

“A crucial turning point”



Blue solar photovoltaic panels neatly arranged in Yuncheng City, China. Photo: Getty Images.

October media coverage of climate change or global warming in newspapers around the globe decreased 10% from September 2025. Moreover, coverage in October 2025 decreased 23% from October 2024 levels.

Figure 1 shows trends in newspaper media coverage at the global scale - organized into seven geographical regions around the world - from January 2004 through October 2025. International wire services stories in October 2025 were down 7% from September 2025 as

2004–2025 World Newspaper Coverage of Climate Change or Global Warming

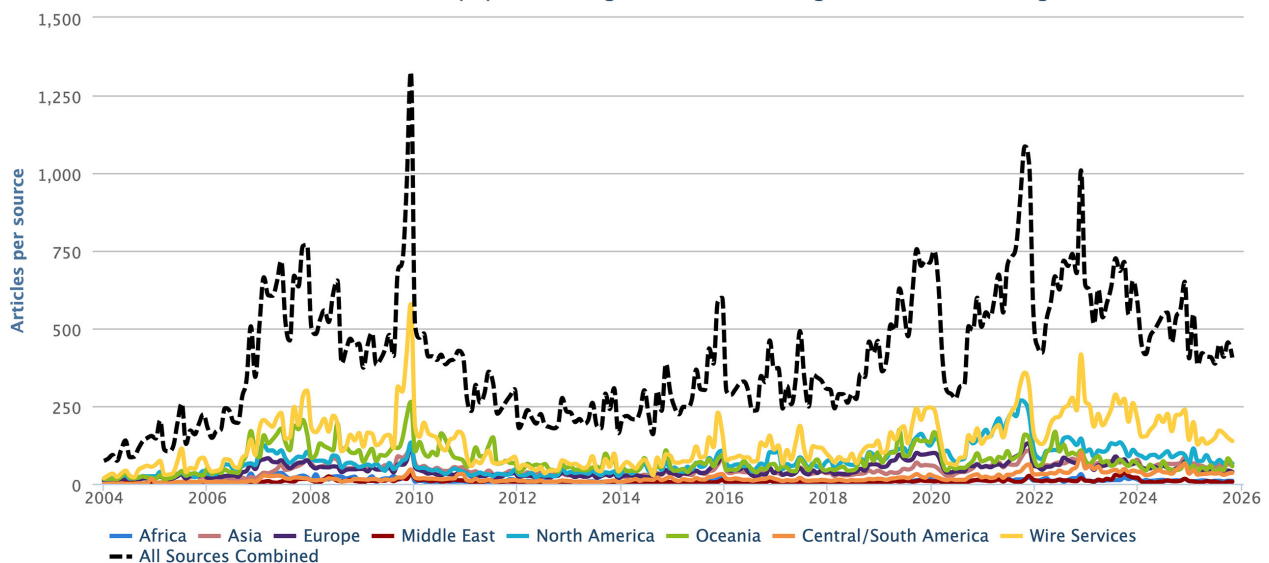


Figure 1. Newspaper media coverage of climate change or global warming in print sources in seven different regions around the world, from January 2004 through October 2025.

