
Food, Nature, Climate

Media insights

This newsletter tracks narrative and real progress in the climate, food and nature nexus in relation to four benchmarks of success, co-designed with a number of partners.

The traffic lights system we use is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of media coverage.

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(↑) = gaining momentum

(-) = no meaningful change

(↓) = losing momentum

(-) Land use is considered central to the climate solution

 Total of 3.5K articles in the media we are monitoring.

 Media interest is up 112% compared to the last four weeks.

At COP26, world leaders, for the [first time](#), clearly recognise the links between the nature and climate crises. Numerous [commitments](#) and [sectoral deals](#) were made to conserve, restore and sustainably manage forests, oceans and other ecosystems. The importance of indigenous peoples' [rights](#) and creating sustainable commodity trading were also [recognised](#).

While the final [pact](#) cites nature, there is no reference to nature-based solutions (NBS). This is due to [discomfort among some negotiators](#) regarding the links between NBS and offset markets. However, [countries did recognise the vital role that nature](#) plays in climate action.

Food systems go under the radar at COP26. [Several outlets](#) reported how not [enough attention](#) was paid to food and farming at COP26, despite its rising emissions. Critics [claimed](#) that there was not enough discussion of livestock emissions, sustainable diets, food loss and farming subsidies.

Agriculture an afterthought in Methane Pledge. The methane deal got lots of attention given the role the US played. However, the heavily-trailed pledge was [criticised](#) for its lack of focus on reducing [livestock emissions](#). [Politico](#) noted that the US's methane-reduction plan "misrepresents and minimises the livestock sector's contribution" to methane emissions.

Forest deal make waves with a focus on indigenous peoples, trade reform and finance, meaning it went further than previous forest pacts (despite Indonesia backtracking and its environment minister's subsequent [twitter feud](#)). However, critics [say](#) that, to be effective, the declaration needs more [detail and transparency](#) on how commitments will be implemented, monitored and enforced.

Carbon markets get more scrutiny. The final agreement resolves [sticky issues](#), such as double counting, but it still leaves space for countries to [game the system](#). For example, experts are [concerned](#) that the new rules can allow millions of old credits into the new system, most of which have not in fact reduced emissions. Significantly for the land sector, the new rules [exclude](#) the use of legacy REDD+ credits generated from "avoided deforestation", but they leave the door open for these schemes to be included in the future. Mark Carney also said the use of voluntary carbon offsets should be a [last resort](#) to cover only residual emissions.

Food systems emissions rise. Two seemingly conflicting reports were published - one from the FAO, which stated food systems emissions rose by [17%](#), and one from the Global Carbon Project, which [reported](#) that land-use change net emissions halved. However, both reports found that net emissions from land use declined over the last 30 years, by between 12% and 25%, results which fall within their respective margins of error. The total emissions increase reported by the FAO stems from emissions from sectors of the food system outside of land-use.

(↑) Galvanising new leaders / voices on food and nature resources

Indigenous people denounce COP26 deal. Indigenous activists said they were [locked](#) out of discussions and expressed scepticism about [financial pledges](#). They also said that world leaders still haven't [committed enough](#) and are not taking [meaningful](#) action on climate change. A coalition of indigenous farmers urged leaders "[to acknowledge the threat climate change poses to their food production and to shine a spotlight on the environmental benefits of the kind of sustainable agriculture they practice across the world](#)".

Financial community focuses on agriculture emissions. Investors called on the G20 to [disclose](#) agricultural emissions reduction targets, while COP saw a number of new commitments, such as the pledge from more than [30 financial institutions](#) to work on eliminating agricultural commodity-driven deforestation risks in their investment and lending portfolios by 2025. Investors also warned the EU against [badging intensive farming as sustainable](#).

Fridays for the Future (FFF) lends its [weight to CAP reform](#). This is a new move for the youth climate movement to focus on agricultural reform.

Ban Ki Moon focuses on food systems and adaptation. Moving beyond mitigation, [new voices](#) are emerging ahead of COP27 addressing the role of food systems in building resilience.

