

2025 세계기자대회

# WORLD JOURNALISTS CONFERENCE 2025

## Conference II

The Role of Journalism in Confronting  
Climate Change and Environmental Shifts

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- **Biography**
- **Presentation Material**



**WJC** World  
Journalists  
Conference  
2025



## The Role of Journalism in Confronting Climate Change and Environmental Shifts

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Moderator

## PARK Sang Wook

Journalist  
JTBC  
Korea

### Educational Background

- ◆ PhD candidate of Energy, Resource and Environmental Policy, Korea University Graduate School of Energy and Environment
- ◆ Master of Energy, Resource and Environmental Policy, Korea University Graduate School of Energy and Environment

### Professional Experience

- ◆ Journalist, JTBC

### Award-winning Career

- ◆ Korea Science Journalist Award Grand Prize, Korea Science Journalist Association (2024)
- ◆ Green World Award 2023 Global Silver, The Green Organization (2023)
- ◆ Korea Green Climate Award Grand Prize, National Assembly Climate Change Forum (2023)
- ◆ World Meteorological Day Administrator Recognition, Korea Meteorological Administration (2021)

### Writing Work

- ◆ (Research) <International Comparative Study on the Green Taxonomy> (2024)
- ◆ (Book) <Climate 1.5°C, No Time to Waste> (2022)
- ◆ (Book) <Climate Black Hole> (2024)



## Speaker

### **Murray BREWSTER**

Senior Defence & Foreign Policy Correspondent  
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)  
Canada

## Educational Background

- ◆ Associate degree in Broadcast Journalism  
- Niagara College (1985) Welland, Ontario, Canada

## Professional Experience

- ◆ CBC News - Senior defence & foreign policy correspondent (2016-Present)
- ◆ The Canadian Press - Senior defence & veterans correspondent (1994-2016)
- ◆ Standard Broadcast News - Parliamentary bureau chief. (1993-94)

## Award-winning Career

- ◆ Winner of 14 national Radio-Television News Directors Awards.
- ◆ Winner of two Atlantic Journalism Awards.
- ◆ Winner of two National Newspaper Awards.
- ◆ Finalist (twice) in the Michener Award prize for public service in journalism.

## Writing Work

- ◆ Published book: The Savage War (a retrospective of Canada's war in Afghanistan) (2011)
- ◆ Published book: The Harper Factor (contributed an essay to a compilation book on the policy legacy of Canada's Conservative government) (2015)

**Murray BREWSTER**

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## The Role of Journalism in Confronting Climate Change and Environmental Shifts

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As journalists we often berate our governments for a lack of vision - or creative thinking. We go on and on about institutions that don't connect the dots on some of the most complex policy issues. We complain and critique them for not learning the lessons of history. Yet, I'm here to tell you on the issue of climate change we as journalists are often guilty of the same myopic approach.

We rarely connect the dots.

When we talk about climate it usually falls into a few select bins - science, policy, protests and politics.

Rarely is it spoken about in terms of its effects on the national security of each of our nations. Climate change is becoming a driver of geopolitics - whether it is the melting of polar ice cap in the Arctic; raging wildfires in the North - or more recently California; natural disasters; droughts and food insecurity that lead to mass migration.

And it's not like the warnings haven't been there.

The US National Security and Intelligence Assessment in 2008 put it this way.

"We judge global climate change will have wide-ranging implications for U.S. national security interests over the next 20 years . . . The United States depends on a smooth-functioning international system ensuring the flow of trade and market access to critical raw materials such as oil and gas, and security for its allies and partners. Climate change and climate change policies could affect all of these—domestic stability in a number of key states, the opening of new sea lanes and access to raw materials, and the global economy more broadly—with significant geopolitical consequences."

Again, in 2015 the White House national security strategy

"Climate change is an urgent and growing threat to our national security, contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources like food and water. The present day effects of climate change are being felt from the Arctic to the Midwest. Increased sea levels and storm surges threaten coastal regions, infrastructure, and property."



Let's pause and look at that.

“...contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows and conflicts over resources.”

Keep in mind, this is a ten-year-old US strategy. But what are we seeing today?

Natural disasters that in many respects require a military response - even if it is to move humanitarian supplies. In my country, the military has been used regularly to fight forest fires.

In 2023, the Canadian military conducted 141 straight days of operations supporting civilian authorities. That was a record. Most of it was dealing with climate-related crisis.

