

# What the Papers Say: Trends in Sustainability

## A Comparative Analysis of 115 Leading National Newspapers Worldwide

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### Abstract

In this paper, an overview of the results of a longitudinal analysis of the coverage of sustainability-related concepts in 115 leading national newspapers worldwide between January 1990 and July 2008 – covering approximately 20,500,000 articles in 340,000 newspaper issues in 39 countries – is presented. On a global level, 'sustainable development' and 'corporate social responsibility' seem to have reached the mainstream public arena, whereas the coverage of 'corporate citizenship' and 'corporate sustainability' remains marginal. The increase in sustainability-related media coverage since 1990 largely seems to be of an incremental nature, rather than clearly associated with specific events. Only very few truly global events can be identified that triggered a substantial amount of media coverage globally. Furthermore, marked regional and national differences in the coverage of sustainability-related concepts can be identified.

**Key words:** Corporate Citizenship, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Corporate Accountability, Triple Bottom Line, Media Representation, Text Mining, Newspaper Analysis, Document Frequencies

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