

Investigating the climate crisis with results

Focus on biodiversity and ocean reporting

Jessica Aldred



September 2026

What we'll cover today

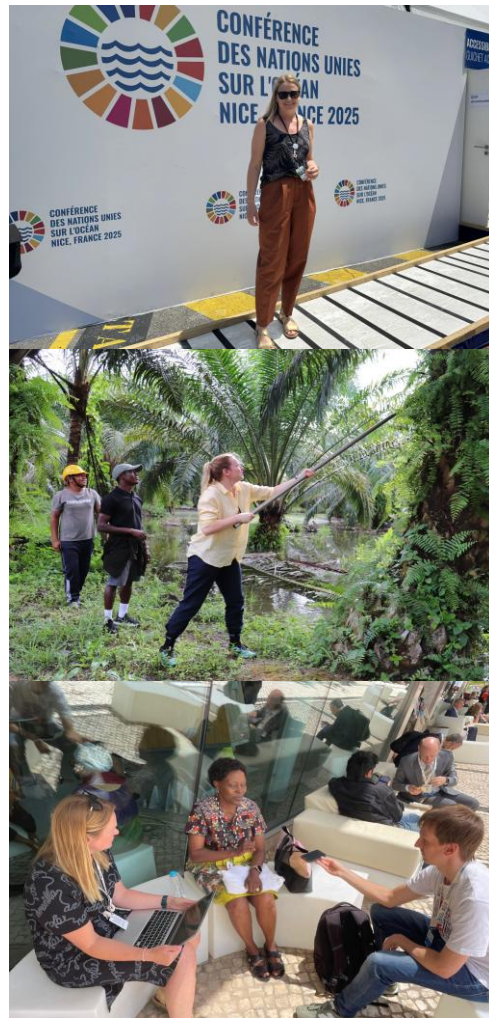
- Ongoing importance of climate reporting
- Deep dive into ocean and biodiversity reporting and governance
- How and why to increase the visibility of these topics
- Practical advice throughout: tools, tips, techniques etc
- Questions!

About me

Pulitzer Center: ocean editor, 2023 - present

China Dialogue (now Dialogue Earth):
special projects editor (*ocean, palm oil, biodiversity*)
2019 - 2023

16 years at **The Guardian**, 12 as environment reporter
and deputy editor, 2006-2018



The Pulitzer Center
champions the power of
stories to make complex issues
relevant and inspire action.



**GAME-CHANGING
RESOURCES**

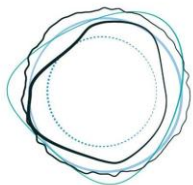
that strengthen and
deepen reporting

**BREAKTHROUGH
JOURNALISM**

that goes beyond
the headlines

**AUDIENCE-CENTERED
ENGAGEMENT**

that amplifies impact
and promotes agency



Ocean Reporting Network

A fellowship programme that gives professional journalists the opportunity to spend a year working on an in-depth or investigative project

Benefits

Funding

Training

Mentorship & guidance

DARE team expertise

Access to platforms & databases

Collaboration, being part of a network

Speaking opportunities

Engagement and impact



THIRD COHORT (2026)



Frankie Adkins
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Oceania)



Rukaia Alabadi
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Middle East)



Islam Alatrash
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Africa)



Laureano Barrera
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Americas)



Daniela Castro
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Americas)



Aqwa Fiazmi Hanifan
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Asia)



Karen Pinchin
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Americas)



Jenn Thornhill Verma
2026 and 2024 Ocean Reporting
Fellow (Americas)



Supriya Vohra
2026 Ocean Reporting Fellow
(Asia)



Grants - individual stories



ENGLISH

THE NEW YORKER

PART OF: China: The Superpower of Seafood

'Squid Fleet' Takes You Into the Opaque World of Chinese Fishing

 Multiple Authors

October 11, 2023

THE NEW YORKER



SPANISH

LA "CAJA NEGRA" DEL MARE DORICUM

PART OF: Perú: La mayor tragedia ambiental

Los secretos de la 'caja negra' de 'Mare Doricum'

 Daniel Yovera
GRANTEE

July 15, 2024

Epicentro



INDONESIAN

PART OF: The Dark Side of Shrimp Aquaculture: From Land Displacement to Marine Pollution

