

# Twitter ranks worst in climate change misinformation report

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A report ranking climate change misinformation gave Twitter (recently rebranded as X) only a single point out of a 21-point scorecard when assessing policies aimed at reducing inaccurate information – the worst out of five major tech platforms. The Climate of Misinformation report by Climate Action Against Disinformation looked at Meta, Pinterest, YouTube, TikTok and Twitter for their content moderation policies and efforts to mitigate inaccurate information such as climate denialism. The group, which is made up of dozens of international climate and anti-disinformation organizations including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, released the report to draw attention towards climate misinformation on major platforms and makes the claim that big tech has become a “complicit actor” in accelerating the spread of climate denial. Twitter’s rank in the survey was because it failed to meet almost any of the organization’s criteria for climate misinformation policies, which ranged from having clear and publicly available information on climate science to having clearly articulated policies on what actions the company will take against the spread of misinformation. The report noted that billionaire tech mogul Elon Musk’s purchase of the company last year added to the confusion over how policies are enforced and how the company makes content decisions. “Elon Musk’s acquisition of the company has created uncertainty about which policies are still standing and which are not,” the report stated. Twitter received its only point in the report for fulfilling one of the researchers’ requirements that platforms have an easily accessible and readable privacy policy. Twitter was also the only platform to lack a clear reporting process for flagging harmful or misleading content for higher review. Tech platforms have long struggled with creating effective or coherent policies on content moderation, while events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2020 US presidential election resulted in swaths of misinformation circulating online. Amid conservative backlash and labor cuts in the tech industry, many companies have also deprioritized content moderation and opened the door to potential surges in misinformation on their platforms. Although the other platforms fared better, none ranked especially high on the report’s scale – Pinterest scored highest with 12 points out of a possible 21. Issues ranged from a lack of clear definitions of what constituted climate misinformation, failure to enforce existing policies in a transparent way and a lack of proof that companies apply these policies equally across different languages. None of the companies release public reports on how their algorithmic changes affect climate misinformation, according to the report. The organization’s authors advocate for a number of changes to big tech’s policies, including establishing clear guidelines on climate and updating privacy policies to show when private data is being sold to advertisers that could be linked to the fossil fuel industry. Although anti-misinformation groups such as Climate Action Against Disinformation have repeatedly advocated for big tech to make investments in

their content moderation, the trend in the past year has often been the opposite. Musk has hollowed out Twitter's moderation capabilities while reversing policies to allow for the targeting of transgender people as well as the spread of anti-vaccine falsehoods. YouTube also reversed its policy to allow for election denialism, while Instagram allowed anti-vaccine activist Robert F Kennedy Jr back onto its platform.