2000–2025 Indian Newspaper Coverage of Climate Change or Global Warming

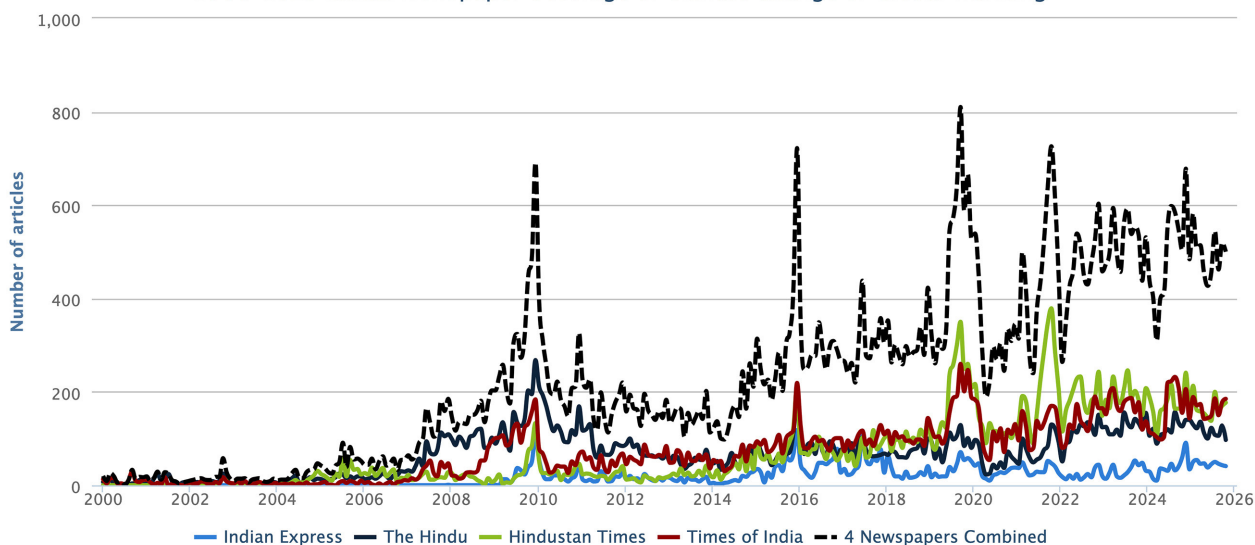


Figure 2. Indian print media coverage – in *The Indian Express*, *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Times of India* – of climate change or global warming from January 2000 through October 2025.

well as down 38% from October 2024. For yet another month in 2025, the quantity of media coverage struggles to keep pace with the pace of a changing climate.

At the regional level, October 2025 coverage decreased in all regions compared to September 2025 except in Latin America, where coverage increased 8%, and in Africa, where coverage remained level: North America (-8%), Asia (-9%), the European Union (EU) (-9%), the Middle East (-11), and Oceania (-31%) compared to September 2025. As an example at the country level (where we provide 15 country profiles around the world in 14 different languages overall), coverage in Indian print newspapers – *The Indian Express*, *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Times of India* – dropped nearly 4% from the previous month of September 2025 and dropped 1% from October 2024 (Figure 2).

Turning to the content of news coverage, in October there were many media stories relating to **ecological** and **meteorological** dimensions of climate change or global warming. To illustrate, connections were made between hurricane Melissa and climate change in media accounts in mid- to late- October. For example, *El País* journalist **María Mónica Monsalves** wrote, “since Hurricane Melissa intensified from a Category 1 to a Category 5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale in just 48 hours last Monday, the question

of how much climate change might have contributed to its growth became unavoidable. Even before making landfall in Jamaica last Tuesday, meteorologists were already warning that it was the third most intense hurricane ever recorded in the Caribbean, after Wilma (2005) and Gilbert (1988). In the following days, it devastated several Caribbean islands, leaving at least 50 dead and causing billions of dollars in damage. With a general increase in ocean surface temperatures, which broke records in 2024, it is almost impossible that storms arising under the current climate emergency will not be strengthened and intensified by this phenomenon (...) “Human-caused climate change clearly made Hurricane Melissa stronger and more destructive,” said Ralf Toumi, director of the Institute, in a statement. “These storms will be even more devastating in the future if we continue to overheat the planet by burning fossil fuels,” he added (...) The cyclone is estimated to cause between \$7 billion and \$20 billion in losses. “It’s a reminder of how climate injustice works,” says one of the authors”. As a second example, **Washington Post** correspondents **Ben Noll, Ruby Mellen, Brady Dennis and Douglas MacMillan** reported, “A slow, lumbering storm like Melissa is cause for great concern. “In many cases, it’s a worst-case kind of scenario,” said Jeff Masters, a meteorologist who writes on climate change and weather for Yale Climate Connections and for years served with