The argument - in my country - has been that while the military is fighting forest fires, it's not training for its regular job. That - mind you - is unique to Canada where we still have trouble defining what role our military plays in our society.

But it is an illustration of how climate change has a direct impact on national security.

And when you look at climate coverage - writ large - it is an under-reported, under-appreciated aspect of the issue.

It is in countries like Canada, a little more front and center. But not by much. When you step on the global stage at the COP conferences it is all about emissions targets, phasing out coal, driving zero plastic waste, protecting more of nature and advancing coastal resilience.

What's interesting is that I'm not alone in my assessment. A 2021 study Global Environmental Change - a peer-reviewed international journal - looked at how climate was covered by the media.

It found - by enlarge - a difference between the way climate is covered in the Global North and Global South.

It found that countries from the Global North cover climate change more frequently, but countries from the Global South focus more on its challenges and implications for society writ large.

In 2021, NATO recognized climate change as a 'threat multiplier' in its Climate Change and Security Action Plan and introduced an annual High-Level Dialogue on Climate Change and Security.

As someone who has covered every NATO Summit - save two - over the last 20 years I can tell you that the alliance's recognition of climate change as a threat was - long overdue and largely under-reported.

At the 2021 Summit, Canada offered and has subsequently established the NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence in Montreal.

Its focus - among other things - is to help reduce the impact of military activities on climate. Big, heavy pieces of military equipment produce a lot of carbon. So do battles.

One of the bigger aspects of the center's research is mitigating the effect of climate change on military institutions.

As the center noted: "Climate change tests the resilience of military installations and infrastructure, with strategic sites being vulnerable to rising sea levels, melting permafrost, and extreme weather events."

In June 2023, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the European Defence Agency published a report on the 'climate-energy-defence nexus' that included actions for EU defence to ensure climate resilience and energy sustainability.

The EU is also placing an emphasis on adaptation - making sure military capabilities and infrastructure are for challenging climatic conditions.

Once again folks, a lot of this has flown under the radar and goes largely unnoticed and unrecognized because both environmental and defence journalists and their editors either don't understand the nexus of environment and national security - or they don't care.

The World Economic Forum - however - recently sat up and took notice saying -

"We live in this era of connected shocks. So, a food crisis in one community can become a migration crisis in another context, can become a security context crisis in the third."

The Council on Foreign Relations went step further in the fall of last year with a detailed examination of how climate change is increasingly a driver in conflict.

It wrote:

"Within individual countries, climate change increases the likelihood that civil war could break out. For example, research has found that a rise in average temperatures by 1.8°F is linked to a 4.5 percent increase in the incidence of civil war that year. Climate is also linked to





making such wars last longer. For instance, some researchers have suggested that the bloody and ongoing civil war in Syria was made worse by climate change. They cite the idea that desertification and reduction in agricultural lands placed great strains on the Syrians, giving increased power to violent actors who controlled access to food and other resources. They argue that severe drought also led young men to move into urban settings seeking work, where they became more vulnerable to recruitment by militant organizations. Still, other scholars dispute the claim and suggest that the connections to climate are not necessarily clear.”

The report goes on to say:

“Climate-related factors can contribute to the onset of violence, can make it worse, and can even be themselves exacerbated by conflict. When wars break out, sometimes partly sparked by climate change, military responses can in turn cause more damage to the climate in a vicious cycle. Wars that involve using extensive heavy machinery, advanced weaponry, and other technologies can increase greenhouse gas emissions, destroy and contaminate ecosystems, and cause other harmful outcomes.”

Nowhere is climate change being felt more keenly than in the Arctic. But even in my country the relationship between climate and national security is poorly understood and under-appreciated.

Temperatures in the Arctic are rising at twice the rate of the rest of the world on average. That -in turn - has led to melting glaciers and ice sheets - factors that contribute to rising sea levels. What’s happening in the Arctic could lead to global changes in the food fishery and food security overall. That places additional burdens on economies, societies, and institutions around the world.

Where the nexus between climate and national security has been covered is in the realm of how it is reshaping geopolitics.

Sea-lanes once choked with ice and glacier sheets retreating are opening up resource competition among the great powers.

Take Greenland for example, which has been in the news recently - perhaps for all of the wrong reasons.

