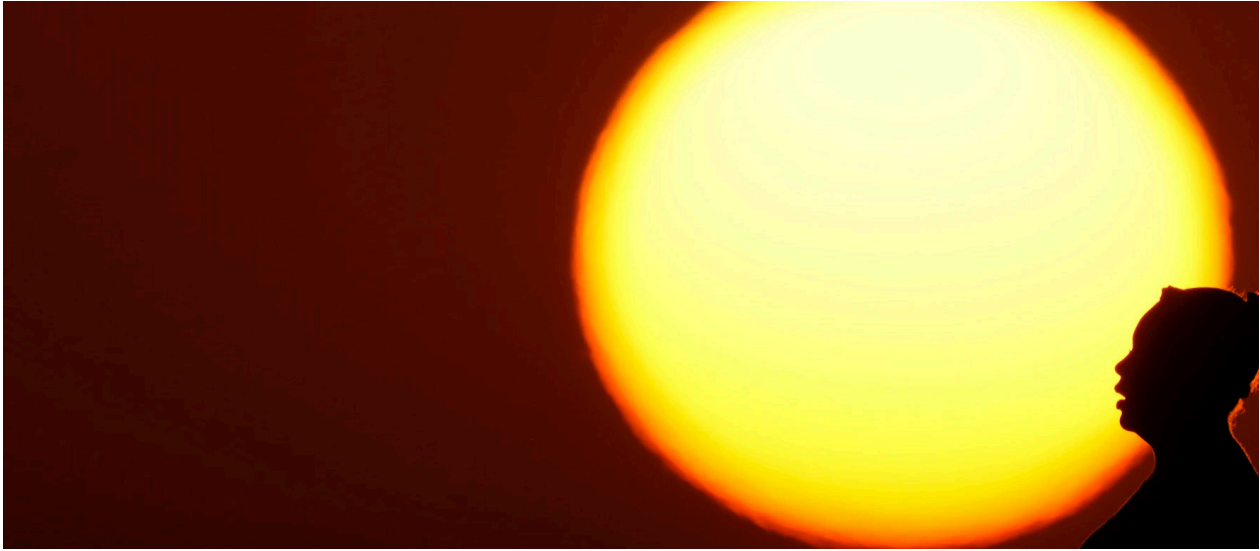


“The planet is losing resilience and the patient is sick”



A woman is silhouetted against the setting sun as triple-digit heat indexes continue in Kansas City, Photo: Charlie Riedel/AP.

September media coverage of climate change or global warming in newspapers around the globe increased 7% from August 2023, but dipped slightly (-1%) from September 2022 levels. International wire services continued to increase (+6%), as radio coverage also continued to rise (+24%) from August 2023. Compared with August 2023, coverage was down in North America (-12%),

and in Oceania (-15%). Yet, the quantity of coverage increased in the European Union (EU) (+7%), Asia (+14%), Latin America (+27%), the Middle East (+35%), and in Africa (+71%). Figure 1 shows trends in newspaper media coverage at the global scale - organized into seven geographical regions around the world - from January 2004 through September 2023.

