

Fw: Facebook's commitment to fight climate change

[REDACTED]

From: Nick Clegg [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 1:22 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Facebook's commitment to fight climate change

Dear Friends of the Earth and other signatories,

Thank you for reaching out. I am writing on behalf of Mark Zuckerberg in response to your letter dated July 10.

Climate change is an urgent threat to all of us and I want to reassure you that Facebook is absolutely committed to fighting it. We believe that tackling climate change is something we must do as a global community, and that demands immediate action. We also recognize that there are efforts to undermine, and otherwise stand in the way of advances being made in climate science. We know the responsibility we have both as a platform to connect people to information and as a global company that feels passionately about climate action.

Our approach to climate change has two strands: the action we take as a company to reduce emissions and encourage sustainability; and our approach to climate misinformation posted on our platform.

As a company we're taking action to reduce our impact through an aggressive emission reduction target, advance sustainability throughout our supply chain, and partner with others to drive climate action and solutions around the world. We are planning to make further, even more ambitious announcements related to these areas in the coming months. We remain committed to fulfilling the spirit of the Paris Agreement through our support of the **We Are Still In** coalition and ramping up our own efforts. We have set a goal to reduce our operational greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent by the end of 2020 compared to 2017 levels. In 2019, Facebook reduced greenhouse gas emissions 59 percent compared to our base year of 2017—equivalent to 364,000 metric tons of CO₂e or nearly 79,000 passenger cars taken off the road for one year. You can read more in our [2019 sustainability report](#).

On content, I want to confirm that our independent third-party fact-checking partners **do** review and rate climate misinformation. There has never been a prohibition against them doing so. In fact it's one of the reasons why we have a fact-checking partner specifically dedicated to reviewing science content, and many of the other partners in our network of over 70 global fact-checking organizations rate this content as well. As with all types of claims debunked by our partners, we reduce the distribution of these posts in News Feed and apply a warning label on top of these

posts both on Facebook and Instagram so people understand that the content has been rated and what the ratings mean.

I want to specifically address the concerns you raise with additional clarifying points on our misinformation approach:

- o **Opinion Content.** It has long been our guidance to independent fact-checkers that clear opinion content is not subject to fact-checking on Facebook. However, when someone presents content that is based on underlying false information as opinion – even if it’s an opinion or editorial piece in the media – it is still eligible for fact-checking. If a publisher wants to dispute a fact-check rating, they can do so directly with the fact-checker. We provide this guidance to fact-checkers in our public Help Center, which we recently updated to help fact-checkers exercise their judgment as to whether a piece of content is an attempt to mask false information under the guise of opinion: <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/182222309230722>.
- o **Fact-checker Certification.** All of our third-party fact-checking partners are certified through a non-partisan International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) and follow IFCN’s Code of Principles. The IFCN’s Code of Principles includes a series of commitments that organizations must adhere to in order to promote excellence in fact-checking: nonpartisanship and fairness; transparency of sources; transparency of funding and organization; transparency of methodology; open and honest corrections policy. Since we don't think it's appropriate for us to be the arbiters of truth, we rely on the International Fact-Checking Network to set guidelines for these high standards.
- o **The Oversight Board.** The Oversight Board is an independent entity that is setting the timeline on which it will be working to hear its first cases; however we are doing everything we can to support them to begin their work as soon as possible. Facebook recognizes the gravity of topics like climate science, which is why we - and the board - are taking time to ensure that the right processes are in place to allow for the long term success and impact of the board.

Finally, I want to assure you that we are reviewing our policies, enforcement, and products with a specific focus on climate information. I am including your feedback in those discussions, which involve people from all across our company. We have also launched the [Climate Conversation Map](#) as a means to accelerate understanding and action on climate and further our partnerships with NGOs and researchers. Those interested in access can email us at climateconvomaps@fb.com.

If we are going to rise to this enormous challenge, it will take an unprecedented level of creativity, political will and global cooperation. I hope that by continuing to work together positively and productively we might be able to make a real difference.

Yours Sincerely,

Nick Clegg
VP, Global Affairs and Communications
Facebook