NASA’s jet propulsion lab published an analysis in the journal Nature last year. The report took a comprehensive look at retreating ice sheets using satellite data and GPS from 1985 to 2022 - more than 250,000 data points.

Of the 207 glaciers in the study, 179 retreated significantly since 1985, 27 held steady, and one advanced slightly.

Areas of critical minerals - once inaccessible are now within reach on the island. Is it any wonder that the Trump Administration is prepared to use military force to acquire Greenland.

The same might be said about Canada's Far North.

Yet, most of the coverage of the Arctic and climate revolves around how accessibility will create ecological damage. There is reference to the militarization of the North and the potential for conflict. But most serious military observers dismiss - outright - the notion that wars could be fought over in hospitable Arctic territory. Yet, they still train for them.

I will return to where I began. We as journalists have to do a better job at connecting the dots. We live in perilous times - environmentally and now geopolitically. Climate change is spoken about in apocalyptic and existential terms.

The apocalypse may be upon us. Although, it may not look entirely like what we have been predicting for the last 20 years.



## Speaker

### Tsegahun Asefa SHIMEKIT

Senior News Editor  
NBC Ethiopia TV  
Ethiopia

## Educational Background

- ◆ BA in Journalism
- ◆ course certificates from d/t international Media organizations
- ◆ Bsc in Electrical Engineering

## Professional Experience

- ◆ 3 years news anchoring/Producer
- ◆ 1 year as a senior news Editor
- ◆ 1 year on managing different social Media platforms

## Award-winning Career

- ◆ I have received multiple certificates for serving as a Master of Ceremonies (MC)

## Writing Work

- ◆ My experience in the journalism role has allowed me to engage with diverse audiences and facilitate meaningful discussions.

Tsegahun Asefa SHIMEKIT

## ***The Role of Journalism in Confronting Climate Change and Environmental Shifts***



Present M.r Tsegahun Asefa Shimekit  
By:- ***Senior News Editor***



Nbc Ethiopia



### **THE GROWING CLIMATE CRISIS**

The climate crisis is no longer a distant threat—it's here, and it's rapidly escalating. Over the past few decades, we've seen a dramatic increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Temperatures across the globe have risen exponentially, and the past decade has been the hottest decade on record.

As a Journalist We are witnessing unprecedented weather, vanishing species, and a world that is changing before our own eyes. And most sobering of all, however, is the fact that we are not just witnesses to this crisis but are also a part of the solution.

As the crisis continues to evolve, the need for action has never been more urgent. It's not only about saving the planet—it's about ensuring a habitable future for humanity itself.



**The Duty of Journalism:** Journalism plays a fundamental role in raising awareness, providing credible information, and creating change. Discuss the ways through which journalists can shed light on environmental degradation's consequences, new virus outbreaks, and climate migration.

**Fact-Based Reporting:** Emphasize the importance of science-based, unbiased reporting and fact-checking in reporting on climate change and environmental change. Climate denial and disinformation are real threats.

**Platform for Discussion and Solutions:** Journalism is also a forum for sharp discussion either of policy, measures of adaptation, or new technology and can amplify the voice of activists, researchers, and displaced people affected by the environment.

## CHALLENGES JOURNALISTS FACE

- Complexity of Climate Science
- Misinformation and Climate Denial
- Lack of Funding and Resources
- Challenges in Accessing Reliable Data
- Political and Corporate Pressure
- Public Apathy and Media Fatigue
- Bridging the Gap Between Local and Global Impact

## JOURNALISM IN THE AGE OF MISINFORMATION AND AI

- As artificial intelligence and social media expand, false facts regarding climate change are spreading rapidly.
- Journalists should fight disinformation through stringent fact-checking, verification of data, and sources of credibility.

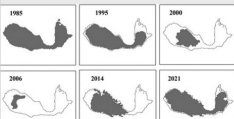
### The ethical challenge

- How do we weigh freedom of speech against preventing climate misinformation?
- The role of media literacy in helping audiences differentiate between real and misleading information.