2004–2023 World Newspaper Coverage of Climate Change or Global Warming

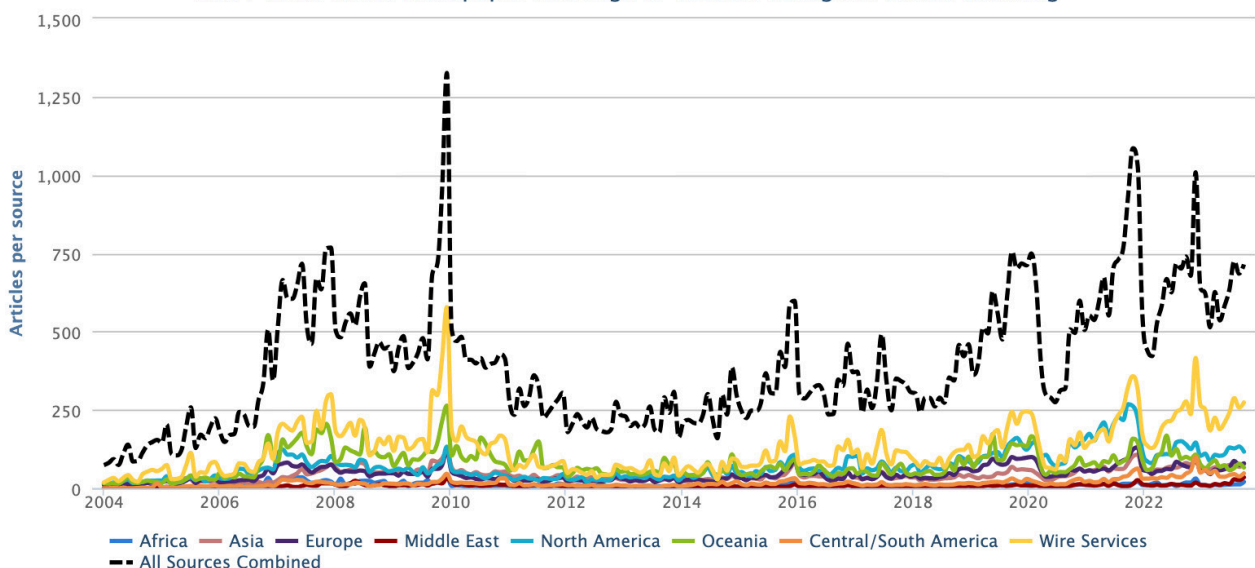


Figure 1. Newspaper media coverage of climate change or global warming in print sources in seven different regions around the world, from January 2004 through September 2023.

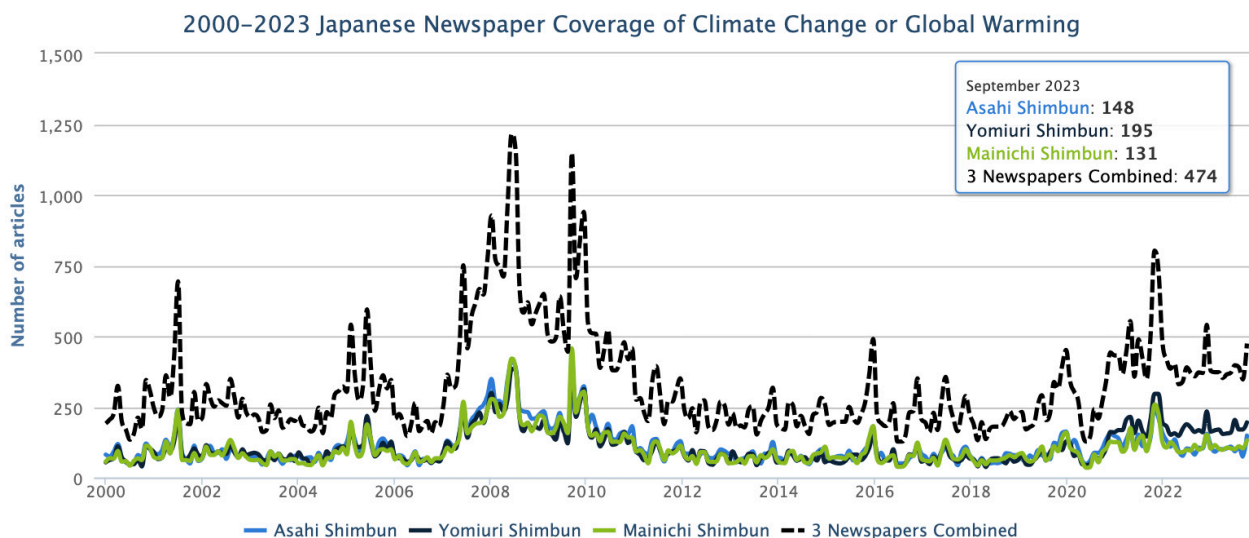


Figure 2. Newspaper coverage of climate change or global warming in Japan sources *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Mainichi Shimbun* from January 2004 through September 2023.

Our 26-member team at the Media and Climate Change Observatory (MeCCO) continues to provide three international and seven ongoing regional assessments of trends in coverage, along with 16 country-level appraisals each month. Visit our website for open-source datasets and downloadable visuals. Of note in September 2023, Japanese print coverage in *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Mainichi Shimbun* went up 37% (see Figure 2) from the previous month.