Shrimp Estate: Target Meleset, Petambak Merugi, dan IPAL yang Serampangan

 Multiple Authors

February 22, 2026

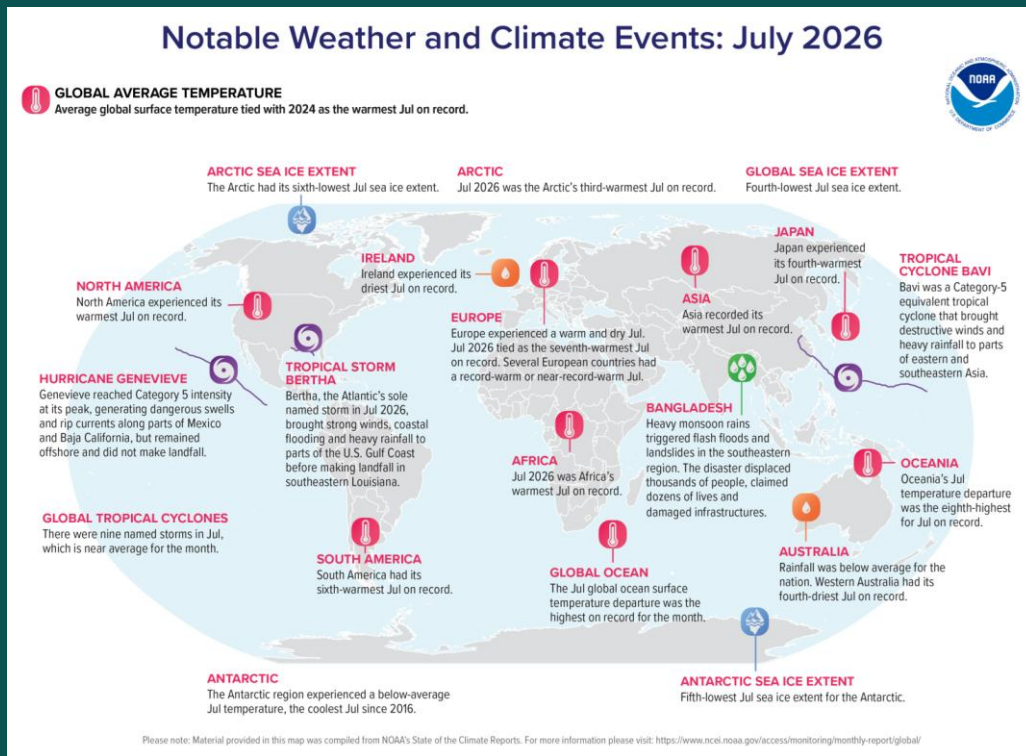
JARING

Ongoing importance of climate reporting

Between 80-89% of the world's people want their governments to be doing more to address climate change

– The 89%

Project



Nepal

A turning point for
climate coverage?



Bhaskar Bhattacharya/ATP

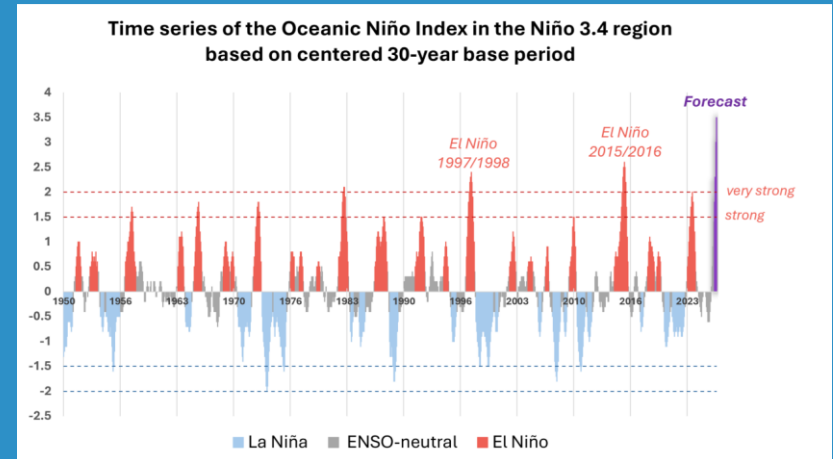
There is "an exceptionally high likelihood of nearly 100%" that El Niño will persist through to February 2027

– *World Meteorological Organisation*

"The science leaves no room for doubt: the planet is in uncharted waters, and those waters are heating up. Sea surface temperatures are rising, temperatures keep climbing, and the world is in the danger zone of extreme weather. The race now is between rising risks and our commitment to take climate action and protect people. We must win that race."