## Stories of Climate Change in Ethiopia

### The Disappearing Lake - The Case of Lake Haramaya



### Floods and the Destruction of Villages in the South



### Drought and Famine in the Somali and Afar Regions



### The Fight Against Climate Change



## CONCLUSION: THE WAY FORWARD

Global Cooperation:

**Working Together for a Sustainable Future**

**Climate change is a shared global issue—no country can fix it alone.**

**Journalists of all backgrounds must collaborate to:**

**Share investigative techniques.**

**Get underreported environmental crises noticed.**

**Develop cross-border solutions to hold world powers accountable.**

**Platforms like this conference allow us to exchange knowledge, debate solutions, and strategize on how to amplify our impact.**

**Journalism is not just about reporting, but shaping the future.**

- **We must move beyond awareness-raising and demand substantive policy changes and feasible solutions.**
- **Our common responsibility as media is to maintain climate change on the global agenda and avoid disinformation from threatening progress.**
- **Let's voice out and ensure a sustainable future—a story at a time.**

**SENIOR NEWS  
EDITOR/ANCHOR**



Presented by:

**TSEGAHUN  
ASEFA**



Speaker

## Gianmarco VOLPE

Agenzia Nova  
Head of the Global Affairs Desk  
Italy

### Educational Background

- ◆ Second-level master's degree, Journalism – Lumsa University, Rome
- ◆ Master's degree, Journalism and International Relations – Lumsa University, Rome
- ◆ Bachelor's degree, Communication Sciences – Lumsa University, Rome

### Professional Experience

- ◆ Head of the Global Affairs Desk at Agenzia Nova (2014-2025)
- ◆ Middle East and North Africa analyst at Centro Studi Internazionali (2012-2014)
- ◆ Media advisor at Nato (2012)
- ◆ Journalist at Il Venerdì di Repubblica (2009-2012)

### Writing Work

- ◆ Fino al Palazzo (2019)
- ◆ Atlante geopolitico del Mediterraneo (2014)





**Gianmarco VOLPE**

## Voices of Change: Journalism, Abruzzo's Snow and a Warming World

Dear colleagues,  
thank you for having me today. I want to start with a place I love: the Apennine Mountains in Abruzzo. It's a beautiful part of Italy, not very famous. I went there as a kid, especially in winter. The snow was deep. The air was cold. Skiing was fun—not just for me, but for many people. Now, things are different. For five years, winters are too warm. Snow is rare. The cold lasts only a few weeks. I miss it, but it's not just my problem.

In Abruzzo, towns lived on snow. In the 1950s and '60s, people spent millions. They built ski lifts, hotels, shops. They thought snow would stay. Today, it's falling apart. I've seen it: fewer visitors, quiet streets, less money. In Rome, it's crazy too—finding a parking spot is like a game! Italy is changing. Money, people, politics—all because of climate trouble.

This is why journalism matters. It's not just about snow or towns. It's about a big global problem. Today, I'll talk about how journalism handles climate change—in Italy, in Europe. The hard parts, the good parts, and why it's so important.

### **Journalism: A Light in Trouble**

Climate change is here now. In 2023, Europe got very hot. Rome and Palermo hit 40°C. You'd sweat just standing there! The Alps lose ice. Venice floods a lot. Abruzzo's mountains have little snow. Journalism needs to show this clearly. Not just with numbers, but with stories that make us act.

When it's good, it works. A scientist says, "Italy is 1.5°C warmer since 1980." Okay, but boring. A journalist takes you to Roccaraso in Abruzzo. Ski slopes are empty. Hotels are closed. Jobs are gone. You remember that. In Europe, we have the Green Deal. It's a plan to stop climate harm by 2050. Journalists check it. Italy said, "No coal by 2025." When it slowed, we said, "Hurry up!" That keeps things moving.

We also show ideas. Solar power in Italy. Wind power in Europe. Not only bad news, but ways to fix it.

## Italy in the Middle

Italy faces big climate problems. In the north, mountains melt. In the south, beaches shrink. Milan's air is dirty. Last summer, Sicily had wildfires. Thousands ran. Tuscany had floods. Villages turned to water. This happens all the time now.

Italian journalists work hard. Climate change is everywhere. Puglia's olive trees die. Sardinia has too many tourists. Abruzzo's snow is going. We have lots to say. But people get tired of bad news. We call it "climate fatigue." Nobody wants to feel sad with breakfast!

It's tough for us too. Big newspapers, like Corriere della Sera, sell less now. Half their readers left since the 2000s. Online, fast news wins—crimes, fights. Not slow climate stuff. Small news teams in Abruzzo close. Writers get almost no money. Who can pay to check a mountain for a week? Not many.