First, *political* and *economic*-themed media stories about climate change or global warming were prevalent in September. At the start of the month, African leaders met in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss climate policy action: this generated news attention. For example, *Associated Press* correspondents [Cara Anna](#) and [Evelyne Musambi](#) reported, “The first African Climate Summit opened Monday with heads of state and others asserting a stronger voice on a worldwide issue that affects their continent the most even though its 1.3 billion people contribute to global warming the least. Kenyan President William Ruto’s government and the African Union launched a ministerial session as more than a dozen heads of state began to arrive, determined to wield more global influence and bring in far more financing and support. The first speakers included young people, who demanded a bigger voice in the process. “For

a very long time we have looked at this as a problem. There are immense opportunities as well,” Ruto said of the climate crisis, speaking of multibillion-dollar economic possibilities, new financial structures, Africa’s huge mineral wealth and the ideal of shared prosperity. “We are not here to catalog grievances,” he said”. As the summit concluded, *New York Times* journalist [Max Bearak](#) wrote, “Heads of state from across Africa concluded an inaugural climate summit on Wednesday in Nairobi, Kenya’s capital, by issuing a declaration that called for an urgent restructuring of the way wealthier nations engage with the continent. The declaration stressed numerous times that rather than being a hapless victim, Africa was primed for leadership on clean energy and environmental stewardship. But to make that happen, the statement said, the world’s industrialized countries, which are largely responsible for the pollution that is causing climate change, must first unlock access to their wealth through investments, instead of relegating their contributions to aid when disasters strike. This lack of financing is one of the biggest issues dividing rich and poor nations as the world struggles to slash carbon dioxide emissions. It will be one of the main points of contention at the United Nations global climate summit starting Nov. 30 in Dubai. The historic gathering in Nairobi was partly an effort by poorer nations to amplify their argument. At the event, investors announced what amounted

to around \$23 billion that would go toward projects including solar microgrids, carbon markets and reforestation. But it was unclear how much of that money represented commitments, as opposed to intentions. Kenya's president, William Ruto, who acted as the summit's host and master of ceremonies, said that Africa had 60 percent of the world's renewable energy potential and nearly a third of the minerals crucial to electrifying industries that are currently dependent on planet-warming fossil fuels. Meanwhile, 600 million people in Africa have little or no access to electricity. "We must go green fast, before industrializing, and not vice versa," Mr. Ruto said".

Shortly after the African meeting, the long-anticipated United Nations (UN) 'Global Stocktake' report was released. Reporting was widespread regarding how various countries were largely falling short of Paris Climate Agreement commitments. For example, [Wall Street Journal correspondent Matthew Dalton reported](#), "Government plans to limit greenhouse gas emissions in the coming years aren't nearly ambitious enough to limit global warming in line with the Paris climate accord, the United Nations said in a report that examines progress toward the agreement's goals eight years after it was signed. The Paris accords call for governments to keep warming well under 2 degrees Celsius compared with preindustrial temperatures and "pursue efforts" to limit it to 1.5 degrees. It also requires governments to review implementation of the accord every five years, starting in 2023. The report, published Friday, largely relies on previous analyses conducted by the U.N. It finds that global emissions must fall 43% between 2019 and 2030 to limit warming to 1.5 degrees. The plans

"The world's industrialized countries, which are largely responsible for the pollution that is causing climate change, must first unlock access to their wealth through investments, instead of relegating their contributions to aid when disasters strike. This lack of financing is one of the biggest issues dividing rich and poor nations as the world struggles to slash carbon dioxide emissions."



Members of the Turkana tribe protesting outside the summit on Monday. Photo: Brian Inganga/Associated Press.

submitted as of September 2022 would cut emissions by only 3.6% in 2030 compared with 2019. The report also chastises wealthy countries for not providing enough financial support to the developing world to cut emissions, one of the main goals of the Paris accord". Meanwhile, [Straits Times journalist David Fogarty reported](#), "Called the Global Stocktake, it is the result of two years of assessing how far off course Mankind is in reducing the risks from climate change. But far from just another gloomy report, it will also offer suggestions on positive steps to tackle the problem. "It's a moment to take a long, hard look at the state of our planet and chart a better course for the future," said the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is overseeing the assessment".