– *UN Secretary-General António Guterres*

El Niño



But it's dropping down the news agenda ...

Global media coverage of climate change, 2025-26



14%

Airtime decline in the US



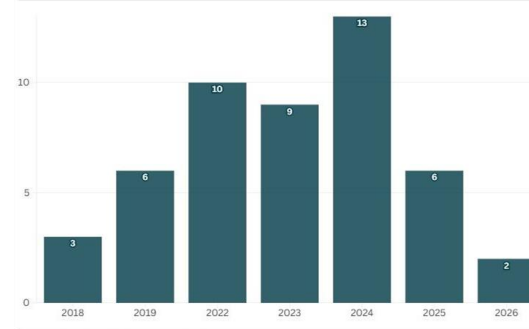
35%

Public audience interest in the climate crisis



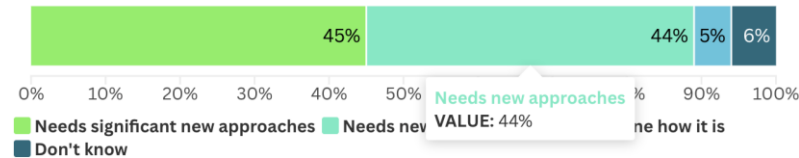
"Completely stable"

Climate and environment-related talks at the International Journalism Festival in Perugia



Source: International Journalism Festival.
*The festival was canceled in 2020 and 2021 owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

89% of journalists surveyed say climate reporting needs new approaches



Data source: Kantar-Climate News Tracker Newsroom Survey 2026 • Q: "Do you think there is a need for changes in Climate Change reporting?" N = 80 respondents from BBC, ITV, Sky News, Channel 4 and Channel 5, representing a range of roles and desks. Fieldwork: October 2025-January 2026.

Ocean and biodiversity stories offer new ways into climate reporting



**Let's play ...
governance
acronym bingo!**



<https://www.menti.com/alt4pzibmuir>

Or enter this unique code at menti.com

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Ocean governance in a wide arena