MECCO MONTHLY SUMMARIES

ISSUE 106, OCTOBER 2025



NOAA's Hurricane Hunters. A storm that inches along can subject places in its path to longer stretches of torrential rainfall, sustained winds and heightened storm surge. With Melissa, Masters said, he worries about the potential rainfall most of all...Jim Kossin, a retired NOAA climate scientist and hurricane expert, said that while it is clear climate change is making the strongest storms even stronger, researchers are continuing to investigate whether the planetary changes are also leading to more slow-moving storms that dump huge amounts of rain". As a third example, **Guardian journalists Natricia Duncan, Anthony Lugg, Tom Phillips and Oliver Holmes added**, "Melissa is so unusually strong that the US military said it had moved its forces – likely to be ships and aircraft – in the vicinity of the storm to safer areas. Climate scientists have said the intensification of Hurricane Melissa – with winds doubling from 70mph to 140mph in just a day – is probably a symptom of the

rapid heating of the world's oceans, part of the human-driven climate crisis".

Next, many October 2025 media stories featured several **scientific** themes in news accounts. To illustrate, new research about warming in the Antarctic generated news. For example, **Daily Mail (UK) reporter Xantha Leatham wrote**, "When it comes to the fight against climate change, the Southern Ocean is on our side. For around 200 years it has acted as a major buffer against global warming by absorbing harmful carbon dioxide. But the ocean around Antarctica is building up a colossal 'burp' that could trigger an increase in global temperatures, experts have warned. Rather than a Homer Simpson-esque belch, this 'burp' signifies an 'abrupt discharge of heat' that could take place over decades. Over time, deep currents bring warm water – which has gradually been heating up over centuries – to the surface of the ocean,



Figure 3. Examples of newspaper front pages covering Hurricane Melissa while making connections with climate change in October 2025.

where it directly reheats the atmosphere. This would cause temperatures to increase, ice sheets to melt, sea levels to rise and reverse decades of climate change progress, the researchers cautioned. And the impact could be comparable to global warming caused by humans, they said”.

News of record carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels generated media attention. For example, [La Vanguardia](#) journalist [Antonio Cerrillo](#) noted, “between 2023 and 2024, the global average concentration of CO₂ increased by 3.5 ppm, the largest increase since modern measurements began in 1957. In 2004, the annual average CO₂ level measured by the WTO network of stations was 377.1 ppm, while in 2024 it reached 423.9 ppm. Approximately half of the total CO₂ emitted each year remains in the atmosphere and the rest is absorbed by terrestrial ecosystems and oceans. The likely reason for the record growth between 2023 and 2024 was the large contribution of forest fire emissions and less CO₂ absorption on land and in the ocean in 2024, the warmest year on record, with a strong El Niño phenomenon”. Meanwhile, [Associated Press](#) journalists [Jamey Keaton](#) and [Seth Borenstein](#) wrote, “Heat-trapping carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere jumped by the highest amount on record last year, soaring to a level not seen in human civilization and “turbo-charging” the Earth’s climate and causing more extreme weather, the United Nations weather agency said Wednesday. The World Meteorological Organization said in its latest bulletin on greenhouse gases, an annual study released ahead of the U.N.’s annual climate conference, that CO₂ growth rates have now tripled since the 1960s, and reached levels that existed more than 800,000 years ago”.

“Rising global heat is now killing one person a minute around the world, a major report on the health impact of the climate crisis has revealed. It says the world’s addiction to fossil fuels also causes toxic air pollution, wildfires and the spread of diseases such as dengue fever, and millions each year are dying owing to the failure to tackle global heating.”



Firefighters tackle a blaze in Chaves, Portugal, in August. Photo: Pedro Sarmiento Costa/EPA.