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Figure 3. Examples of newspaper front pages with climate change stories in September, related to UN General Assembly and 'Climate Week' stories connected to climate change or global warming.

In mid-September, the UN General Assembly and the associated 'Climate Week' in New York City dominated news reporting on climate change. For example, [BBC correspondent James Landale reported](#), "The 140 or so world leaders gathering in New York for their annual assembly have a lot on their plate: Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a global cost of living crisis, a worsening climate emergency, and the disruption of new technologies such as artificial intelligence. There are disagreements

internationally not only over what is most important but also what the remedies should be. "People are looking to their leaders for a way out of this mess," says Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General". As a second example, [journalist Yvette Tanamal from The Jakarta Post noted](#), "With the world continuing to grapple with the post-COVID-19 recovery, the economic and political tension sparked by the war in Ukraine, as well as an ever-worsening climate crisis, thousands of delegates from across the

world are gathering in New York in the United States to advance key talks and navigate the current precarious geopolitical landscape”.

Second, **ecological** and **meteorological** dimensions of climate change or global warming were detected in many news stories. To illustrate, ongoing stories of heat records – with links made to global warming – proliferated. For example, [Washington Post reporter Dan Stillman](#) wrote, “Fueled by unprecedented heat on much of Earth’s land and ocean surface, this summer was the planet’s hottest on record “by a large margin,” the European Union’s Copernicus Climate Change Service announced...August capped this summer’s extreme heat with a monthly average temperature of 62.3 degrees Fahrenheit (16.82 Celsius), which was 0.71 C warmer than the long-term average and 0.31 C warmer than the previous warmest August in 2016. It was the planet’s second-hottest month ever observed, closely following July, which was the hottest. The average surface air temperature for June, July and August – which scientists consider “meteorological summer” – was 62.2 degrees F (16.77 degrees C), based on analysis of billions of weather instrument measurements. That was 0.66 C above the long-term average, which is considered a large margin when comparing seasonal averages in temperature. Every summer since 2009 has been warmer than average”.

Also in September, there were many stories linking climate change with torrential rains and flooding in and around the Libyan community of Derna. For instance, [CNN correspondent](#)

“More than 5,000 people are presumed dead and 10,000 missing after heavy rains in northeastern Libya caused two dams to collapse, surging more water into already inundated areas. Tamer Ramadan, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies delegation in Libya, gave the numbers of missing people during a briefing to reporters in Geneva, Switzerland. “The death toll is huge.”



Overturned cars lay among other debris caused by flash floods in Derna, eastern Libya, on September 11, 2023. Photo: AFP/Getty Images.

[Hamdi Alkhshali](#) reported, “More than 5,000 people are presumed dead and 10,000 missing after heavy rains in northeastern Libya caused two dams to collapse, surging more water into already inundated areas. Tamer Ramadan, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies delegation in Libya, gave the numbers of missing people during a briefing to reporters in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday. “The death toll is huge,” she said. At least 5,300 people are thought dead, said the interior ministry of Libya’s eastern government

on Tuesday, state media LANA reported. CNN has not been able to independently verify the number of deaths or those missing... The rain, which has swept across several cities in Libya's north-east, is the result of a very strong low-pressure system that brought catastrophic flooding to Greece last week and moved into the Mediterranean before developing into a tropical-like cyclone known as a medicane. The deadly storm comes in an unprecedented year of climate disasters and record-breaking weather extremes, from devastating wildfires to oppressive heat. Just as ocean temperatures around the world soar off the charts due to planet-warming pollution, the temperature of the Mediterranean is well-above average, which scientists say fueled the storm's heavy rainfall. "The warmer water does not only fuel those storms in terms of rainfall intensity, it also makes them more ferocious," Karsten Haustein, climate scientist and meteorologist at Leipzig University in Germany, told the Science Media Center".