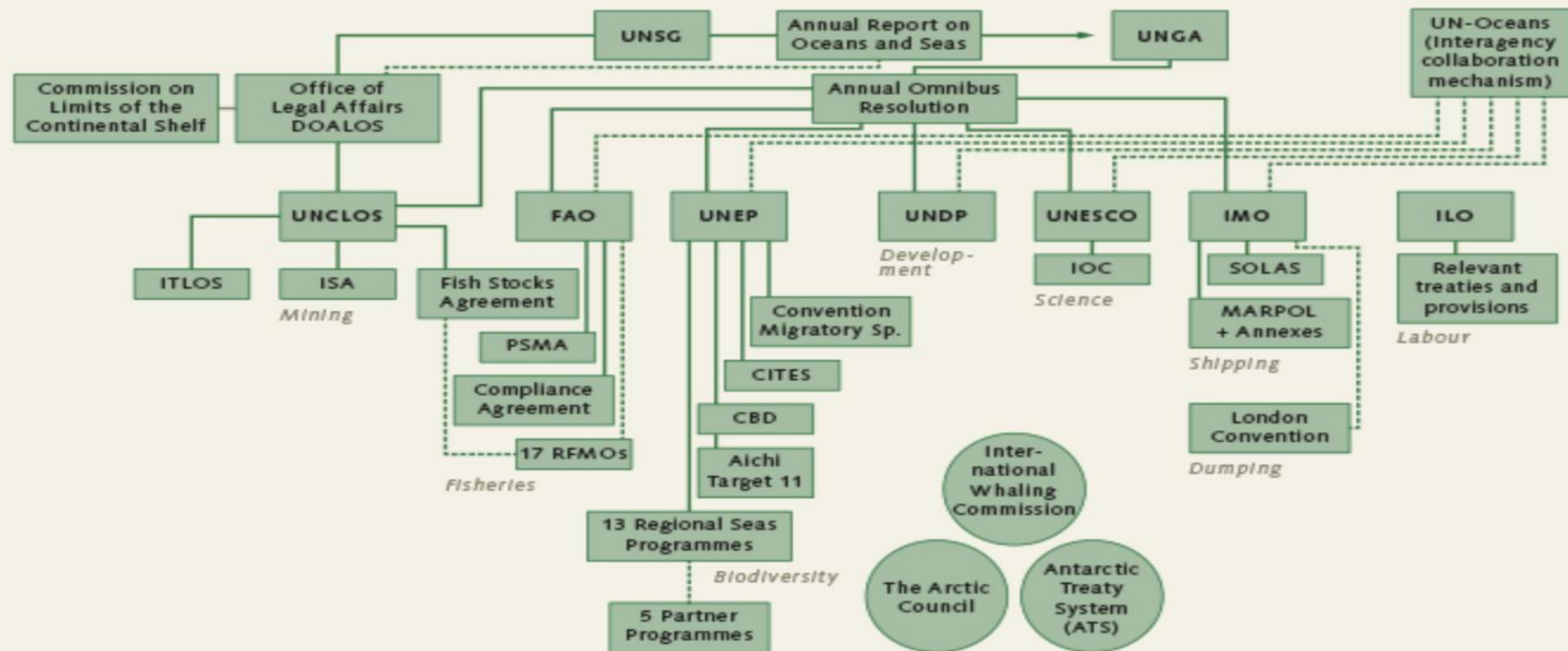


fig. 3.8 > At the level of the United Nations alone, many organizations are wholly or partially involved with aspects of the ocean. Solid lines indicate direct dependencies between bodies and international agreements. Dashed lines indicate functional links. Intergovernmental organizations that do not directly form part of the UN system (such as the International Whaling Commission) are shown separately. "Aichi Target 11" refers to the goal adopted at the biodiversity conference in Aichi, Japan, of assigning protected status to 10 per cent of marine areas by the year 2020. © Global Ocean Commission

Why the ocean?



 **Covers 70% of our planet**

 **Absorbs carbon dioxide and excess heat**

 **Drives and regulates climate and weather patterns**

 **The life within it produces the oxygen we breathe**

 **More than 3 billion people around the world – mainly in the Global South – rely on fish as the primary source of protein**

 **Fisheries, aquaculture, and post-harvest work provides employment and income for 10%-12% of the world's population (UN FAO)**

The ocean is under pressure

Climate impacts

Overfishing and illegal fishing

Pollution

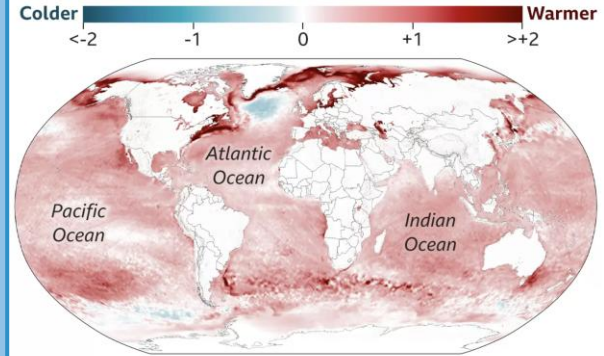
Biodiversity loss

Other human activities ...

Deep-sea mining; renewable energy technology; shipping; tourism;
aquaculture; geoengineering

Rising temperatures in the world's oceans

Average sea surface temperature in 2011-2020 (degrees C), compared to 1951-1980

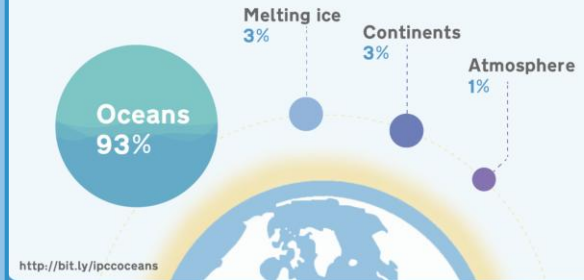


Source: ECMWF ERA5

B B C

The
Carbon
Brief

Where is the heat from global warming going?



