Sustainability in the media

Scientists and reporters do things differently

• focus
• framing of debates
• evidence
Focus

![Graph showing the number of climate change papers from 1988 to 2004. The number of papers increased significantly from 1998 onwards.](image-url)
Focus

Framing

Organic food & agriculture stories using a few templates…
• biggest/best: organics fastest growing sector of food industry
• fashion: celebrity organic restaurants
• rivalry: organics safer/greener than traditional agriculture
• controversy: industries fool the public

Lockie concludes:
“…the multiple approaches taken by agriculturalists to the pursuit of sustainability and food quality were largely invisible.”
Evidence

[S]ome skeptical meteorologists and analysts assert that global warming reflects a natural cycle of temperature fluctuation and can not be decisively tied to human actions.

“As far as we are concerned, there’s no evidence for global warming, and by the year 2000 the man-made greenhouse theory will probably be regarded as the biggest scientific gaffe of the century,” Piers Corbyn, an astrophysicist at London’s Weather Action forecasting organization told the Reuter news agency.
Evidence

- Balanced accounts of anthropogenic contributions to warming: 52.65%
- Skepticism of anthropogenic contribution dominant: 6.18%
- Exclusive coverage of anthropogenic warming: 5.88%
- Anthropogenic contribution dominant: 35.29%

Boykoff & Boykoff, *Global Environmental Change*, 2004