Third, many *cultural* stories relating to climate change or global warming were found in our ongoing monitoring work. To begin, protests across many regions generated ongoing news attention. For example, [Associated Press correspondents David Keyton, Aaron Favila, Philipp Jenne, Justin Kabumba, and Achmad Ibrahim reported](#), "From Europe to Africa to southeast Asia, tens of thousands of climate activists launched protests to call for an end to the burning of planet-warming fossil fuels as the globe suffers dramatic weather extremes and record-breaking heat, with plans to continue through the weekend. The protests – driven by several mostly youth-led, local and global climate groups and organizations, including Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future movement – were taking place in dozens of countries and hundreds of cities worldwide. Several thousand people marched in Vienna, holding up signs demanding higher taxes for carbon emissions and an end to meat consumption. Members

"From Europe to Africa to southeast Asia, tens of thousands of climate activists launched protests to call for an end to the burning of planet-warming fossil fuels as the globe suffers dramatic weather extremes and record-breaking heat."



People take part in a Global Climate Strike 'Fridays for Future' protest in Madrid, Spain on September 15. Photo: Manu Fernandez/AP.

of the student climate awareness group Last Generation sat down in front of parliament, and speakers called on government to quit oil and gas and pass laws to save the climate".

Several news accounts were focused on demonstrations outside of the aforementioned UN General Assembly meeting in New York City. For example, [Associated Press correspondent Seth Borenstein reported](#), "Yelling that the future and their lives depend on ending fossil fuels, tens of thousands of protesters on Sunday kicked off a week where leaders will try once again to curb climate change primarily caused by coal, oil and natural gas. But protesters say it's not going to be enough. And they aimed their wrath directly at U.S. President Joe Biden, urging him to stop approving new oil and gas

projects, phase out current ones and declare a climate emergency with larger executive powers... The March to End Fossil Fuels featured such politicians as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and actors Susan Sarandon, Ethan Hawke, Edward Norton, Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon. But the real action on Broadway was where protesters crowded the street, pleading for a better but not-so-hot future. It was the opening salvo to New York's Climate Week, where world leaders in business, politics and the arts gather to try to save the planet, highlighted by a new special United Nations summit Wednesday. Many of the leaders of countries that cause the most heat-trapping carbon pollution will not be in attendance. And they won't speak at the summit organized by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a way that only countries that promise new concrete action are invited to speak. Organizers estimated 75,000 people marched Sunday".

"Earth is exceeding its "safe operating space for humanity" in six of nine key measurements of its health, and two of the remaining three are headed in the wrong direction, a new study said. Earth's climate, biodiversity, land, freshwater, nutrient pollution and "novel" chemicals are all out of whack."



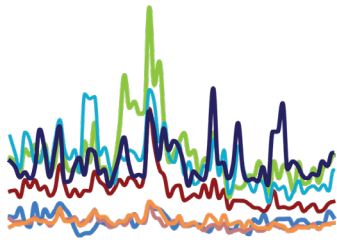
Haze blankets the main business district in Jakarta, Indonesia. Photo: Data Alangkara/AP.

Last, several *scientific* findings sparked media stories this month. Among them, updated research on 'safe operating spaces' for humanity - referred to as 'planetary boundaries' as well - with a focus on climate change sparked news attention. For example, *Associated Press* journalist [Seth Borenstein reported](#), "Earth is exceeding its "safe operating space for humanity" in six of nine key measurements of its health, and two of the remaining three are headed in the wrong direction, a new study said. Earth's climate, biodiversity, land, freshwater, nutrient pollution and "novel" chemicals (human-made compounds like microplastics and nuclear waste) are all out of whack, a group of international scientists said in Wednesday's journal *Science Advances*. Only the acidity of the oceans, the health of the air and the ozone layer are within the boundaries considered safe,

and both ocean and air pollution are heading in the wrong direction, the study said. "We are in very bad shape," said study co-author Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany. "We show in this analysis that the planet is losing resilience and the patient is sick"."

Thanks for your interest in our Media and Climate Change Observatory (MeCCO) work monitoring media coverage of these intersecting dimensions and themes associated with climate change and global warming.

~ report prepared by *Max Boykoff, Rogelio Fernández-Reyes, Jennifer Katzung, Ami Nacu-Schmidt and Olivia Pearman*



MeCCO

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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 the Nexis Uni, Proquest and Factiva databases via the University of Colorado libraries. 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**

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