Focus on the ocean: momentum grows



2017

- Coverage of potential high seas treaty
- First UN Ocean Conference
- Broadcast of Blue Planet II drives public awareness

2019

- Launch of Ian Urbina's Outlaw Ocean project

2020 onwards

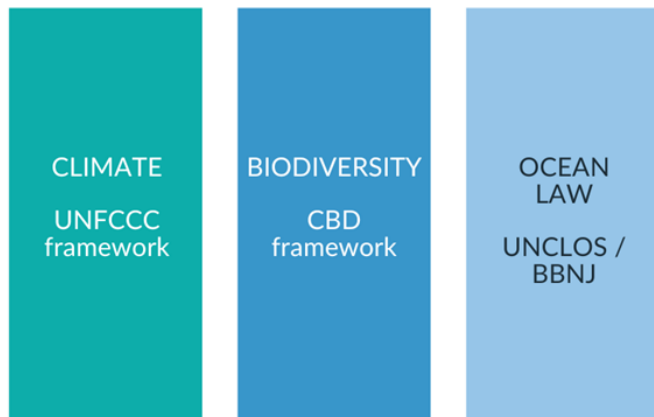
- Funders, journalists see the topic as a "new frontier"
- High-profile campaigns around plastic pollution
- Ocean-climate nexus
- Creation of dedicated ocean reporting programmes

The ocean at COP

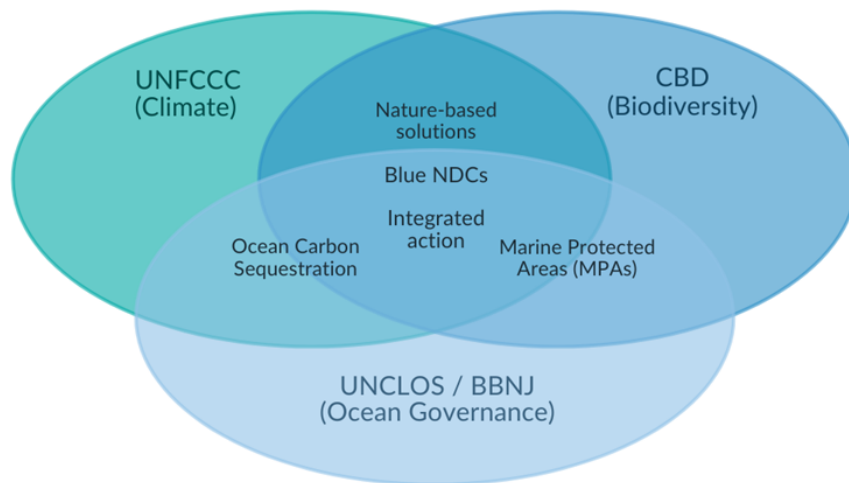
COP26 deal sees progress on ocean protection

Ocean-based action was brought into the UN climate process in Glasgow, but further commitments are needed ahead of key events next year

Historical governance silos



Integrated Ocean-Climate-Biodiversity Nexus



Ocean 'wins'

BBNJ/high seas treaty

CBD 30x30 target

WTO subsidies deal

Ocean included in UNFCCC framework

Plastics treaty pathway

High-level political will

Active and engaged civil society

Growing public awareness and campaigns

Tech advances



Ocean topics

The “big ones”

Climate impacts
Pollution
Fishing
Biodiversity loss

Under-reported with potential

Deep-sea mining
Ocean science
Marine geoengineering
Shipping
The blue economy and blue finance
Transparency and governance
The Arctic
Aquaculture





Better ocean reporting

Three biggest needs:

Funding

More ocean literacy

Journalist collaboration

Access to sources



What makes a good story:

