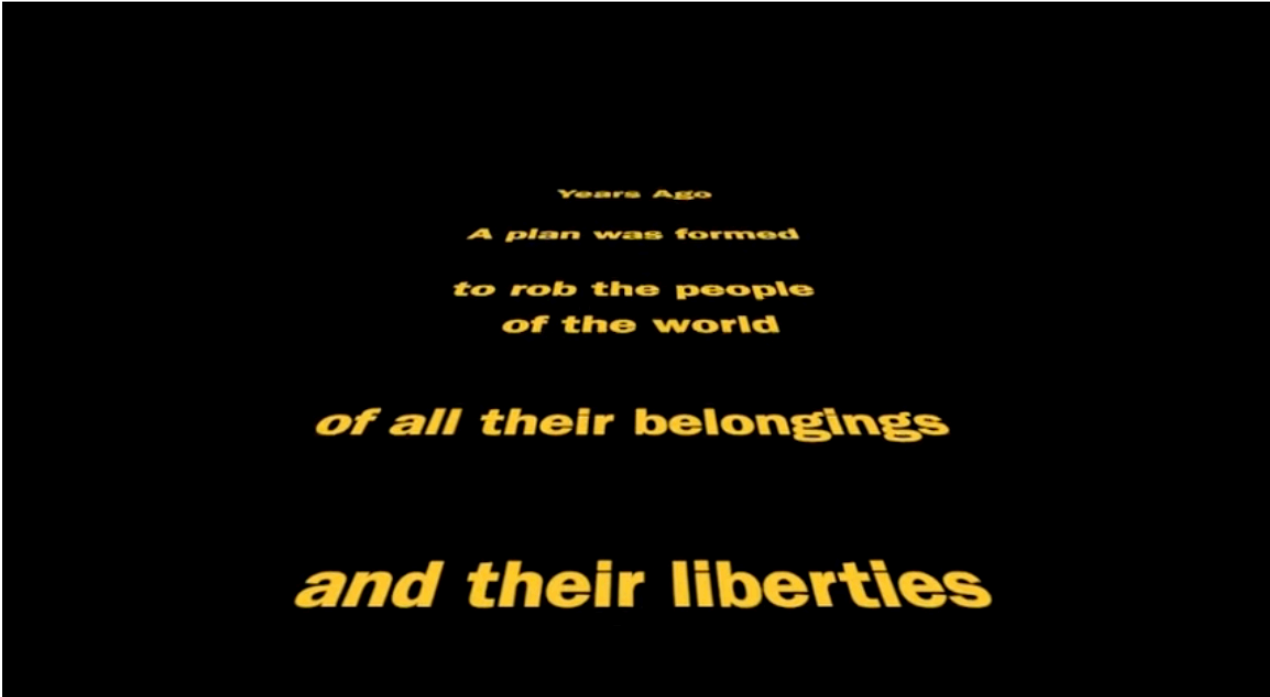
has over 15k likes. Accusing women of being mentally unstable or hysterical is a [historic trope in misogynist attacks](#).

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## Misogyny and Transphobia

**More fringe narratives illustrate a fixation on gender roles and policing sexual expression, as well as the convergence of climate disinformation with current moral panic around the trans community.** Examples of so-called "[petromasculinity](#)" (the merger of fossil fuel advocacy with toxic masculinity) can be seen in posts across [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and smaller platforms [such as Gettr](#) and Donald Trump's Truth Social.

Across platforms, posters questioned or "[joked](#)" about whether Thunberg was a biological woman, allegedly 'exposing' the teenager and her mother as secretly male. Some also claimed she was somehow related to George Soros or the Rothschild family, to add some [anti-semitic conspiracism](#) into the hetero-normativity.



**Years Ago  
A plan was formed  
to rob the people  
of the world  
of all their belongings  
and their liberties**



## Who is Greta Thunberg and who is her mum MALEna ernMAN?



Awaken

2.14K subscribers

Subscribe

83



Share



Klaus Schwab is one, too. He, Rothschilds, Soros (who never changed his name back!) even little Greta ALL LOOK ALIKE! All white, pasty, vampirish....



