

SGR Responsible Science Conference 2026

OFFICIAL DISINFORMATION! CAN SCIENCE OVERCOME POLITICAL SPIN, SILENCE AND CORPORATE GREENWASH?

Wednesday 14th October, 16.00-18.00 (BST) on Zoom

Register for a free ticket (donations welcome!) at: www.sgr.org.uk/events/

Programme

4.00 - 4.05 Welcome and introduction
Andrew Simms, SGR

4.05 - 4.10 **Participants' poll #1**

4.10 - 5.10 **Presentations**

Attacks on science

Dr Jules Barbati-Dajches, Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists

Fighting misinformation - the use of law

Johnny White, Client Earth

Clearing PR Pollution: reporting on the oil and gas industry and their enablers

Ellen Ormesher, DeSmog

From research to marketing: how major corporations distort our worldview

Dr Stuart Parkinson, SGR

5.10 - 5.40 **Questions to the speakers and discussion**

5.40 - 5.55 **Participants' poll #2 and suggestions for action**

5.55 - 6.00 Closing remarks

6.15 - 6.45 **AGM (SGR members only)**

ATTACKS ON SCIENCE

Dr Jules Barbati-Dajches, Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists

With unprecedented attacks in the United States on science and the public's access to information on global heating, pollution and environmental degradation, the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists was formed to fight back against these threats to achieving a just and liveable society. It works to make sure that government decisions are informed by the best available science and evidence, free from political interference, and responsive to diverse community voices. In response to the politicisation of science, it also mobilises science and scientists to strengthen US democracy by working for more fair and inclusive elections and processes of governance. Jules talks about their and the Center's work to defend and promote science for public benefit, for example in terms of tackling pollution, public health, and participation in government decision-making, and the political fairness it needs to do its job.

***Dr Jules Barbati-Dajches** Jules Barbati-Dajches is an analyst for the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists. In their role, Dr. Barbati-Dajches conducts research and analyses to show the ways in which science and equity are politicized and the impacts of such politicization. Their research supports advocacy campaigns that show the necessity of protecting independent science to produce reliable data and evidence-informed policy. As one example, Jules led the development of UCS's Attacks on Science Tracker, an analytical platform that documents the second Trump administration's interference in federal science. Prior to joining UCS, they worked in numerous research, teaching, and messaging capacities. Their past research examines how perceptions and behaviors are influenced by messaging factors (e.g., source, format, medium), with a focus on social inequities and their impact on minoritized groups. Dr. Barbati-Dajches' research has been published in several peer-reviewed journals, including Mass Communication and Society, Health Communication, Communication Studies, and Vaccine. Jules received their PhD in communication from the University of Arizona, and their MA and BA in communication from the University of Oklahoma.*

FIGHTING MISINFORMATION - THE USE OF LAW

Johnny White, Client Earth

ClientEarth works globally using the law to protect nature and the people who depend on it. We work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders towards system change in favour of real sustainability promoting transparency, integrity and accountability in corporations and governments. This has included confronting disinformation, greenwash and mismanagement of environmental risks, from taking legal action against oil companies like Shell and TotalEnergies, to tackling misleading narratives within the major plastic users, Coca-Cola, Nestle and Danone. Johnny White talks about the challenges and opportunities of using the law to take on powerful multinational corporates.



***Johnny White** leads ClientEarth's Accountable Corporations team. His team uses the law to hold businesses to account for their contributions to the climate, toxic pollution and plastic crises. Among other things, they have successfully used the legal system to fight greenwashing and expose climate obstructionism, securing legal victories and concessions from many of the world's largest companies, including TotalEnergies, Coca-Cola and KLM. Prior to joining ClientEarth in 2020, Johnny worked at the law firm Clifford Chance, specialising in high-value commercial and financial disputes and international human rights law.*

CLEARING PR POLLUTION: REPORTING ON THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY AND THEIR ENABLERS

Ellen Ormesher, DeSmog

The mainstream media is increasingly dominated by conservative, right-wing actors antagonistic towards taking action to prevent climate breakdown. At the same, independent media organisations are laying off climate reporters right when we need informed and courageous climate reporting the most. For 20 years, DeSmog has been an essential resource in the fight against climate mis-and-disinformation, offering independent journalism that reveals the people, companies, and organisations blocking climate action. Investigative reporter Ellen Ormesher will map out the current landscape of bad actors, from fossil fuel companies to the advertising and PR firms helping to burnish their reputations. She'll discuss how their tactics have shifted, and what goes into exposing disinformation that harms climate goals and undermines democracy.



***Ellen Ormesher** covers how the energy industry uses PR, advertising, and lobbying to delay a just transition. She has exposed lobbying against fossil fuel advertising bans, and oil and gas-funded education programmes in communities facing the costs of extraction. Her reporting has featured in *The Guardian*, *The Ecologist*, and E24. Ellen was the Chartered Institute of Journalists' Young Environmental Reporter of the Year in 2026, and a SEAL Environmental Journalist of the Year in 2024.*

FROM RESEARCH TO MARKETING: HOW MAJOR CORPORATIONS DISTORT OUR WORLDVIEW

Dr Stuart Parkinson, Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR)

Large corporations are hugely powerful in our society. They supply goods and services upon which our everyday lives depend. They are dominant funders of scientific research and development. They have a major influence on our education system, news reporting, and politics. Their marketing campaigns direct our consumption patterns. At every step, they shape our thinking about what is reliable information and what is 'reasonable'. This presentation will draw on SGR's research to give examples of major problem areas – including fossil fuel sponsorship of sport, arms industry involvement in science education, misrepresentation of climate targets, and AI-related misinformation. We will then discuss some key ways in which the situation can be changed.



***Dr Stuart Parkinson** is Executive Director of SGR, a post he has held for 23 years, where he has co-ordinated research, education and campaigning on ethical issues across science and technology. He holds a PhD in climate change science and a bachelor's degree in physics and engineering from Lancaster University. He has also worked in academia, industry, and the environmental sector. He has authored numerous reports, academic papers, and popular science articles, on issues including climate science and policy, corporate and military involvement in science, and the carbon footprint of sport.*
