
Science & Technology Briefs

EU ‘Disinformation Police’ In Witch Hunt Against Scientists

The European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) is part of the same slime mold as the (latent) U.S. Disinformation Governance Board. EDMO’s spawn can be found in all 27 EU member countries, one of which, the Italian Digital Media Observatory (IDMO), produced an outrageous media spot in May against so-called “climate fake news,” which the Italian national RAI network broadcasted daily. Full disclosure: RAI is among the initiators of IDMO, together with the GEDI newspaper chain, the LUISS private university, and others.

The spot claims that all critics of climate emergency are puppets of the oil industry. In a rapid succession of screenshots, the petition titled, “There Is No Climate Emergency,” launched in 2019 by 500 scientists, including eminent Italians, and now with over 1,000 signers, is shown, with a background voice saying, “The battle to clean out the web has just begun.”

Prof. Franco Battaglia, who initiated the petition and authored a book titled with the title of the petition, exposed the lies of the IDMO media spot in a recent article in the Italian daily *La Verità*. He pointed out, among other things, that the spot shows scientists who are no longer alive and cannot defend themselves, but it dishonestly does not give the names of the 500 who signed his petition.

“Let us name a few names,” Battaglia wrote. “Ivar Giaever, first signer and Nobel Physics Prize winner; Antonino Zichichi; Franco Prodi.” You

cannot exclude that any of the signers have worked for the oil industry, “But none of them has received money in exchange for a signature under that letter [petition] to the UN. The IDMO spot authors claim they want to discuss, which is questionable, since they overtly state they want to ‘remove from the web’ those 1,000 scientists. The three IDMO authors are graduates in economics, literature and journalism: they scarcely have anything to teach on the issues they cover.”

In July Battaglia interviewed Prof. Richard Lindzen, a former professor of meteorology at MIT with a degree in physics from Harvard, and lead author of the 2001 Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, who said the IPCC doesn’t listen to scientists but to politicians:

“IPCC opinions are largely the product of government members of that committee and not the product of its scientific component. The latter has a minor role in drafting the summaries that are then distributed to the media and to politicians.” Lindzen is a member of the CO₂ Coalition, which “is engaged in educating the public on the importance of CO₂ for life. Reducing CO₂ by 60% would mean the death of animal life by starvation. The idea that CO₂ is the leverage for controlling the climate system, a highly complex system, is almost absurd,” Lindzen says.

“Independently from what one believes on climate behavior, there is no basis to consider the CO₂ increase as an existential threat. However, if a political movement succeeds in convincing the people that we are facing an existential threat, they hope to achieve unlimited power, including power in the crucial energy sector. This

power allows a few individuals to make a lot of money, creating many difficulties for the common people.” The [interview](#) with Lindzen was published July 21 in *La Verità*.

Genes That Make Rice Plants More Heat Resistant

Rice is the world’s third-most produced crop behind corn (maize) and wheat. According to a [study](#) published June 16 in the journal *Science*, researchers from the Shanghai Institute of Plant Physiology and Ecology have discovered two genes in the rice plant that can be exploited to make it more heat resistant, providing a new way to breed highly thermo-tolerant crops.

The scientists discovered a mechanism by which the rice plant’s cell membrane senses external heat-stress signals before communicating with chloroplasts. Too much heat can damage these membranes, and overlong exposure can cause a crop to fail. The new species is heat tolerant to 38° Centigrade (100.4°F) without crop failure, while the output of normal species would be reduced above 35°C. The newly-found genes might also be used in other plants, including wheat, corn, beans, and vegetables.

EPA’s Atrazine Ban Would Contribute to Worldwide Food Shortages

Corn is the world’s most produced agricultural crop. In just seven decades, America’s conventional (non-organic) farmers increased per-acre corn yields

by an incredible 500%—while using steadily less water, fuel, fertilizer and pesticides—feeding millions more people. Among the many reasons for such a miracle is their ability to control weeds that would otherwise steal moisture and nutrients from this vital food for man and beast, now unfortunately also diverted to make ethanol.

