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Environmental Mindscapes: Cultural Mediation and Ecocritical Narratives in Digital Journalism

Abstract I: Il presente lavoro analizza il giornalismo ambientale digitale come forma di mediazione culturale. Muovendo dall'ecocritica, dai Translation Studies e dagli studi sulla comunicazione ambientale, introduce il concetto di *environmental mindscapes* al fine di esaminare come le realtà ecologiche vengano percepite, interpretate e negoziate. Lo studio analizza sei articoli ambientali pubblicati da *The Guardian* e *The Conversation* tra il 2025 e il 2026, concentrandosi su tre dimensioni interconnesse: luogo, crisi e responsabilità. Attraverso una lettura qualitativa e un'analisi lessicale, i risultati mostrano come il giornalismo digitale trasformi realtà ecologiche situate in narrazioni culturalmente significative, costruendo appartenenza, consapevolezza e coinvolgimento ambientale e orientando l'immaginazione di possibili futuri ecologici.

Abstract II: This article explores digital environmental journalism as a form of cultural mediation. Drawing on Ecocriticism, Translation Studies, and Environmental Communication, it introduces the concept of *environmental mindscapes* to examine how ecological realities are perceived, interpreted, and negotiated. The study analyses six environmental articles published by *The Guardian* and *The Conversation* between 2025 and 2026, focusing on three interconnected dimensions: place, crisis, and responsibility. Qualitative close reading and lexical analysis show how digital journalism transforms situated ecological realities into culturally meaningful narratives, constructing environmental belonging, awareness, and engagement, while shaping how readers imagine ecological change and possible environmental futures.

Keywords: Environmental mindscapes, cultural mediation, ecocriticism, digital journalism.

1. Introduction

Climate change, biodiversity loss, ecological degradation, and sustainability challenges have become increasingly prominent in contemporary public discourse, shaping political, cultural, and social agendas across the globe. Within this context, digital media have emerged as crucial sites for the circulation of ecological knowledge, enabling environmental concerns to circulate across geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. Environmental journalism plays a particularly significant role in this process because it transforms

situated experiences of ecological change, scientific knowledge, and environmental events into narratives that can be accessed and interpreted by geographically dispersed audiences. Environmental communication, therefore, extends beyond the simple dissemination of scientific information: it mediates between expert knowledge, public discourse, and everyday understandings of environmental change (Hansen & Cox 2015; Davis *et al.* 2018; Cox & Pezzullo 2016).

This mediating function has important implications for the way environmental realities are perceived and imagined. Digital environmental narratives connect specific places, communities, ecosystems, and ecological events to broader debates concerning climate change, sustainability, biodiversity, and environmental justice. In doing so, they contribute to the construction of shared ecological imaginaries through which audiences interpret environmental transformations and their implications for human and more-than-human worlds. Environmental journalism can consequently be approached as a form of cultural mediation, through which situated ecological realities are selected, contextualised, framed, and narrativised for wider interpretive communities.

This perspective also resonates with Translation Studies, particularly with approaches that understand translation as extending beyond interlingual transfer to encompass processes of cultural negotiation and mediation. Esperança Bielsa and Susan Bassnett (2008) demonstrate the close relationship between journalism and translation, particularly in the processes through which news is selected, adapted, and circulated across linguistic and cultural contexts. From this perspective, journalistic practices may be understood as translational insofar as they relocate experiences, knowledge, values, and narratives from one communicative and cultural context into another. In environmental journalism, such processes acquire particular significance because ecological realities are frequently geographically situated while their implications are increasingly transnational.

The concept of landscape provides a further point of departure for this argument. Environmental realities are not encountered simply as neutral physical settings but are interpreted through cultural representations, memory, affect, and narrative. Landscapes may therefore function simultaneously as material environments and as repositories of cultural meaning. When such landscapes are transformed into digital narratives, their material and symbolic dimensions become available to audiences who may have no direct experience of the places represented. Digital journalism thus participates in a process through which local environmental realities acquire meanings that can circulate beyond their immediate geographical contexts.