People don't always listen. Climate change isn't exciting. No bad guys. No quick end. A 2022 study said only 35% of Italians read nature news. Many look at X instead. Politics splits us. Some like green plans. Some say they hurt jobs. We try to be fair. Everyone says, "You're not!" Abruzzo's winter gets a quick look—then it's gone.

## My Job at Agenzia Nova

I'm Gianmarco Volpe, Head of the Global Affairs Desk at Agenzia Nova. We're a small Italian news agency. We cover world politics and money. Funds are low—normal for us—but we have people all over. We want Italians to see how climate change moves power and cash, here and far away.

In Africa's Sahel, no rain pushes people to Italy. That changes rules in Rome. In the Arctic, ice melts. Ships go new ways. Bad for Italian ports. In Asia, floods stop tech factories. Italian companies pay more. In Brazil, fires burn pig food. Prosciutto costs extra! These are about work and control. We try to make Italians notice.

Last month, our Rome team wrote about India's heat. Rice crops failed. Prices went up. Italy buys that rice. Risotto is expensive now! We show these links. It's hard when people like sports more.

## Europe's Big Fight

Europe has a messy battle. Twenty-seven countries, all different. Germany uses coal. Spain has no water. The Netherlands fights the sea. We want one story for all. But an Abruzzo farmer doesn't care about Swedish ice. A Greek fisherman skips Dutch walls.



Now, Europe deals with Ukraine. The focus is on guns and defense. That's fair—war is serious. We need safety. Money goes to armies, not green plans. The Green Deal feels far away these days. Leaders talk about tanks, not trees. It makes sense. But climate change doesn't stop. Journalists have to keep it alive. We can't let the Green Deal disappear. We must push leaders to remember it, even now.

Lies make it harder. In 2024, X said EU taxes hurt farmers on purpose. Not true. But people got mad in France and Poland. We fix that. Online noise wins too much. Europe has many voices—hard to make one loud climate call.

## Trump Changes Things

On January 20, 2025, Donald Trump came back as U.S. president. He left the Paris Climate Agreement—again. He says it's fake. He wants oil. The U.S. makes lots of pollution. Them leaving is bad—like a friend quitting a team. Nice timing, huh?

Europe is upset but keeps going. EU leaders said, “This is hard.” The Green Deal stays—zero harm by 2050. Germany's Robert Habeck said, “Trump's out? We're in!” New ideas come in February 2025. But Ukraine pulls focus. Some say green costs too much. People protest. It's a big test.

China said, “Bad move,” but stays in Paris for 2060. Poor countries worry. No U.S. money means less help for dry Africa. At COP29 in Baku last year, all promised to try. Without the U.S., it's tough. I wrote about the G20 in Rome, 2021. Leaders wanted 1.5°C warming. Trump shakes that now. We must stay strong.

## Some Good News

It's not all bad. In Italy, La Repubblica makes maps and videos. Abruzzo farmers try new things. At Agenzia Nova, we show climate and money with pictures—trade maps with red dots. Europe has teams like the European Data Journalism Network. They find big facts together.

I like “fix-it news.” Not just “we're stuck,” but “here's how.” Tuscany uses old water paths to fight dry times. Abruzzo tries tours, not skis—good luck! A 2023 study said 70% of Europeans want this. News with hope. That's nice.

## Journalism Can Start Things

Journalism does more than talk. In 2019, it made Greta Thunberg loud. Kids marched everywhere. In Abruzzo, a solar story got others to try. At Agenzia Nova, our Iceland heat-

power piece got calls from Italian leaders. It tells, it pushes, it starts fires. It checks power too. Italy's coal slowed. We pointed it out. It moved again. In Europe, we watch the Green Deal. Now with Ukraine, we keep climate in sight.

## A Day of Work

Last summer, our reporter went to Puglia. Olive trees die there—too hot, no rain, bugs. He had little money, just a train ride. He talked to farmers, took pictures, checked with experts. He wrote: “Puglia’s trees are going.” It went online. People helped a bit after. Small, but good. That’s journalism—tough days, little wins.

## What's Next

Journalism needs more. Money for big stories. Lessons to understand science. People saying, “We believe you.” In Italy, cash is short. A “Help News” fund? Agenzia Nova has little. More would help. We need tools—computers for numbers, people to stop lies. We can't stop. Abruzzo's winters, Venice's water—they're still here to save.