In late October, the release of the annual report [‘The Lancet Countdown’](#) (co-authored with MeCCO team members Lucy McAllister and Olivia Pearman) earned media attention. For example, [Guardian environment editor Damien Carrington](#) reported, “Rising global heat is now killing one person a minute around the world, a major report on the health impact of the climate crisis has revealed. It says the world’s addiction to fossil fuels also causes toxic air pollution, wildfires and the spread of diseases such as dengue fever, and millions each year are dying owing to the failure to tackle global heating. The report, the most comprehensive to date, says the damage to health will get worse with leaders such as Donald Trump ripping up climate policies and oil companies continuing to exploit new reserves. Governments gave out \$2.5bn a day in direct subsidies to fossil fuel users and producers in 2023, the researchers found, while people lost about the same

amount because of high temperatures preventing them from working on farms and building sites. Reduced coal burning has saved about 400 lives a day in the last decade, the report says, and renewable energy production is rising fast. But the experts say a healthy future is impossible if fossil fuels continue to be financed at current rates". As a second example, *El Mundo* journalist **C. G. Lucio** noted, "The data from the new report is devastating. According to their analysis, 12 of the 20 indicators that measure health threats have reached unprecedented levels. "This year's health report presents a grim and undeniable picture of the devastating health damage reaching every corner of the world, with unprecedented health threats caused by heat, extreme weather events, and smoke from wildfires that are killing millions of people"".

"More than 700,000 federal employees have been sidelined and thousands more are at risk of being fired as the government shutdown drags on. But the workers responsible for carrying out the president's plans for more fossil fuels and less wind and solar power are still hard at work. Some are approving permits for companies that want to extract metals, coal, oil and gas from public lands and federal waters. Others are rolling back limits on the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change."



While other federal employees have been furloughed, this week the Interior Department prepared to open more than 250,000 acres of land in Wyoming and Nebraska to oil drilling. Photo: Kristina Barker/*The New York Times*.

In terms of content of news coverage about climate change in October 2025, news reporting included many **political** and **economic**-themed media stories about climate change or global warming. To begin, media attention paid to the United States (US) government shutdown made several connections with climate change. For example, *New York Times* journalist **Lisa Friedman** reported, "More than 700,000 federal employees have been sidelined and thousands more are at risk of being fired as **the government shutdown** drags on. But the workers responsible for carrying out the president's plans for more fossil fuels and less wind and solar power are still hard at work. Some are approving permits for companies that want to extract metals, coal, oil and gas from public lands and federal waters.

Others are rolling back limits on the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change. On Thursday the Bureau of Land Management approved the expansion of a copper mine on public land in Utah. Earlier this week the Interior Department prepared to open more than 250,000 acres of land in Wyoming and Nebraska to oil drilling, and held a coal lease sale for access to Montana's Powder River Basin. And at the Environmental Protection Agency, employees are finalizing a plan to allow more mercury emissions from coal plants, according to two people familiar with the work underway. Charlotte Taylor, a spokeswoman for the Interior Department, said the agency was doing what was necessary in light of President Trump's declaration in January of a national energy emergency".

At the global level, many media stories about renewables and climate change circulated in October. For example, [BBC News correspondent Justin Rowlett reported](#), “Renewable energy overtook coal as the world’s leading source of electricity in the first half of this year - a historic first, according to new data from the global energy think tank Ember. Electricity demand is growing around the world but the growth in solar and wind was so strong it met 100% of the extra electricity demand, even helping drive a slight decline in coal and gas use. However, Ember says the headlines mask a mixed global picture. Developing countries, especially China, led the clean energy charge but richer nations including the US and EU relied more than before on planet-warming fossil fuels for electricity generation. This divide is likely to get more pronounced, according to a separate report from the International Energy Agency