This shift from the material landscape to its symbolic and narrative dimensions finds an important parallel in Arjun Appadurai's (1996) theorisation of global cultural flows. In *Modernity at Large*, Appadurai introduces the notion of various "-scapes" – including ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes – to describe the fluid and disjunctive dimensions of contemporary globalisation.

> These landscapes thus are the building blocks of what […] I would call imagined worlds, that is, the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe. An important fact of

> the world we live in today is that many persons on the globe live in such imagined worlds (and not just in imagined communities) and thus are able to contest and sometimes even subvert the imagined worlds of the official mind and of the entrepreneurial mentality that surround them (Appadurai 1996: 33).

Of particular relevance to the present study is the concept of mediascape, which refers to the images, narratives, and representations through which individuals construct their understanding of distant realities. Media do not simply reflect the world; they actively participate in the production of interpretive frameworks through which the world becomes intelligible. In other words, "discussing media simply from the point of view of its material conditions, or productions, is not enough. It is necessary to reach out to the realm of imagination and critically address it" (Granja do Amaral & Obute 2023: 4).

Building on these perspectives, this article introduces the notion of "environmental mindscapes" to describe the cognitive and cultural frameworks through which environmental realities are perceived, interpreted, and emotionally experienced. If landscapes refer to material environments and digital media provide the means through which representations of those environments circulate, environmental mindscapes designate the interpretive frameworks through which environmental narratives acquire meaning. They emerge through processes of mediation that transform geographically situated experiences into narratives capable of circulating across cultural and geographical boundaries.

This perspective can also be situated within recent theoretical developments in both Ecocriticism and Translation Studies. Ursula K. Heise's (2008) concept of "environmental imagination" highlights the transnational dimensions of ecological thinking and the growing need to understand environmental issues beyond strictly local frameworks. Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann's (2014) "material ecocriticism" emphasises the narrative agency of places, landscapes, and material environments, suggesting that ecological realities are embedded in processes of meaning-making. From the perspective of Translation Studies, Michael Cronin (2017) argues for an ecological understanding of translation that situates acts of mediation within broader environmental and cultural networks, while Mona Baker's (2006) "narrative approach" foregrounds the role of mediation in shaping public understandings of social reality.

Environmental journalism can consequently be understood as a form of journalistic translation, provided that translation is conceived here not exclusively as interlingual transfer but as a process of cultural mediation through which local ecological experiences are recontextualised and circulated across broader frameworks of understanding. Environmental journalists act as mediators who transform environmental events, scientific knowledge, and place-based experiences into narratives that circulate across multiple interpretive communities. Through processes of selection, framing, and narration, environmental journalism contributes to the production of environmental mindscapes that influence how environmental crises, responsibilities, and possible futures are imagined.

While questions of ecology, mediation, and sustainability have attracted increasing scholarly attention, comparatively less attention has been paid to digital journalism as a site of intercultural environmental mediation. In particular, the processes through which locally

situated ecological realities are reframed for geographically and culturally dispersed audiences, and thereby transformed into shared environmental imaginaries, remain relatively underexplored.

The present study addresses this gap through a small purposive corpus of six environmental articles published between 2025 and 2026 by *The Guardian (Environment)* and *The Conversation*. The two platforms represent distinct yet complementary models of environmental communication: one primarily grounded in journalistic storytelling and public-interest reporting, the other operating at the intersection of academic expertise and public communication.

Thus, the article addresses the following research question: how do digital environmental narratives mediate ecological realities through representations of place, crisis, and responsibility, and how do these processes contribute to the formation of environmental mindscapes?

More specifically, the analysis focuses on three interconnected narrative dimensions: place, crisis, and responsibility. These dimensions are not intended as an exhaustive taxonomy of environmental journalism. Rather, they provide a possible analytical framework for exploring how environmental narratives articulate connections to place, make ecological threats intelligible, and negotiate questions of agency and responsibility.

