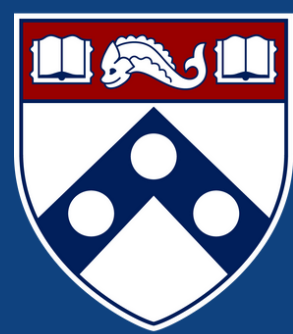


Debunking Misconceptions & Conspiracy  
Theories About Climate Change: A Project of  
the Penn Climate Communication Class (2024)

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Annenberg  
PUBLIC POLICY CENTER  
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# Debunking Misconceptions & Conspiracy Theories About Climate Change: A Project of the Penn Climate Communication Class (2024)

## Misconceptions

1. Individuals cannot make a meaningful difference
2. It's too late to act
3. Climate science knowledge is unreliable
4. Solar and wind power are unacceptably costly and unreliable
5. Climate change solutions cause problems for other parts of the ecosystem
6. Climate change is beneficial

## Conspiracy theories

1. The High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP) is manipulating weather for political ends
2. 15-minute cities are a plot by global elites to create locked-down Great Reset prison cities
3. Jewish space lasers (not climate change) are responsible for the California wildfires
4. To sustain their false claims about water scarcity and drought, climate advocates deny the existence of self-generating primary water
5. The Deep State/U.N. are using climate change rhetoric to hijack religion to create a socialist New World Order
6. Agenda 2030 is a globalist conspiracy to create a New World Order

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## Misconceptions

### *Claim 1: Individuals cannot make a meaningful difference*

E.g., "[Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals](#)"

**Rebuttal:** [When individuals organize their communities to fight for climate action, these efforts can compound to create progress.](#)

### *Claim 2: It's too late to act*

E.g., "[FACT: We are too late to stop the hell climate change will unleash](#)"

**Rebuttal:** [Scientists agree that it's not too late; we have technology and solutions available now to make a difference - but we must act now.](#)

### *Claim 3: Climate science knowledge is unreliable*

E.g., "[Paper co-authored by Dr. Christy on climate model warming bias is a top 10 download](#)"

**Rebuttal:** [Science is iterative but over time becomes more reliable. Climate science projections have proven accurate.](#)

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## Misconceptions

### **Claim 4: Solar and wind power are unacceptably costly and unreliable**

E.g., [Texas Gov. Greg Abbott blamed a power grid failure on renewables \(wind & solar\)](#)

**Rebuttal:** [Renewable energy makes power grids more, not less reliable, and new energy storage tools as well as diversification of technology and geography further improve reliability.](#)

### **Claim 5: Climate change solutions cause problems for other parts of the ecosystem**

E.g., [Wind farm contractors acknowledge turbines harm dolphins, whales](#)

**Rebuttal:** [Climate change solutions, such as wind farms at sea, are technologically feasible and their efficacy is established and beneficial to marine life.](#)

### **Claim 6: Climate change is beneficial**

E.g., [Ron Johnson Says Climate Change Is 'Beneficial'](#)

**Rebuttal:** [While climate change may yield some benefits, these benefits are greatly outweighed by the economic, health-related, political, and ecological consequences](#)

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## Conspiracy theories

**Theory 1: The High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP) is manipulating weather for political ends**

E.g., [the Deep State is "using HAARP to rig the Iowa Caucus" in 2024 to depress the vote of supporters of Donald Trump](#)

**Rebuttal:** *Scientific convergent evidence demonstrates that greenhouse gas emissions affect the climate; [the HAARP transmitters interventions in the ionosphere are incapable of doing so.](#)*

**Theory 2: 15-minute cities are a plot by global elites to create locked-down Great Reset prison cities**

E.g., ["Climate Change Lockdowns disguised as 15 Minute Cities" are "creating a digital open-air prison"](#)

**Rebuttal:** *15-minute cities [have not experienced lockdowns](#) but instead are [a convenient and equitable way to create climate friendly access to healthcare, schools, grocery stores, jobs and greenspace.](#)*



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## Conspiracy theories

**Theory 3: Jewish space lasers (not climate change) are responsible for the California wildfires**

E.g., [Marjorie Taylor Greene penned conspiracy theory that a laser beam from space started deadly 2018 California wildfire](#)

**Rebuttal:** *The space lasers that do exist are used only to [take precise measurements](#); they do not have the capacity to manipulate weather events. More heat in the atmosphere leads to more energy- strengthening the power of weather events like wildfires, [allowing these systems to become more extreme](#).*

**Theory 4: To sustain their false claims about water scarcity and drought, climate advocates deny the existence of self-generating primary water**

E.g., [“What is primary water and how is it different from other water sources?”](#)

**Rebuttal:** *Although once considered a plausible [scientific hypothesis](#), geologists have found [no evidence](#) of the existence of self-generating primary water, and theorists are instead mislabelling [groundwater and aquifers](#).*

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## Conspiracy theories

**Theory 5: The Deep State/U.N. are using climate change rhetoric to hijack religion to create a socialist New World Order**

E.g., ["Occult UN Forces Seek to Hijack Religion for Globalism"](#)

**Rebuttal:** *Well-respected religious leaders, including the Pope, support combatting global climate change.*

**Theory 6: Agenda 2030 is a globalist conspiracy to create a New World Order**

E.g., ["UN's Agenda 2030 is Every Totalitarian's Dream"](#)

**Rebuttal:** [Agenda 2030, the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) are not a binding contract, but aspirational targets tied to documentable need \(as demonstrated by the Obama administration's commitment, the Trump Administration's Abandonment, and the Biden Administration's re-commitment\).](#)