Long-lasting herbicides both control weeds, but also figure in soil management. They are integral to no-till farming, which helps farmers save costly tractor fuel and avoid breaking up soils—thereby reducing erosion, retaining soil moisture, and safeguarding soil organisms. In the U.S., the second most widely used herbicide is atrazine (a chlorinated triazine systemic herbicide), used on 65 million acres of corn, sorghum, and sugar cane, to control invasive and hard-to-kill weeds impervious to other herbicides. It is also used on millions of acres of golf courses, lawns and highway medians nationwide. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has periodically reviewed atrazine science and found it safe for people, animals and the environment.

Enter the Center for Biological Diversity and the Pesticide Action Network—two fanatically Malthusian organizations that oppose fossil fuels, genetically engineered crops, and man-made fertilizers and insecticides. They often use sue-and-settle lawsuits, in which the imputation of even “likely” harm to even one member of a species is enough to force a ban on that pesticide or herbicide. In 2016, the EPA proposed, but ultimately rejected, a 3.4 ppb (parts per billion) limit, but in June 2022 it said it is [re-evaluating](#) Atrazine.

Any major restriction on using atrazine-based herbicides will exacerbate international grain shortages,

increase hunger, and add to soaring fuel and fertilizer prices. A new EPA edict may violate legal standards recently articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court in *West Virginia v. EPA*, regarding the agency’s asserted authority to regulate power plants in the name of “climate change”—the court used precisely these terms to reject EPA’s arrogation of authority.

Indifference to cuts in agriculture, in the midst of growing hunger worldwide, is inexcusable. Those wishing to weigh in on the proposed ruling can read it and [submit comments](#) at Regulations.gov until Sept. 6.

Webb Telescope Gathering Data on Potentially Habitable Planets

From its L2 Lagrange Point orbit 1.5 million kilometers from Earth, the new James Webb Space Telescope can study a star with potentially habitable planets as no previous instrument has been able to do. On July 18, the Webb released exciting data on the red dwarf sun, TRAPPIST-1, which has potentially habitable planets around it. The data on the sun (not its planets) was then rendered as [images](#) by a citizen scientist.

Discovered in 2020, TRAPPIST-1 is in the constellation Aquarius, in our galaxy. It is a mere 39 light years from Earth and has a system of seven orbiting, rocky planets with sizes and masses similar to Earth, three of which are considered to be in the “habitable zone”—having conditions in which liquid water could exist. Webb’s first task will be to detect whether these planets have atmospheres. Then it will search for the presence of carbon dioxide, water vapor, and ozone.

Astronomers and citizen scientists around planet Earth are eagerly awaiting what Webb will discover

next, and what could be the next step in answering mankind’s old question, “Are we alone?”

The World Loses Two Leading Scientists

Dr. Bernard Bigot: A May 14 [press release](#) from the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), the largest of the magnetic confinement experiments to develop thermonuclear fusion, announced the death that day of Dr. Bernard Bigot, the organization’s Director-General.

Dr. Bigot honored the Schiller Institute by presenting his views on the prospects for fusion energy for the world, as a participant to the Institute’s Sept. 5-6, 2021 international online conference, “War Drive Towards Armageddon—Or a New Paradigm Among Sovereign Nations United by the Common Aims of Mankind?” Dr. Bigot [addressed](#) the second panel on “The Role of Science in Creating Mankind’s Future.”

Eugene Parker: The astrophysicist for whom the Parker Solar Probe is named, died March 15 at the age of 94.

A brilliant scientist and true pioneer, Parker coined the term “solar wind” to describe the plasma of charged particles constantly ejected in all directions by the Sun. In 1957, he wrote a paper hypothesizing that the superheated corona of the Sun should, in theory, create a stream of charged particles leaving the Sun’s surface at high speed. Many of his associates scoffed at the idea, recommending that he should “go back to the library and read up on the subject,” before putting forward such “nonsense.”

See the [obituary](#) on Space.com. For the Parker Solar Probe, see the [article](#) by Janet G. West, “The Parker Solar Probe: Rendezvous with Our Exuberant Sun,” in *EIR*, Vol. 45, No. 2, Nov. 2, 2018, pp. 18-23.