The analysis suggests that digital environmental journalism does more than disseminate information about ecological issues. Through lexical choices, semantic fields, framing, narrative positioning, and representations of agency, it transforms local and situated ecological realities into culturally meaningful narratives. Across the corpus, place is associated with belonging, memory, and ecological connectivity; crisis with risk, vulnerability, visibility, and urgency; and responsibility with political choice, environmental literacy, stewardship, and collective action. Taken together, these processes reveal how digital environmental journalism contributes to the formation of environmental mindscapes in which ecological realities become not only knowable but also imaginable, emotionally meaningful, and potentially actionable.

2. Landscapes, Memory, and Environmental Narratives

The concept of landscape has undergone significant transformation within the humanities over recent decades. No longer understood merely as a physical or geographical setting, landscape is increasingly regarded as a cultural construct shaped by historical memory, symbolic meanings, practices, and narrative forms. Denis Cosgrove (1998), for instance, emphasises the cultural and representational dimensions through which landscapes become ways of seeing and interpreting the world, while Simon Schama (1995) famously observes that "before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind" (1995: 7). From this perspective, environments become meaningful through the stories, memories, values, and practices through which individuals and communities establish relationships with particular places. As Adam Jaworski and Crispin Thurlow argue:

> But landscape as a way of seeing is not to be confined to the mediated representations of space in art and literature. It is a broader concept pertaining to how we view

> and interpret space in ways that are contingent on geographical, social, economic, legal, cultural and emotional circumstances, as well as our practical uses of physical environment as nature and territory, aesthetic judgements, memory and myth, for example drawing on religious beliefs and references, historical discourses, politics of gender relations, class, ethnicity, and the imperial projects of colonization – all of which are still present today and consistently reproduced in, for example, contemporary tourist landscapes (2010: 3).

Landscape consequently involves not only what is materially present but also the cultural frameworks through which that material reality is perceived and interpreted. This perspective converges with broader approaches to memory and place. Pierre Nora's (1989) notion of *lieux de mémoire* highlights the extent to which particular locations can become repositories of collective remembrance, while Jan Assmann (2011) emphasises the role of cultural memory in preserving and transmitting shared meanings across generations. Landscapes may therefore be understood not simply as material environments but as mnemonic spaces in which memory, identity, and experience converge. Yi-Fu Tuan (1977), similarly, argues that place emerges through lived experience and emotional attachment, transforming abstract space into meaningful human environments.

Landscapes can consequently function as narrative structures through which communities organise their understanding of the world. Hayden White (1987) emphasises the role of narrative in conferring coherence and significance upon experience, and environmental realities are no exception. Places acquire meaning because they are embedded within stories that connect physical environments to cultural values, historical memories, and collective identities. The significance of landscape thus derives not solely from its material features but from the narratives through which it is interpreted and remembered.

This shift from landscape to its symbolic and narrative dimensions resonates with Appadurai's (1996) influential discussion of global cultural flows and mediascapes, defined as "image-centered, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality" (1996: 35). Media do not simply mirror the world but actively participate in the production of interpretive frameworks through which reality becomes intelligible. Environmental journalism can therefore be approached as a specific form of mediascape in which ecological realities are translated into narratives capable of circulating across cultural and geographical boundaries.

The relationship between place and narrative has acquired particular relevance within contemporary ecocriticism. Greg Garrard (2023) notes that environmental narratives play an important role in shaping ecological awareness by providing interpretive frameworks through which environmental issues become culturally meaningful. Heise (2008), likewise, argues that contemporary environmental consciousness requires forms of imagination capable of linking local experiences to global ecological processes.