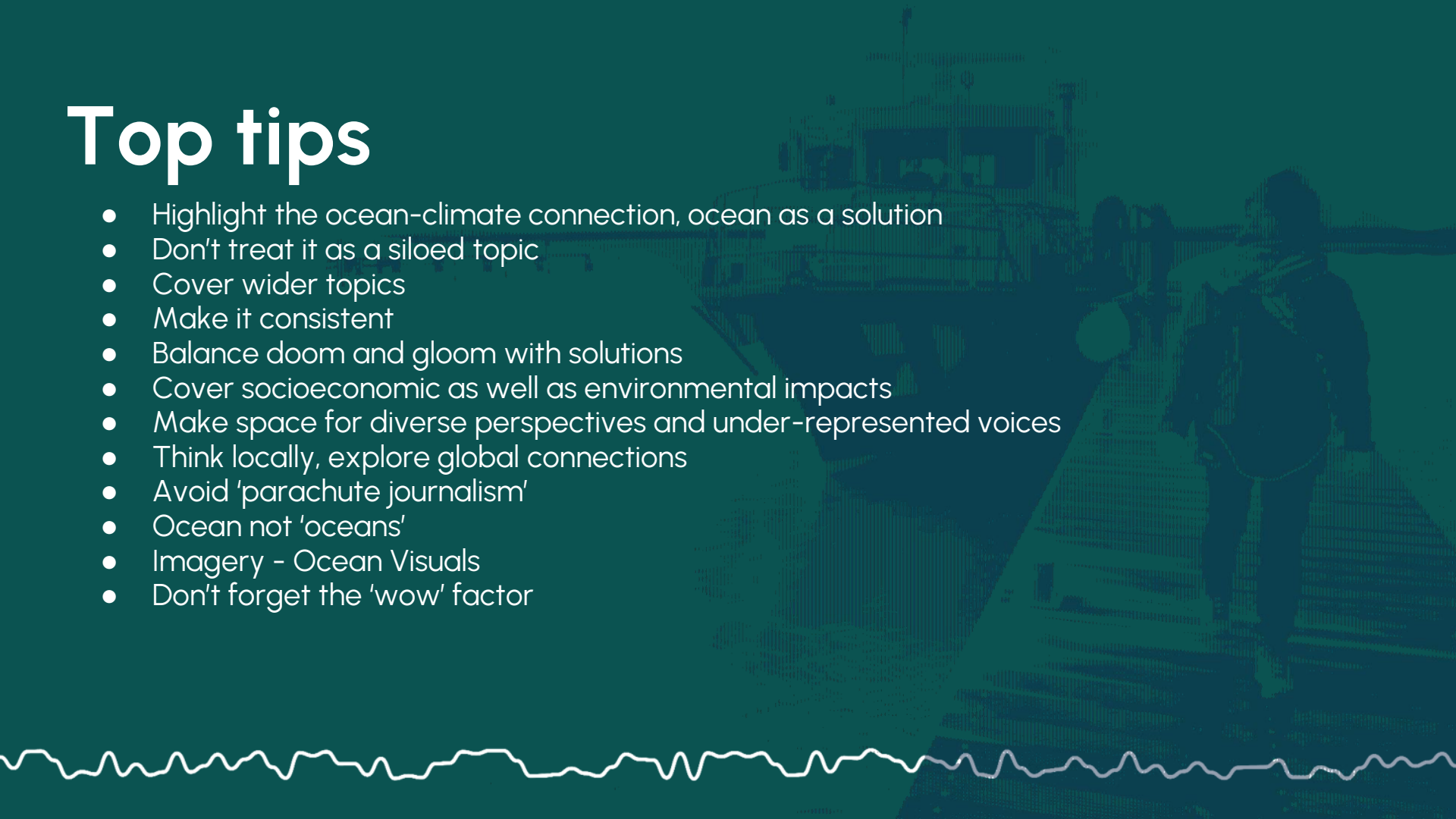
Depth, scientific accuracy

Inclusion of diverse perspectives

Powerful visuals

Top tips

- Highlight the ocean-climate connection, ocean as a solution
- Don't treat it as a siloed topic
- Cover wider topics
- Make it consistent
- Balance doom and gloom with solutions
- Cover socioeconomic as well as environmental impacts
- Make space for diverse perspectives and under-represented voices
- Think locally, explore global connections
- Avoid 'parachute journalism'
- Ocean not 'oceans'
- Imagery - Ocean Visuals
- Don't forget the 'wow' factor



Common skills, platforms, training

RINdata & Aleph
Panjiva
Sayari
Comtrade
Supply chains
Follow the money
Data analysis
Data viz
QGIS & datawrapper
Global Fishing Watch
Marine Traffic
IHS Maritime
Satellite imagery
OSINT



Trending

Unveiling the shadowy nexus: Power, PEPs and opacity in Ghana's fisheries sector

 Gideon Sarpong X · 1 week ago 9 minutes read

This story was produced in partnership with the Pulitzer Center's Ocean Reporting Network.

Pulitzer Center Update
Behind the Story: How 2 Reporters Uncovered Deep-Sea Mining Secrets

"It can feel like science fiction," Pulitzer Center grantee Elizabeth Claire Alberts said. "The idea..."