Journalism is our voice. It can call us to save the Apennines, the Mediterranean, our tomorrow—even with Ukraine now. It's not perfect. It trips. It's quiet sometimes. But help it, and it's strong. From Abruzzo's snow to big world places, it makes our story—fight, hope, a world to keep. Let's lift it. When journalism grows, we grow—together, ready to change things.

Thank you.



Speaker

## YUN Ji Ro

Director  
NEXT group  
Korea

### Educational Background

- ◆ MSc in Computational Science & Technology, Seoul National University (2013)
- ◆ B.A. in Economics, Yonsei University (2005)

### Professional Experience

- ◆ Director of Media, NEXT group (March 2023 - present)
- ◆ Journalist, Segye Ilbo (January 2005 - February 2023)
- ◆ Columnist of Hankyoreh (July 2023 - present) and Segye Ilbo (February 2025 - present)
- ◆ Regular guest of 'White Paper on Earth' corner on KBS 1 Radio (June 2022 - present)

### Award-winning Career

- ◆ Medical Science Coverage of the Year Award -Environment, Korea Science Journalists Association (2022)
- ◆ Korea Green Climate Award, National Assembly Forum on Climate Change (2020)
- ◆ EU Climate Change Journalist Award, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Korea (2019)
- ◆ Climate Change Journalist Award, the Korean Society of Climate Change Research (2019)

### Writing Work

- ◆ <A Carbonful Table>, Sejongbooks, 2022
- ◆ <Ensemble ENSO prediction based on various perturbation methods>, Seoul National University, 2013

**YUN Ji Ro**

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## Is Climate Just an Item, or a View?

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Distinguished fellow journalists,

It is a great honor to stand before you today. My name is Yun Jiro, and I oversee media affairs at Next Group, a climate and energy think tank.

Many of you attending this conference, both as audience members and as speakers on this stage, are esteemed members of the media. Given this, some of you may be wondering why someone from a think tank has been invited to speak at this event.

I previously stood in a similar position at the World Journalists Conference in 2021 as a journalist. Four years have passed since then, and much has changed—not only for me personally but also in the global landscape and Korea's circumstances. With these shifts, I believe we must reconsider how we define and approach climate journalism, and that is the message I wish to share with you today.

To reflect on the past four years, I revisited the remarks I had prepared at the time. As you may recall, in 2018, the Extinction Rebellion movement in the UK and the civil disobedience protests led by Greta Thunberg in Sweden gained significant momentum, bringing climate politics to the forefront.

The outbreak of COVID-19 significantly heightened global awareness of climate issues. In the United States, grassroots initiatives such as the Sunrise Movement played a key role in shaping public opinion, ultimately contributing to the Democratic Party's rise to power. In Korea, the government adopted a bold and forward-looking approach by introducing the Green New Deal and carbon neutrality commitments in 2020. During that period, I witnessed a sharp rise in climate-related news coverage and underscored the necessity of shifting from mere quantity to a more substantive and in-depth approach in climate journalism.

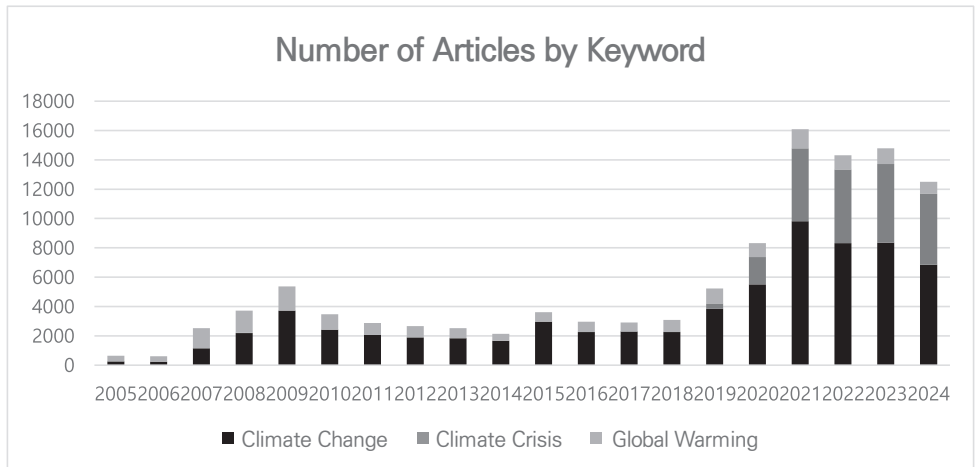
### 1. Has Anything Changed?