(IEA). It predicts renewables will grow much less strongly than forecast in the US as a result of the policies of President Donald Trump’s administration. Coal, a major contributor to global warming, was still the world’s largest individual source of energy generation in 2024, a position it has held for more than 50 years, according to the IEA. Even though China is still adding to its fleet of coal-fired power stations, it also remains way ahead in clean energy growth, adding more solar and wind capacity than the rest of the world combined. This enabled the growth in renewable generation in China to outpace rising electricity demand and helped reduce its fossil fuel generation by 2%. India experienced slower electricity demand growth and also added significant new solar and wind capacity, meaning it too cut back on coal and gas. In contrast, developed nations like the US, and also the EU, saw the opposite trend. In the US, electricity demand grew faster than clean energy output, increasing reliance on fossil

“Renewable energy overtook coal as the world’s leading source of electricity in the first half of this year - a historic first, according to new data from the global energy think tank Ember. Electricity demand is growing around the world but the growth in solar and wind was so strong it met 100% of the extra electricity demand, even helping drive a slight decline in coal and gas use.”



Photo: AFP via Getty Images.

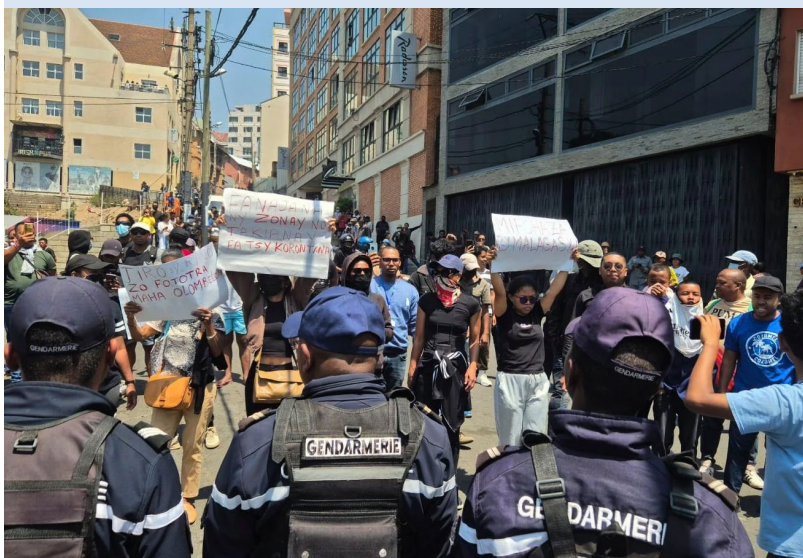
fuels, while in the EU, months of weak wind and hydropower performance led to a rise in coal and gas generation. In a separate report the IEA has halved its forecast for the growth of renewable energy in the US this decade. Last year, the agency predicted the US would add 500GW of new renewable capacity – mostly from solar and wind – by 2030. That has been cut that back to 250GW. The IEA analysis represents the most thorough assessment to date of the impact the Trump administration’s policies are having on global efforts to transition to cleaner energy sources and underscores the dramatically different approach of the US and China. As China’s clean tech exports surge, the US is focusing on encouraging the world buy more of its oil and gas. Despite these regional differences, Ember calls this moment a “crucial turning point”.

Last, media portrayals also touched on ongoing [cultural](#)-themed stories relating to climate

change or global warming. To illustrate, protest movements were cast in the spotlight in October. For example, [BBC News reporter Leigh Boobyer wrote](#), “Just Stop Oil protesters who sprayed Stonehenge with orange powder “carefully planned” the act, a court was told. Salisbury Crown Court heard on Monday the prehistoric stones were covered in orange powder paint as part of a protest by the campaign group on 19 June last year. Rajan Naidu, 74, Niamh Lynch, 22, Luke Watson, 36, are accused of damaging an ancient, protected monument and causing a public nuisance. They deny the charges. Simon Jones told the jury: “The prosecution say that this is an act of blatant and clear vandalism.” Mr. Naidu, of Gosford Street, Birmingham and University of Oxford student Ms. Lynch, of Norfolk Road, Bedford, are accused of using two fire extinguishers filled with corn flour, talc and an orange dye to spray the monument”. Taking another perspective, [Fox News correspondent Emma Colton reported](#), “Climate protesters have grown more confrontational in recent years, experts say,