A further step is provided by Tim Ingold's (2000) conception of "dwelling", which challenges static understandings of landscape and emphasises the dynamic relationships between people and environments. Landscapes emerge through ongoing interactions among human and non-human actors, memories, practices, and material conditions. This perspective converges with material ecocriticism, which questions the traditional separation between

human storytelling and the material world. Iovino and Oppermann (2014) developed the concept of "storied matter" to describe the narrative agency embedded within material environments, arguing that places, landscapes, and ecological processes participate in the production of meaning rather than functioning as passive settings for human experience. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that landscapes should be understood as mnemonic, narrative, and relational constructs: simultaneously material realities, repositories of memory, and cultural texts.

Environmental journalism operates precisely at the intersection of these dimensions. By transforming places into stories and connecting local environments to global concerns, digital media contribute to the production of environmental narratives through which readers interpret ecological realities and their implications for contemporary society. It is within this context that the notion of environmental mindscapes becomes particularly relevant. If landscapes represent culturally mediated environments and narratives provide the means through which such environments acquire meaning, environmental mindscapes may be understood as the cognitive and cultural configurations emerging from the interaction between place, memory, media, and narrative.

3. Corpus and Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative and interpretive approach situated primarily at the intersection of Ecocriticism and Translation Studies, with particular attention to digital journalism as a form of cultural mediation. Rather than seeking statistical representativeness, the study examines how environmental journalism transforms geographically situated ecological realities, scientific knowledge, and place-based experiences into narratives capable of circulating beyond their immediate contexts.

The corpus consists of six environmental articles published between 2025 and 2026 by *The Guardian (Environment)* and *The Conversation*. The two platforms were purposively selected because they represent distinct yet complementary models of contemporary environmental communication. *The Guardian* is an established international news organisation whose environmental coverage combines public-interest reporting, investigative journalism, and narrative approaches to climate and sustainability issues. *The Conversation*, by contrast, operates at the intersection of academic expertise and public communication: its articles are generally written by scholars and researchers and edited for a wider non-specialist readership. The comparison therefore makes it possible to examine different modes of environmental mediation: one primarily grounded in journalistic storytelling and public-interest reporting, the other in the mediation of specialised knowledge for broader audiences.

The six articles were chosen through purposive sampling and organised around three analytical dimensions that emerged from the theoretical framework and were subsequently refined through close engagement with the corpus: place, crisis, and responsibility. The texts are "'I don't like being stuck in an office': the young people helping plant a ring of trees around London" (Tomkins 2026) and "Farmers are key to restoring native woodlands – here's what's holding them back" (Harrington & Zhu 2026) for place; "Environmental damage is putting European way of life at risk, says report" (Niranjan 2025) and "One of the

world's most important climate threats has an image problem" (Thomson 2026) for crisis; and "An equal and habitable world is possible" (Watts 2026) and "Eco-literate children can be stewards of nature: here's how to boost environmental education" (Sumner 2026) for responsibility.

The three dimensions are not treated as mutually exclusive thematic categories. Rather, they constitute overlapping narrative processes through which environmental realities acquire cultural meaning. Place concerns the transformation of landscapes, ecosystems, and local environments into sites of belonging, memory, identity, and ecological relationship. Crisis addresses the ways environmental threats, uncertainty, and ecological change are framed as intelligible forms of risk, vulnerability, or urgency. Responsibility concerns the distribution of agency and the construction of possible forms of environmental action, including collective political intervention, education, stewardship, and care.

The analysis was conducted through comparative qualitative close reading. Four interconnected aspects were examined across the six texts: (1) lexical choices and semantic fields; (2) framing and evaluative language; (3) the representation and distribution of agency among human, non-human, and institutional actors; and (4) narrative positioning, particularly the ways in which environmental realities are connected to human experience, social values, and possible futures. Particular attention was paid to recurring words and expressions that establish spatial, affective, temporal, epistemic, or ethical relationships with the environment. Metaphors, contrasts, evaluative formulations, forms of attribution, and representations of action were considered where they contributed to the construction of environmental meaning. The procedure therefore moved from textual evidence to interpretive category rather than simply using predetermined categories to confirm initial assumptions. For each article, salient lexical and narrative patterns were first identified; these were then considered in relation to the broader framing of the text and compared with the corresponding article from the other platform. The analysis subsequently examined how these patterns contribute to the construction of an environmental mindscape. For instance, expressions of embodied experience and ecological connectivity are considered evidence of the construction of place as belonging; lexical fields of risk, damage, visibility, or uncertainty indicate ways of making crisis intelligible; and references to political choice, learning, stewardship, or collective action reveal how responsibility and environmental agency are constructed.