So, what has changed over the past four years? According to a media audience survey published late last year by the Korea Press Foundation, 71.4% of respondents stated that the volume of climate change coverage in Korea remains insufficient, while only 3.3% considered it adequate.



A separate survey conducted earlier found that over half (51.8%) of respondents who said they ‘rarely see climate change coverage’ cited the reason that such reports do not stand out. I am curious to hear your thoughts on these results. I believe we should not simply interpret them as a sign that media interest in climate change has faded once again. There are two key implications to consider. First, as shown in the graph below, it is possible that articles related to climate issues were not recognized as ‘News Coverage on Climate Change’ by the audience.

Graph 1 illustrates the number of articles containing specific keywords in national general newspapers in Korea from 2005 to 2014. The number of media outlets analyzed remained consistent throughout the period.



Graph 1 (Source: Big Kinds, BIG Korean Integrated News Database System, a public news search platform operated by the Korea Press Foundation)

It is clear that climate change-related articles saw a significant surge four years ago. However, since 2022, their volume has shown a noticeable decline. At this point, I would like to highlight this article.

## Power Grid Expansion Delayed by 66 to 150 Months... Ongoing Conflicts Unresolved

The construction of the 345kV Bukdangjin–Shintangjeong transmission line, completed in December last year, was delayed by 12 years and 6 months from its original schedule, marking the longest power grid project delay in South Korea.

This transmission line was intended to supply electricity generated from the Taeon Thermal Power Plant to Chungnam and southern Gyeonggi Province. However, opposition from local residents and a lack of cooperation from local governments led to years of delays.

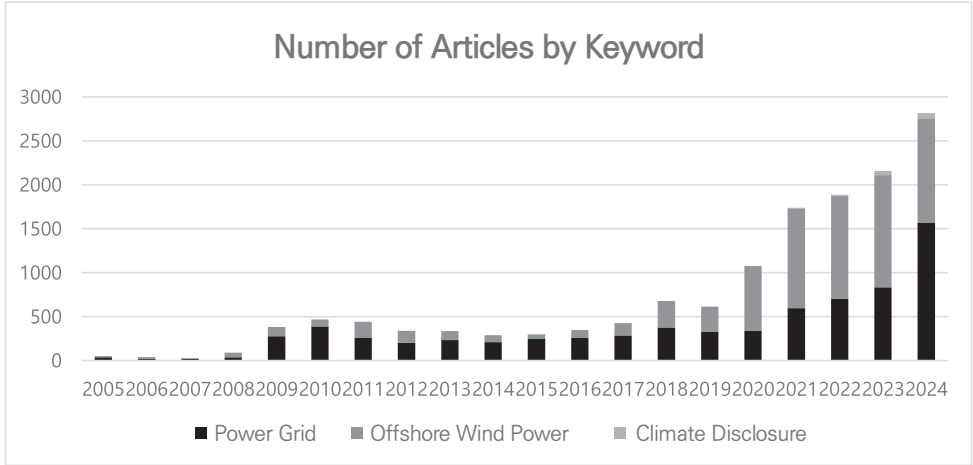
Other projects have also faced setbacks. The 500kV East Coast–Singapyeong HVDC transmission system, connected to the Shin Hanul Nuclear Power Plant, has been delayed by 5 years and 6 months, while the 345kV Dangjin Thermal–Shinsongsan transmission line, which carries power from the Dangjin Thermal Power Plant, has been postponed by 7 years and 6 months.

Additionally, the construction of the 345kV Sinjangseong Substation, linked to the Southwest Offshore Wind Farm, has been pushed back by 6 years and 2 months.  
(Yonhap News, February 3, 2025)

The title of this article is “[Challenges of the Electric Era] ① Power Plants Built in Vain... The Need to Resolve Transmission Grid Bottlenecks.” Efficient grid operation is just as essential to the energy transition as the expansion of carbon-free energy sources. However, without understanding the full context, readers might not even recognize this article as being related to climate action. They might simply dismiss it as ‘just another infrastructure issue with transmission towers.’

Graph 2 illustrates the volume of news coverage on power grids, offshore wind power, and climate disclosure. A significant number of articles featuring these keywords—like the previous example—could easily be interpreted as general reports on social conflicts or economic issues unless thoroughly examined or placed within the broader framework of climate reporting





Graph 2 (Source: Big Kinds, BIG Korean Integrated News Database System, a public news search platform operated by the Korea Press Foundation)

As climate action has shifted from raising alarm to concrete implementation, the scope of reporting has expanded. However, general readers may not have perceived these broader reports as part of the climate category.