1



3

Oct 28, 2022, 11:23 AM



Reply



ReTruth



Like



Example of "petromasculinity" taking place on Donald Trump's Truth Social platform.

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## Gender Based and Sexual Violence

In recent days there has been a heightened intensity of videos abusing Thunberg and other climate activists that are both misogynistic and steeped in climate denialism. For example, **one [TikTok](#) offers a mashup of Greta's climate speeches with otherwise-deplatformed "manosphere" icon Andrew Tate.**

On 4chan, things were even worse. **The infamous /pol/ board - Politically Incorrect - contains many posts addressing Greta and are rife with comments viciously attacking her with ableist and misogynistic slurs, as well as violent rhetoric.**

**\*Please note: We have hyperlinked some posts below, both for transparency and to demonstrate the severity of the issue, but advise caution for those clicking through - the content therein is extreme and disturbing in nature\***

Some posts initially attacked Greta due to [her climate activism](#) or [alleged declarations against capitalism](#), but others have descended into [sexually targeting](#) the 19-year-old activist. **Similarly sexual content was found on platforms such as [Gettr](#) and [Telegram](#) alongside explicit calls to [violence](#)** - one post suggests Thunberg should be incinerated, while [on Gab](#) a "cartoon" depicts Greta as a mermaid being blown up

while sabotaging the Nord Stream pipeline.

Sexually violent threats against Thunberg are sadly not new - a graphic [sticker created in 2020](#) depicting the (then 16-year-old) activist resurfaced among comments in our dataset, spurring fake sexual scenarios, images and drawings. **It should be of growing concern that many users continue expressing their will to sexually assault the activist, publicly sharing scenarios in which they imagine their crimes to take place.**

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## One For the Road...

If content is not attacking Greta, it will often shamelessly co-opt her advocacy, using critiques of COP27 to validate pushback on negotiations and wider climate action (see yesterday's bulletin for more detail on 'wokewashing' opposition). US climate denier and founder of Climate Depot [Marc Morano](#) is attending the summit in Sharm el-Sheik with live updates on social media - last week he [appeared on OANN](#) claiming he would be "supporting Greta's message that this is a scam for greenwashing, lying and cheating."

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## UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: Africa's Gas Lobby Comes to Sharm



## OUR VERDICT:

The climate community needs to double down on support for [campaigns](#) to keep [greenwashing](#) out of ESG, as companies look for opportunities to backslide on commitments to appease critics. Because social media algorithms amplify salacious content over quality, those spreading outlandish disinformation are rewarded while those posting the (sometimes dry or technical) truth are shouted over.

## The Culture Warriors Come for ESG



NJ Ayuk ✓  
@nj\_ayuk



Oil and natural gas will be playing an ongoing role in Africa's energy mix for years to come. Renewables are expensive, unreliable and can't do the heavy lifting for now. We need to drill for Gas and Make Energy Poverty History while fighting Climate Change.

[#cop27egypt](#) [#COP27](#)



I WILL BE ATTENDING

**COP 27: 6 NOV – 18 NOV 2022**

DRILL  
BABY DRILL!

MAKING  
ENERGY  
POVERTY  
HISTORY  
BY 2030

8:25 PM · Nov 5, 2022 · Twitter for Android

**942 Retweets**   **4 Quote Tweets**   **1,896 Likes**

At COP27, #StopEACOP activists like [Patience Nabukalu are calling for](#) "climate finance & investing in a just transition to renewable energy" and not "fossil fuel projects like the East African Crude Oil Pipeline." Activists like [Vanessa Nakate are vocal](#) about how Africans are the least responsible for climate change, yet face the most devastating consequences of continued fossil fuel use.