This approach is consistent with the article's understanding of environmental journalism as cultural mediation. Translation Studies provides the conceptual basis for viewing mediation as a process through which situated experiences and forms of knowledge are recontextualised for audiences beyond their original settings. Bielsa and Bassnett (2008) are particularly relevant in this regard, as their discussion of news translation foregrounds the processes of selection, adaptation, and circulation through which journalistic discourse moves across cultural and linguistic contexts. Ecocriticism, meanwhile, foregrounds the relationships among material environments, human experience, environmental imagination, and ecological futures. In this sense, environmental journalism does not simply transmit information about an external environmental reality. Through selection, framing, lexical choice, and narrative organisation, it constructs interpretive pathways through which readers

can perceive, understand, and evaluate ecological change. Environmental mindscapes are therefore understood as the interpretive configurations produced through these processes: the cognitive and cultural frameworks through which environmental realities become meaningful and readers are invited to imagine relationships among places, ecological processes, human communities, and possible futures.

The methodological approach avoids treating place, crisis, and responsibility as an exhaustive taxonomy of environmental journalism. Their value lies instead in their interconnectedness: places provide the experiential and cultural contexts within which environmental change is perceived; crisis narratives transform ecological processes into socially intelligible forms of risk and urgency; and responsibility narratives construct possible forms of agency in response to those conditions.

4. Environmental Mindscapes in Digital Journalism: A Comparative Analysis

The analysis below treats place, crisis, and responsibility as interconnected processes rather than isolated themes. Across the corpus, these dimensions reveal three complementary ways in which digital environmental journalism makes ecological realities culturally intelligible: by locating environmental change in meaningful places, by translating complex ecological processes into recognisable forms of crisis, and by constructing possible forms of agency and response.

4.1. Translating Place

The representation of place constitutes a key dimension of environmental mediation because geographical locations become meaningful through the relationships, memories, practices, and values attached to them. The two selected articles construct place differently: *The Guardian* foregrounds embodied experience and ecological connectivity, whereas *The Conversation* combines land management with narratives of attachment, identity, and inherited memory.

In *The Guardian* article "'I don't like being stuck in an office': the young people helping plant a ring of trees around London", place is initially constructed through embodied and affective language. The title establishes a contrast between being "stuck in an office" and being outdoors, while a participant explains: "I love being outdoors – I can breathe". The opposition between office and outdoors, reinforced by the bodily verb *breathe*, turns the environment into an experienced space rather than a merely geographical setting. Another participant describes his emotional response to the project: "I feel very happy – the trees are growing already". The article thus uses direct speech to give environmental experience a bodily and affective dimension.

This experiential dimension is then expanded into an ecological understanding of London. The London Tree Ring is described as a project creating "corridors of plant and animal life around the capital", while its longer-term objective is to create habitats that are "better connected and more diverse". The spatial vocabulary is significant: ring, corridors, connected, habitats, and environment construct London not as a fixed urban entity but as an ecological network in which human and non-human environments intersect. The project is explicitly described as seeking to "reconnect a new generation with their environment",

making reconnection a particularly productive lexical choice. The relationship between people and place is presented as something that can be restored alongside ecological systems.

The article consequently produces an environmental mindscape in which place is associated with experience, connection, and participation. Hadley Wood does not remain merely a geographically specific backdrop; it becomes a model through which readers can imagine urban space as capable of ecological recovery and social inclusion.

