

The Role of Niche Media in Bringing a Social Change

S. Gopikrishna Warriar
Managing Editor

Understand the media – Spin it like Tendulkar



The first challenges for NGOs and other stakeholders in the environment and development sector is to catch the attention of the local reporter and/or the editor

Tools to engage journalists

- Press release or a press statement – a written statement that can be reached to the journalists either by e-mail or during a press meeting.
- Press meeting or a press briefing – a meeting (formal or informal) where researchers meet journalists to talk about a recent development.
- Media workshop – an online or an offline event where journalists have the opportunity to interact with multiple experts
- Op-eds – Ensuring that your voice and arguments are heard in the media, public and policy space.

- Should you pay to get media editorial space? No, absolutely not. That is an endless path. Good journalists will always be interested in good stories. Your job is to identify and reach them.

This strange animal called the journalist

- Usually young and inexperienced when covering field assignments
- Working on multiple stories at the same time
- Hard pressed for time and energy
- Constantly trying hard to sell their story with the gatekeepers
- Works long hours, at least six days of a week
- Juggles this with their personal life
- Not always well paid



Understanding the editor

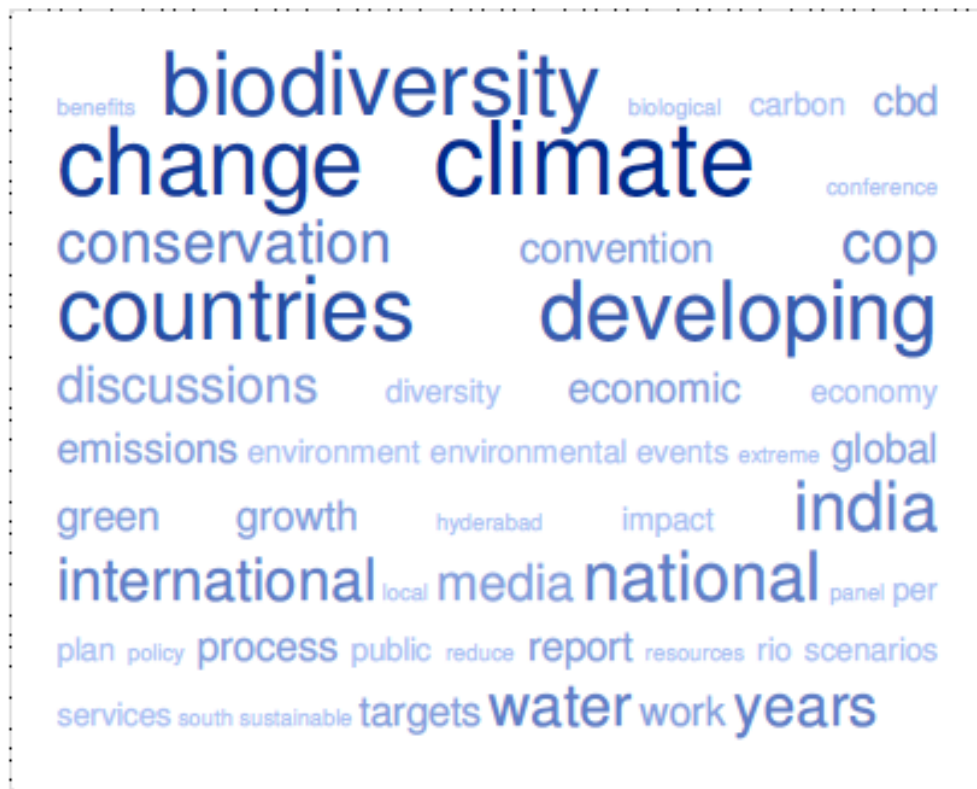
- Has to balance multiple interests in their media product
- Has to ensure that their product sells
- Reports to the owners of the media house and the shareholders
- Has to prioritise news in their product. Your themes may not be high on their priority list
- Works long hours. Never really switches off
- Has very short attention-span for your ideas



Kunda Dixit, editor of Nepali Times is one of the senior-most environment editors in South Asia

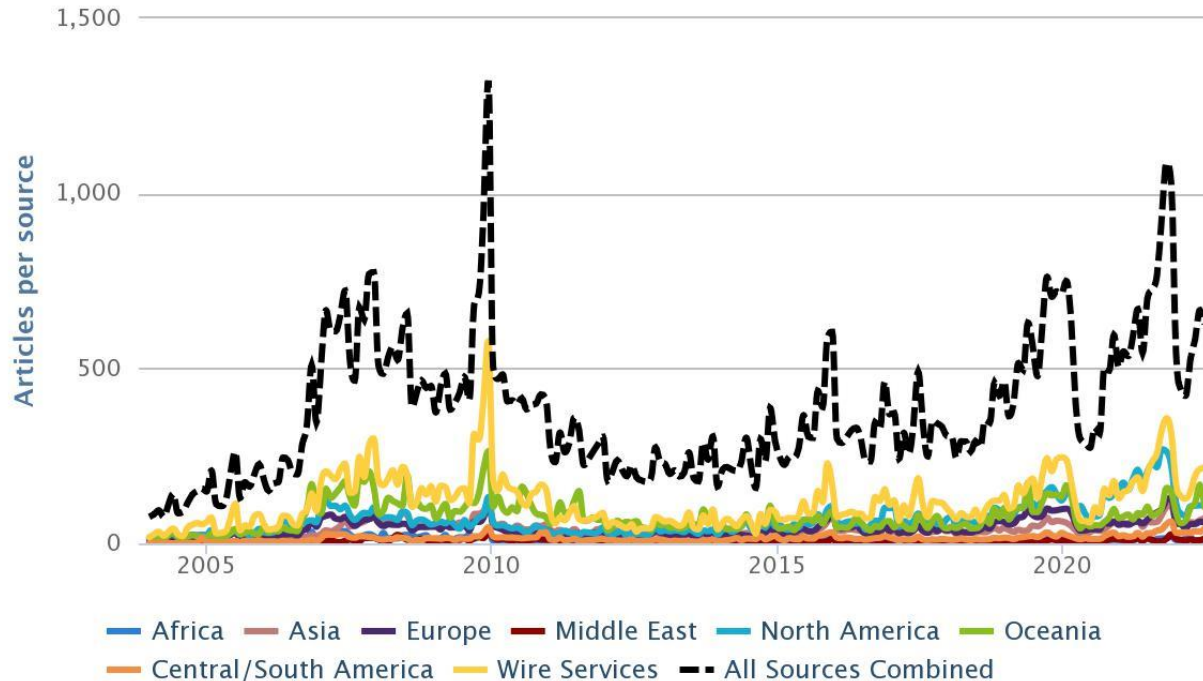
But ...

- The media works with catchwords (climate change, biodiversity, etc.) and not necessarily concepts
- It needs topicality
- Your op-ed has to link with the larger picture
- Your idea has to catch the editor's attention



Get the timing right

2004–2022 World Newspaper Coverage of Climate Change or Global Warming



This graph monitors 126 sources (across newspapers, radio and TV) in 58 countries in seven different regions around the world.

What skills should the media relations person need?

- To start with – humility
- Patience and good humor
- A reasonably good knowledge of the subject matter
- Reasonable authorization to answer questions
- An ability to judge journalists on their merit and professional standing
- An ability to listen
- An understanding of how the media functions

MONGABAY

— INDIA —

**You can reach the Mongabay-India editorial at
indiasubmissions@mongabay.com**

Thank you!

india.mongabay.com



@mongabayindia