Nonetheless, **one of the top tweets leading into the summit was [from NJ Ayuk, chair of the African Energy Chamber \(AEC\)](#)**. The AEC is an industry trade group that lobbies for increased fossil fuel use across the continent, although as [Chloé Farand reported for Climate Home on Wednesday](#) (9 November), Njock Ayuk Eyong himself was "convicted of fraud in the US for impersonating a congressman" and "was investigated for money laundering by Ghana's central bank". In connection with his oil and gas-brokering law firm, "Ayuk showed up at a branch with two bags containing \$2.5m in cash, to deposit."

Ayuk did not dispute a single claim in Farand's reporting. Instead, the **AEC published a press release "[reply](#)" in which he falsely labels Farand - a professional journalist - as "a very wealthy activist with close ties to radical group Extinction Rebellion". Ayuk also uses the well-worn technique of disinformers to "[just ask questions](#)" regarding her funding. ClimateHome discloses its [biggest sponsors on the About page](#), which Ayuk clearly visited as he references the 'whiteness' of the organisation to distract from their reporting on his fraud conviction and money laundering investigation.**

**The Pan African Communications Consultancy, APO Group, distributed and amplified the article via the [PR distribution service](#) Accesswire, which has (paid) access to several news outlets.** Headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, APO Group's founder Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard is a [member](#) of the [Advisory Board](#) of the African Energy Chamber. CAAD's research has identified **170 articles repurposing the text of their**

**press release ([link](#))**. Notably, [Yahoo](#) and Associated Press picked up the article and [published the press release](#) with the mention “Paid content from Accesswire”. The African Energy Chamber’s original release also **used the wrong photo illustration, including a picture of E3G researcher Sonia Dunlop instead of Farand** - multiple syndicated outlets followed suit, failing to update when AEC eventually corrected itself and swapped the images.

**AP**

U.S. News World News Politics Sports Entertainment Business Technology Health Science Oddities Lifestyle Photography Videos Listen

PRESS RELEASE: Paid content from Accesswire  
**Africa's Conference of the Parties (COP27) in Egypt: An Opportunity to re-think what we're asking Africa to do and Respect African Voices - African Energy Chamber**  
November 9, 2022

**As Farand notes, none of this back story has prevented the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) from affording Ayuk a prominent role and megaphone in Sharm el-Sheikh, in particular to promote gas extraction across the region.**

It also has not stopped Ayuk from promoting fossil fuels with a "[drill baby drill](#)" message. A [press release](#) and [op-ed](#) from Ayuk and the AEC even called on African countries to embrace fossil fuels and was [covered](#) or [syndicated across small, regional](#) outlets.

As with examples from Russia in [yesterday's bulletin](#), Ayuk warns that **developing clean energy instead of fossil fuels would be "green colonialism,"** this sentiment is echoed in [a Sputnik story](#) suggesting **"Russia, Africa can have common agenda in OPEC,"** which referenced an [event](#) Ayuk participated in with Russian First Deputy Energy Minister, Pavel Sorokin.

## CLIMATE CRISIS

# ‘Drill, baby, drill; gas, baby, gas’: African energy ministers solidify pro-fossil fuel position ahead of COP27



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## State Lobbying

On [November 9, the Washington Post ran an op-ed](#) by **Muhammadu Buhari, President of Nigeria**, in which he accepts that climate change is making extreme weather worse and calls for increased funding from developing nations, but also **concludes there should be more funding specifically for "gas that benefits Africa as well as the West."** Buhari also criticises the hypocrisy of European actors who call for Africa to abandon fossil fuels "and then fire up coal stations whenever Europe feels an energy pinch". In particular, he condemns those who "tell the poorest in the world that their marginal energy use will break the carbon budget – only to sign off on new domestic permits for oil and gas exploration."

Nigerian and Mozambiquan environmental leaders Nnimmo Bassey and Anabela Lemos disagree with Buhari's agenda, pointing out that while Nigeria's oil and gas exploitation has



made it "become the richest economy in [sub-Saharan Africa](#)," those benefits aren't being equitably distributed. "As of 2019, only 55 percent of Nigerians had access to electricity," [they wrote in Foreign Affairs](#), and "in 2018, Nigeria overtook India as the country with the greatest number of people living in extreme poverty." They also then point to a [study](#) showing how "Africa could phase out fossil fuels altogether and rely entirely on renewable energy."