The Conversation article "Farmers are key to restoring native woodlands – here's what's holding them back" constructs place through a different lexical and narrative configuration. Its focus is on land, tree planting, farming, land use, economic decisions, and the institutional conditions surrounding afforestation. Place is therefore presented as a material environment shaped by human decisions and policy frameworks. Yet the article complicates this managerial perspective through the affective language of a farmer who states: "I [would] die for this piece of land. It's ingrained in me so much. My DNA, our fields have all names and stories".

The sequence linking "land", "ingrained", "DNA", "names", and "stories" is particularly revealing. The possessives "my" and "our" establish a relationship of ownership and collective identity, while ingrained metaphorically inscribes the landscape within the person. The reference to DNA intensifies this connection by presenting attachment to land as almost constitutive of personal identity. Finally, names and stories transform fields into repositories of cultural memory. Place is thus simultaneously material, familial, historical, and narrative.

The contrast between the two texts is therefore not simply one between an experiential *The Guardian* and an explanatory *The Conversation*. Both construct environmental place as relational, but they foreground different forms of relationship. *The Guardian* emphasises embodied experience and ecological connectivity, whereas *The Conversation* links landscape management to identity, memory, and attachment. In both cases, geographically situated environments become environmental mindscapes because linguistic and narrative choices transform physical space into a meaningful configuration of belonging and ecological relationship.

4.2. Translating Crisis

If place concerns the formation of environmental belonging, crisis concerns the ways in which ecological change becomes publicly intelligible as a condition of risk, vulnerability, or urgency. Here the two texts reveal particularly contrasting strategies. *The Guardian* makes environmental degradation socially immediate by foregrounding damage and risk, while *The Conversation* focuses on the representational difficulty of making slow and largely invisible ecological processes perceptible.

The title of *The Guardian* article "Environmental damage is putting European way of life at risk, says report" establishes a clear lexical field of damage and threat. The expression *putting ... at risk* converts environmental degradation into a direct threat to a culturally recognisable social order: the "European way of life". The article further describes the "death of wildlife and breakdown of the climate" as "ruining ecosystems that underpin the economy".

The verb ruining is particularly forceful: rather than representing ecological deterioration as a neutral or gradual process, it assigns environmental change a destructive trajectory. At the same time, the reference to ecosystems that underpin the economy translates ecological degradation into social and economic consequences.

The article's lexical pattern consequently moves from environmental damage to collective vulnerability. Expressions concerning biodiversity loss, climate breakdown, environmental degradation, and risks to prosperity are embedded within a broader narrative of European well-being. The crisis becomes meaningful because ecological deterioration threatens systems on which human societies depend. Ecological crisis is therefore not represented as something occurring elsewhere in "nature", but as a condition affecting the organisation and future of European society.

The Conversation article "One of the world's most important climate threats has an image problem" approaches crisis from almost the opposite direction. Its subject, the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation (AMOC), is introduced as a system operating "largely out of sight". It is described as existing "far below our own" perceptual world and moving "slowly, silently through the Atlantic". The lexical cluster "out of sight" / "far below" / "slowly" / "silently" constructs crisis through invisibility, spatial distance, and temporal scale.

The expression "image problem" is itself significant because it shifts attention from the material existence of the environmental threat to its communicative status. The problem is not that AMOC is scientifically insignificant, but that it lacks the immediately recognisable visual forms associated with other environmental crises. The article contrasts it with burning forests, calving icebergs, hurricanes, and beaches strewn with plastic, whose images have become familiar elements of climate journalism. These visual conventions operate as stand-ins for ecological systems that cannot easily be observed directly.

The discussion of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch makes this representational problem even clearer. The phenomenon is often imagined as a "floating island of waste", whereas in reality it is a diffuse concentration of microplastics spread across a vast area of ocean. The contrast demonstrates how media representation can give an otherwise dispersed phenomenon a recognisable spatial form, while simultaneously risking simplification. Environmental mediation therefore becomes part of the crisis itself: making an ecological process visible can increase public attention, but the process of visualisation may also reshape its meaning.

