Climate Conversation Trends

**Key Findings**

- There was an increasing trend in the volume of tweets featuring climate change denial terms between December 2021 and February 2023.

- Starting around July 2022, the average number of tweets per week featuring climate change denial terms increased to approximately ~110k tweets per week. That compares to an average of ~30k tweets per week between December 2021 and June 2022.
  - We were not able to establish the exact cause of this increase, but note that the initial spike (week of July 17, 2022) happened shortly before the vote on President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act on Aug. 16, 2022. Some of the most popular tweets featuring climate change denial terms in the weeks leading up to the vote were from accounts criticizing the act.
  - Around October 2022, we also identified multiple tweets featuring climate change denial terms from accounts celebrating Elon Musk’s takeover of Twitter and the platform’s reportedly reduced moderation of climate change denial content.

- The increase in the volume of tweets was not accompanied by an increase in engagement (retweets and likes). For the majority of the collection period, engagement levels remained below 20k interactions, with an average of 10k interactions.
Climate Conversation Trends

Methodology

● We surfaced tweets containing climate change denial terms using the following search query: ((climate OR "global warming" OR agw OR ESG OR renewable* OR solar OR wind) AND (unreliable OR fake OR deception OR fearmongering OR conspiracy OR scam OR hysteria OR alarmist* OR alarmism OR panic OR hoax OR fraud)) OR (#chemtrails OR #geoengineering OR #weathercontrol OR #forcedclimatechange OR #climateconspiracy OR #globalwarmingfraud OR #climatelockdowns OR #climatescam OR #noclimateemergency OR #climatefraud OR #climatecult OR #climatehoax OR #globalcooling) OR ("climate lockdowns")

● Summary data
  ○ Approximately 4.8 million tweets
  ○ Average engagement of 10k likes and retweets
  ○ Retweets make up 82.4% of total tweets

● Note: The query also returned a limited number of tweets that criticized climate change denial claims but featured one or more of the climate change denial terms above. Based on a statistically significant random sample, we estimate that these make up less than 12% of total tweets and do not change the overall trends we observed.
Tweets feat. Climate Change Denial Terms - Volume and Average Engagement by Week

- **A video circulated online of a former Weather Channel founder claiming “climate change is baloney”**
- **GOP politicians framed Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act as addressing “a FAKE ‘Climate Emergency’” and a “green scam”**
- **Accounts posted “censorship test” tweets to test content moderation systems, including climate denial claims, following Elon Musk’s Twitter takeover**
- **A tweet by a highly-followed user claiming Twitter tried to censor his post exposing the “lying nature of climate alarmism,” and posts claiming Greta Thunberg’s arrest at a coal mine protest was staged**
- **A tweet about government corruption, including the “climate scam,” and another tweet about climate lockdown conspiracy theories**
- **Tweets claiming “conspiracy theories” came true, while “climate hoax” predictions did not**
- **Following a train derailment and chemical spill in Ohio, accounts claimed that environmentalists are ignoring a “real” environmental crisis**
- **A tweet from a conservative commentator criticizing “Biden and his team of green new scam virtue signalers”**
- **A tweet by Elon Musk, in which he says “ESG is a scam”**
- **A “warning” about climate lockdowns and other alleged government restrictions**