(↓) Food / Nature as part of the Covid recovery

 Total of 139 articles in the media we are monitoring.

 Media interest is up 11% compared to the last four weeks.

Global food prices hit their highest level in more than a decade. According to the [FAO](#), the world is [witnessing probably](#) the biggest shock to supply chains since 1982. The CEO of Cargill said this situation is [likely](#) to persist in 2022 due to continuous disruptions to global supply chains.

The debate about the origins of COVID is back. New research suggests the Huanan market was the [source](#) of the [initial outbreak and not just where the virus was spread](#). But a [US intelligence report](#) is inconclusive on the origins, with some agencies suggesting the Wuhan lab leak is the source.

Brazil deforestation figures soar. Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon has increased [almost 22%](#) year-on-year, the highest rate since 2006. This raises serious accountability questions following Brazil's decision to sign up to the COP forest deal.

(-) 'Business as usual' in agriculture is not a safe economic bet

 Total of 326 articles in the media we are monitoring.

 Media interest is up 12% compared to the last four weeks.

Indian government caves into farmer demands. The Indian government has [made an unusual U-turn](#) by repealing the laws that have driven a groundswell of rural/farming unrest in a move seen as politically tactical ahead of the upcoming elections in Uttar Pradesh.

Sri Lanka organic experiment goes wrong. There has been some small but [growing coverage](#) regarding Sri Lankan policies to adopt organic food systems and the subsequent price hikes and unrest this has caused. This has prompted concern that this may be used as ammunition for those looking to refute the role of nature friendly farming in delivering food security and poverty reduction.

Swine & Bird Flu on the rise in Europe. New cases of [Swine Flu](#) in Germany and [Bird Flu](#) in the UK are adding to pandemic challenges for the livestock industry.

EU approves its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to start in 2023. The farm deal worth EUR 386.6 billion will be the [bloc's farming policy](#) till 2027. CAP will give EUR 270 billion in direct aid to farmers to support their livelihoods. But some EU lawmakers criticised the deal, arguing that it [doesn't align](#) with the EU green deal or global climate targets and goes against the interests of small farmers.

Trade/Supply chain action heats up:

- The World Trade Organisation [formally recognised](#) the role of international trade and deforestation.
- Leading brands including Tesco, Nestle and Nando's have signed up to the new [UK Soy](#)

[Manifesto](#), where they have committed to buying only soy that has been grown without deforestation or removal of native vegetation by 2025.

- EU draft law will bar [six](#) commodities (coffee, cocoa, cattle, palm oil, soy and wood, as well as derived products including leather, oil cakes and chocolate) produced in areas at high risk of [deforestation](#). Some environmentalists welcomed the proposal, which encompasses legal and illegal forms of land use, but others criticised it for [excluding](#) certain commodities, like rubber. This has resulted in a [backlash from the Brazilian government](#), asserting this is protectionism.

Brazil's planned Amacro zone could lead to more forest loss. Brazil is [considering](#) a new agricultural development plan that proponents promise can prevent illegal deforestation while intensifying livestock production in four Amazon states. Critics say the plan is a [way](#) to legalise current deforestation and could lead to more trees being felled.

Also worth reading

Mapping where carbon needs to remain to avoid climate catastrophe. A new [research paper](#) maps parts of the world that hold very high concentrations of carbon. Half the world's irrecoverable carbon is concentrated on 3.3% of its land, equivalent in size to India and Mexico combined. The researchers found that if all this natural sink is wrecked, it is likely to lead to the release of 139 gigatons of carbon, overshooting the 1.5C goal. But, new protections for just 5.4% of this land would keep 75% of this carbon out of the atmosphere.

Antibiotic resistance. A study on [antibiotics resistance](#) points the finger at the livestock industry.

This dashboard shows statistics and top articles in the climate, food and nature nexus in relation to three benchmarks of success

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Global Strategic Communications Council (GSCC)

The GSCC is a global network of communications professionals in the field of climate and energy.

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