The comparison reveals two different ways of constructing an environmental crisis mindscape. *The Guardian* relies on the semantic fields of risk, damage, consequence, and collective vulnerability, making ecological degradation socially urgent. *The Conversation*, instead, foregrounds invisibility, distance, uncertainty, and representation, showing that some environmental threats are difficult to imagine precisely because they unfold beyond ordinary human perception. In both cases, crisis is therefore not simply a material condition reported by journalism. It is a mediated cognitive framework through which readers learn what counts as urgent, what can be perceived, and how ecological futures can be imagined.

4.3. Translating Responsibility

The third dimension concerns the construction of environmental agency. Environmental journalism not only describes ecological conditions; it also identifies actors, distributes responsibility, and constructs possible responses. The two articles considered here offer particularly productive examples of different forms of environmental agency: *The Guardian* frames responsibility primarily through collective political transformation, whereas *The Conversation* constructs it through environmental literacy, experience, and stewardship.

The Guardian article "An equal and habitable world is possible" establishes possibility as a central element of its future-oriented framing. The article presents a "habitable, equal" future as materially achievable and explicitly identifies "political choice" and "the hard but crucial work of building a coalition" as necessary conditions for realising it. The semantic field is therefore centred on possible, choice, coalition, cooperative redistribution, and political action rather than on individual lifestyle adjustments alone.

This framing becomes particularly significant because environmental sustainability is connected to economic inequality. The article situates ecological action within a broader programme involving redistribution, decarbonisation, reduced consumption, education, healthcare, and reform of global financial structures. Responsibility is consequently distributed across political and economic institutions rather than located exclusively in individual behaviour. The environmental future becomes inseparable from questions of justice and the distribution of resources and power.

The resulting environmental mindscape is one in which ecological agency is collective and systemic. Readers are encouraged to imagine environmental change not simply as a matter of personal sacrifice but as a politically achievable transformation of social arrangements. The modal formulation "is possible" is particularly important because it constructs the future as open to intervention. Environmental responsibility is therefore linked to political imagination: before systemic change can be enacted, it must become conceivable as a realistic alternative.

The Conversation article "Eco-literate children can be stewards of nature: here's how to boost environmental education" constructs responsibility through a different sequence. Its title directly links knowledge with stewardship, while the article identifies a lack of environmental literacy and argues that "Noticing nature is the first step toward understanding it". It further insists that this process requires "directly experiencing nature".

The lexical progression is crucial, moving from "notice" to "understand", then to "experience" and finally to "steward". Responsibility is not represented as an obligation that can simply be imposed; it is constructed as the result of developing the cognitive and affective capacities necessary to perceive the non-human world. The discussion of plant blindness is particularly significant. The problem is partly perceptual: people fail to notice forms of life that are physically present around them. Environmental education therefore becomes a process of restoring attention and, through attention, cultivating care.

The article consequently constructs responsibility as relational and prospective. Children acquire the knowledge, experience, and attachment that may enable them to become future stewards of the natural world. Environmental literacy is therefore not simply the ac-

quisition of factual knowledge. It involves learning to perceive ecological relationships and developing the affective orientation necessary for sustained environmental care.

The contrast with *The Guardian* is significant but should not be reduced to a simple opposition between collective and individual responsibility. The two texts operate at different levels of agency. *The Guardian* makes systemic environmental transformation politically imaginable, while *The Conversation* makes environmental stewardship cognitively and affectively attainable. Both, however, construct responsibility through a prior transformation in perception. Political agency requires imagining alternative social and ecological futures; stewardship requires learning to notice, understand, and value the non-human world.

Responsibility thus becomes a constitutive dimension of the environmental mindscape: readers are positioned not merely as observers of ecological change, but as potential participants in shaping environmental futures.