The second factor contributing to survey results indicating a lack of climate coverage is the evolving way we consume news. In Korea, news consumption via mobile devices and YouTube is remarkably high. While the degree may vary, similar trends are likely observed in your countries as well. More recently, messaging services have also emerged as a significant platform for news consumption. A key characteristic of these media is that users selectively engage with the information they choose to receive. In other words, even individuals with a strong interest in climate change may find it difficult to encounter relevant articles unless they actively seek them out.

## 2. Climate is a View: A Perspective on Journalism

Naturally, this brings us to the question of news production—what truly defines climate journalism? After spending 18 years in the newspaper industry, I transitioned to a think tank two years ago. However, as I continue to work in media affairs, I still engage frequently with journalists. I often hear dedicated climate reporters share their frustrations: “Writing climate stories is challenging,” “Editors don’t prioritize them.” These are concerns I personally encountered during my time in the newsroom as well.

So, what exactly defines climate journalism? For those attending this conference, there is likely no disagreement that we are living in an era of climate crisis. We must achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. It is now clear that the exhilarating roar of a Ferrari V12 engine or the exclusivity of a Gulfstream private jet can no longer be seen as mere symbols of aspiration. Breaking away from the fossil fuels that have powered 20th-century civilization is nothing short of a revolution.

I believe that climate is not just a niche topic reserved for specialized journalists or specific government departments. Climate is not just an item—it is a perspective, a view that shapes how we understand the world. This means that from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep, we should view everything through the lens of climate. When assessing costs and profitability across all sectors, we must also consider carbon emissions and reduction efforts. Yet, discussions on the latter are still regarded as nothing more than a mere “item.” Allow me to present an example.

U.S. President Donald Trump is urging South Korea to participate in Alaska’s natural gas project. News coverage and reader discussions surrounding this issue have primarily focused on its economic feasibility—whether joining the project would provide a strategic advantage in the tariff war or ensure a return on substantial investment costs. These are important considerations. However, discussions must also take into account the impact of Alaska’s gas consumption on the remaining carbon budget and the risks associated with stranded fossil fuel assets. Yet, such analyses continue to be treated separately as a ‘climate item’ covered exclusively by ‘environmental journalists.’ This implies that climate considerations are still not fully embedded in core decision-making processes.

No single sector can tackle the climate crisis on its own. Politics, economics, culture, and even sports must all be viewed through the lens of climate, and this vital responsibility rests with you. As climate action becomes more specialized and society continues to consume information selectively, embracing a climate lens is more crucial than ever.

### 3. Beyond Boundaries

Applying climate criteria across various sectors requires specialized expertise. After all, viewing climate through a meaningful lens goes beyond simply using adjectives like ‘serious,’ ‘concerning,’ or ‘wrong.’ To objectively assess its impact on emissions and reduction efforts, we need a network that facilitates the exchange of expert knowledge and insights. That is where my role comes in. The Think Tank I am part of specializes in quantitative research on energy and industrial transition. Given the technical complexity of this field, it is not always easy for non-experts to grasp. My job is to refine and communicate these findings, ensuring that valuable insights do not remain confined to a small group of specialists.



There may already be many CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) in your countries that provide valuable knowledge and perspectives, or there may still be a shortage of them. Even if they are limited, climate-focused reporting remains possible—because we are all connected.

Last year, I had the opportunity to cover COP29 in collaboration with The Segye Ilbo. My goal was to examine climate issues from the perspective of Central Asia and the Caucasus region. Too often, global climate discussions are framed through a Western-centric lens. I believed that analyzing these issues from the standpoint of Central Asia and the Caucasus would uncover an entirely different layer of complexity. However, identifying local civil society organizations (CSOs) and experts in non-English-speaking countries where CSO activities are restricted proved to be a significant challenge. Nevertheless, utilizing ChatGPT, online video conferencing, and collaborative Google Sheets, we successfully conducted both preliminary research and on-the-ground reporting.

Integrating climate considerations into every sector is challenging, but there are greater resources available to facilitate this effort than one might assume. I encourage you to make full use of these resources, ensuring that climate is no longer just an item but both a mainstream perspective (view).



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