 Ella Beiser
PULITZER CENTER STAFF

May 15, 2026

Biodiversity pop quiz



<https://www.menti.com/alt4pzibmuir>

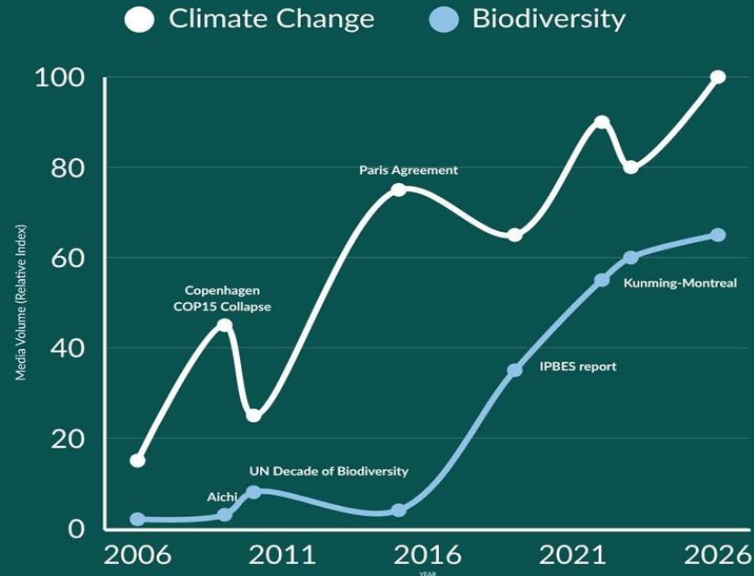
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Biodiversity reporting: an endangered species

Climate change v biodiversity reporting

Climate change still receives roughly four-eight times more mentions than biodiversity



Source: ResearchGate



Convention on Biological Diversity

Legally binding treaty to protect ecosystems, species and genetic resources, sustainable use, access and benefit-sharing

The Cartagena Protocol

Focus: Regulating the safe handling, transport, and transboundary movement of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology.

Objective: Safeguarding global biological diversity and human health from potential risks associated with altered organisms.

The Nagoya Protocol

Focus: Accessing genetic resources and traditional knowledge systems.

Objective: Ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, providing a transparent legal roadmap for researchers and source nations.

CBD COP17, Armenia (19-30 Oct)

First mandatory global stocktake to measure progress against the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The finance gap: Resolving international mechanism standoffs to unlock the €200bn annual nature restoration target by 2030.

The Rio trio synergies: Transitioning away from isolated governance by explicitly linking national biodiversity strategies directly to climate and desertification goals.



Biodiversity reporting in practice

Regina Lam, Dialogue Earth

Jenn Thornhill Verma, Canada's Globe & Mail

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

30x30 targets



COP15 reaches historic agreement to protect biodiversity

An agreement has been reached to protect 30% of the planet's land and 30% of its ocean by 2030, among a host of new targets

Is China ready for biodiversity COP16?

Before the COP16 conference kicks off, Dialogue Earth invited four experts to interpret China's newest biodiversity targets

Marine protection must serve China's communities too

China is progressing towards the 30x30 target but concerns over livelihoods are hampering progress, writes Chen Jian

After the deal: how to keep coverage focussed

- Credits, offsets, nature-harming subsidies
- Accountability: government, corporations
- Implementation of targets
- Finance: the cost of implementation v economic risks of inaction
- Systems reporting: food, ocean etc

Practical

Tips, tools, techniques,
resources ...

Resources



'Investigating the Ocean' Webinar Series: 'How To Follow The Money' (Webinar 3)

Pulitzer Center
183 visualizaciones • hace 1 mes



'Investigating the Ocean' Webinar Series: How To Track Ships Like a Pro Using OSINT (Webinar 2)

Pulitzer Center
321 visualizaciones • hace 2 meses



'Investigating the Ocean' Webinar Series: 'How To Report on Regulation and Governance' (Webinar 1)

Pulitzer Center
294 visualizaciones • hace 2 meses

<https://pulitzercenter.org/journalism/topics/ocean>

Looking ahead: diary dates

CBD COP17 – Yerevan, Armenia, October 2026

UNFCCC COP30 – Antalya, Turkey, November 2026

SEJ (Society of Environmental Journalists) – Halifax, Canada, April 2027

UN Decade of Ocean Science conference – Rio, Brazil, April 2027

Our Ocean – Halifax, Canada, (*date TBC 2027*)

WCSJ (World Conference of Science Journalists) – London, September 2027

UNOC3 (United Nations Ocean Conference) – Busan, South Korea, June 2028)

Thank you!

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