Taken together, the three analytical dimensions reveal a broader progression from place to environmental belonging, from crisis to environmental awareness, and from responsibility to environmental engagement. This progression should not be understood as strictly linear. Rather, it describes the way in which environmental journalism can connect different dimensions of ecological meaning. A meaningful relationship with place may facilitate awareness of environmental change; representations of crisis may intensify the need for action; and narratives of responsibility can help audiences imagine how ecological futures might be changed.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined digital environmental journalism as a form of cultural mediation, asking how environmental narratives construct place, crisis, and responsibility and how these processes contribute to the formation of environmental mindscapes. The analysis of six articles from *The Guardian* and *The Conversation* suggests that environmental journalism does more than transmit information about ecological realities. Through lexical choices, semantic fields, framing, narrative positioning, and the distribution of agency, journalistic texts transform situated environmental experiences and forms of knowledge into culturally meaningful narratives capable of circulating across geographical and interpretive boundaries.

The analysis identifies three interconnected processes. First, place is constructed as more than physical location. In the selected texts, landscapes become associated with embodied experience, ecological connectivity, memory, identity, and belonging. Second, crisis is constructed not only through descriptions of environmental damage and risk but also through processes of visibility and representation. Environmental threats may become socially urgent when they are connected to collective vulnerability, while less visible ecological processes require narrative and representational strategies that make them perceptible to audiences. Third, responsibility is constructed through different but complementary forms of agency. *The Guardian* text foregrounds political choice, structural transformation, and collective action, whereas *The Conversation* article emphasises environmental literacy, experience, and stewardship.

These findings provide an answer to the research question by showing that digital en-

vironmental narratives mediate ecological realities through a process in which place, crisis, and responsibility are mutually constitutive dimensions of environmental meaning. Place gives ecological change an experiential and cultural location; crisis renders that change intelligible as a condition requiring attention; and responsibility provides ways of imagining agency and possible responses. The three dimensions therefore operate together in the construction of environmental mindscapes.

The concept of environmental mindscapes offers a way of bringing these processes together. Environmental mindscapes emerge where material environments, mediated representations, cultural meanings, and possible forms of action intersect. The three dimensions identified in the analysis can consequently be understood as a progression from environmental belonging, through environmental awareness, to environmental engagement. This progression is not linear or exhaustive; rather, it indicates how environmental narratives may connect perception of place with recognition of ecological crisis and, ultimately, with the imagination of possible responses.

Digital journalism thus constitutes a significant site where local ecological experiences can enter broader environmental imaginaries. In this respect, the findings resonate with Rob Nixon's observation that contemporary societies must confront the "representational, narrative, and strategic challenges" (2011: 3) posed by environmental change. At the same time, the study echoes Heise's call for a shift "from a sense of place to a sense of planet" (2008: 114), highlighting how digital journalism translates situated environmental experiences into broader ecological imaginaries.

The findings also suggest that differences between media platforms matter. *The Guardian* tends to construct environmental meaning through more immediate experiential, political, and socially oriented narratives, while *The Conversation* more frequently foregrounds explanatory, educational, and expert-mediated forms of knowledge. These differences do not produce entirely separate environmental imaginaries. Rather, they demonstrate that similar ecological concerns can be translated into different narrative forms depending on the communicative mission, authorship, and intended audience of the platform.

The study is necessarily limited by its small purposive corpus and by its focus on two English-language digital platforms. Its findings should therefore be understood as exploratory rather than statistically representative. Future research could extend the framework to larger corpora, different media environments, and other linguistic and cultural contexts, as well as investigate how environmental mindscapes vary across national media systems and audiences. Such comparative work could further clarify how digital environmental communication contributes to contemporary understandings of ecological change and to the cultural imagination of environmental futures.

Ultimately, the analysis suggests that digital environmental journalism does more than disseminate environmental information. It provides audiences with ways of seeing, imagining, and relating to ecological change. By transforming places into sites of belonging, crises into intelligible forms of urgency, and environmental responsibility into imaginable forms of agency, journalistic narratives actively participate in shaping how environmental futures are culturally imagined.

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