including publicly cataloging energy sector leaders and conservatives as “climate criminals,” staging disruptive protests outside conservative organizations in the U.S., while climate activists in the U.K. have gone as far as attempting citizen’s arrests of water company CEOs... Climate activists have increasingly become more confrontational in splashy and often costly acts of protests, including throwing soup at glass protecting the “Mona Lisa” at the Louvre in Paris while protesting food insecurity in 2024, vandalizing Berlin’s Brandenburg Gate in 2023 with orange paint while calling on the German government to stop using all fossil fuels by 2030, and a yearslong international campaign that has

“From the Andes to the Himalayas, a new wave of protests is unfolding across the world, driven by generational discontent against governments and anger among young people. This week, Madagascar’s President Andry Rajoelina was forced out of power and out of the country after a military mutiny, the culmination of weeks of demonstrations led by young protesters referring to themselves as “Gen Z Madagascar.”



Demonstrators hold up placards reading “water and electricity are basic human rights,” “Malagasy people, wake up,” “Let’s not remain in the dark with our yellow cans” in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Photo: Sarah Tetaud/Associated Press.

vandalized and deflated thousands of tires on SUVs since 2021. Fox News Digital took a look back at how climate protests have intensified in recent years, most notably in Europe, and how the activism is also playing out on U.S. soil and in the court system”. However, [Associated Press journalist Sheikh Saaliq reported](#), “From the Andes to the Himalayas, a new wave of protests is unfolding across the world, driven by generational discontent against governments and anger among young people. This week, Madagascar’s President Andry Rajoelina was forced out of power and out of the country after a military mutiny, the culmination of weeks of demonstrations led by young protesters

MECCO MONTHLY SUMMARIES

ISSUE 106, OCTOBER 2025

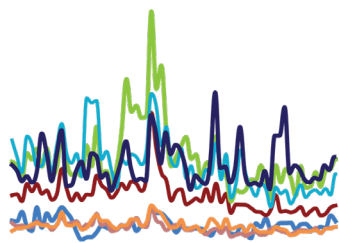


Figure 4. Examples of newspaper front pages with climate change stories in October 2025.

referring to themselves as “Gen Z Madagascar.” The rage against the political establishment in the Indian Ocean island country mirrors other recent protests across the world, in countries like Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru and Morocco. These protests have been sparked by specific grievances but are driven by long-simmering issues like widening inequality, economic uncertainty, corruption, and nepotism of leaders. But they have one thing in common: Mostly leaderless, they are made up primarily of young people who brand themselves as “Gen Z,” defined as those born roughly between 1996 and 2010 – the first generation to grow up entirely in the internet age. “What connects

these youth-led protests is a shared sense that traditional political systems aren’t responsive to their generation’s concerns, whether that’s corruption, climate change, or economic inequality. Protest then becomes the logical outlet when institutional channels feel blocked,” said Sam Nadel, director of Social Change Lab, a U.K.-based nonprofit that researches protests and social movements”.

~ report prepared by Max Boykoff, Rogelio Fernández-Reyes, Ami Nacu-Schmidt, Jeremiah Osborne-Gowey and Olivia Pearman

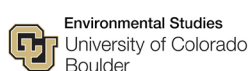


MeCCO

Media and Climate Change Observatory

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

ISSUE 106, OCTOBER 2025



MeCCO monitors 131 sources (across newspapers, radio and TV) in 59 countries in seven different regions around the world. MeCCO assembles the data by accessing archives through Factiva, Infomedia, ProQuest, Nifty, NexisUni, and Retriever databases for our work across our various institutions. These sources are selected through a decision processes involving weighting of three main factors:



Geographical Diversity

favoring a greater geographical range



Circulation

favoring higher circulating publications



Reliable Access to Archives Over Time

favoring those accessible consistently
for longer periods of time