**Bassey and Lemos preemptively addressed Ayuk and Buhari's co-opting of progressive rhetoric:**

*"The fact that Africans have not burned up as much carbon as others provides no justification for attempting to reproduce harmful modes of energy production and their related economic systems. African leaders and their partners in the West misappropriate the concept of climate justice when they invoke this narrative. They claim the moral high ground while benefiting from the deeply unequal financial flows generated by fossil fuel projects."*

This is the view of many Africans who, unlike Ayuk, Buhari and [hundreds of fossil fuel lobbyists](#), struggled for access to high-level events at COP27. [Ugandan climate activist Nyombi Morris](#), is in Sharm as an observer yet still found "the biggest challenge has been mostly on accessing the events, you can not enter inside because you do not have the party accreditation."

As Mohamed Adow from Power Shift Africa states in [Farand's piece](#): **"It's horrifying to see an African Cop used to promote fossil fuels and exacerbate the climate suffering of African people. What is especially galling is that most of the gas being proposed will be sent to be burned by Europeans."**

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## HALL OF SHAME

Some of the worst-offending or most outrageous content we have found 'in the wild' - if you want to stop this nonsense from preventing climate action, start by signing [CAAD's Open Letter for COP27](#).

Posts below tally with the **pillars of** [CAAD's proposed definition for climate mis- and disinformation](#).



**Gunther Eagleman™**   
@GuntherEagleman



Good morning ☕ to those who know climate change is a money grab hoax, just like the war in Ukraine.

12:50 PM · Nov 10, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

1,413 Retweets   29 Quote Tweets   6,128 Likes



**Michael Shellenberger**   
@ShellenbergerMD



Few things are as devastating for poor & oppressed people than a scarcity of energy & food, which is precisely what Malthusian elites like Thunberg want. She urged nations to panic. They did. The result is the worse food & energy crisis in a half-century.



**Michael Shellenberger** @ShellenbergerMD · Oct 21, 2021

Greta Thunberg said "I want you to panic" and nations did. They over-invested in unreliable weather-dependent energy sources & under-invested in reliable energy. Now, global energy shortages are forcing the poor to choose between

food & electricity

[Show this thread](#)

## recovery as winter approaches

By DAVID McHUGH, COLLEEN BARRY, JOE McDONALD and TATIANA POLLASTRI  
October 19, 2021



and shutting down factories in China. The poor in Brazil are choosing between paying for food or electricity. German corn and wheat farmers can't find fertilizer, made using natural gas. And fears are rising that Europe will have to ration electricity if it's a cold winter.

The world is gripped by an energy crunch — a fierce squeeze on some of the key markets for natural gas, oil and other fuels that keep the global economy running and the lights and heat on in homes. Heading into winter, that has meant higher utility bills, more expensive products and growing concern about how energy-consuming Europe and China will recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

11:09 PM · Nov 1, 2022 · Twitter Web App

424 Retweets 19 Quote Tweets 2,600 Likes

Much of the intel in this bulletin was powered by [Beam](#) - an award-winning system developed by CASM Technology and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue to track and confront information threats online. The bespoke climate dashboards used by CAAD collate, enrich, and visualise data from around 3000 actors across climate denial, political, media, industry, influencer and conspiracy ecosystems online, as well as over 250 media outlets worldwide. The system also analyses millions of posts across 4Chan, Facebook, Instagram, MediaCloud, Reddit, Telegram, Twitter and YouTube to capture content broadly related to COP27, as well as discussions around specific policy areas such as Loss and Damage. Complementary tools from Dewey Square Group, [CARDS](#), Graphika and the University of Exeter have provided invaluable analysis in tandem.



## Media Requests

If you are a media outlet or a journalist with a data request, or in need of a spokesperson, please feel free to get in contact with our team at [contact@caad.info](mailto:contact@caad.info), who will do their best to assist with any requests.



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