Issue attention (Climate & Environment Coverage)

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Issue attention – or media attention – refers to the number of pages or airtime minutes devoted to a given issue, in this chase, climate change. Research has shown that there are different actors and events that are substantial divers of issue attention to climate change, such as international events (e.g., the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)), scientific reports, extreme weather events, but also movies (e.g., An Inconvenient Truth) and concerts (e.g., Anderson, 2009; Brossard, Shanahan, & McComas, 2004; Djerf-Pierre, 2012; Liu, Lindquist, & Vedlitz, 2011; Schäfer, Ivanova, & Schmidt, 2014).

FIELD OF APPLICATION/THEORETICAL FOUNDATION
Drivers of issue attention are a fundamental part of climate change-related media coverage. Content analyses identify what triggers media coverage about climate change by examining important drivers (e.g., Brossard et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2011; Schäfer et al., 2014). The variable "drivers of issue attention" is often applied in agenda-setting studies and is used to determine factors, such as actors or events, that place certain topics, and in this case, climate change-related issues, prominently on the media and/or audience agenda (e.g., Anderson, 2009; Djerf-Pierre, 2012).

REFERENCES/COMBINATION WITH OTHER METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION
Using time series regression analysis, studies investigate the influence of various factors on media attention for climate change and global warming (e.g., Liu et al., 2011; Schäfer et al., 2014).

EXAMPLE STUDIES
Anderson (2011); Brossard et al. (2004); Djerf-Pierre (2012); Liu et al. (2011); Schäfer et al. (2014)

INFORMATION ON SCHÄFER ET AL., 2014
Authors: Mike S. Schäfer, Ana Ivanova & Andreas Schmidt
Research question: Which factors influence media attention for climate change between 1996 and 2010?
Object of analysis: The study calculates the monthly amount of climate change-related coverage in two leading newspapers for Australia, Germany and India: Sydney Morning Herald (N = 9,543 articles), The Australian (N = 13,892 articles), Süddeutsche Zeitung (N = 6,889 articles), Frankfurter Allgemeine (N = 5,861 articles), The Hindu (N = 5,710 articles) and Times of India (N = 2,553 articles)
Time frame of analysis: 1996 to 2010

INFO ABOUT VARIABLES
Variables:
Drivers of issue attention
- Factual indicators or problem indicators: Factual and baseline information indicators such as greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the earth's atmosphere or average temperatures including long-term developments as well as short-term extreme weather conditions

- Focusing events: High-profile international events that push concern above the noise threshold of other issues such as the United Nations Conferences of the Parties (COP) or G8 summits

Social feedback: Communication of stakeholders and pressure groups on societal matters, such as citizen complaints, interest group pressures or opinion polls

Level of analysis: Monthly mean issue attention: The number of articles mentioning climate change as a proportion of the absolute number of articles published in a given newspaper by month

Variables and values:
Factual indicators or problem indicators
- International extreme weather events: Heat waves, wildfires, droughts, storms, storm surges and floods with the indicators death toll, number of people affected, estimated damage (US$ million). Each indicator of all event types was standardized separately; afterwards a monthly index summarizing the three indicators for events of all types and in all countries was constructed. Source: EM-DAT, The International Disaster Database (www.emdat.be/)
- Domestic extreme weather events: Same variable as international extreme weather events, but restricted to domestic disasters. Domestic temperature: Mean value of the monthly average temperature at the two places of publication. Source: NCEP/NCAR reanalysis

Focusing events
- International political events: UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties (share of conference days in a month), United Nations Conferences on Environment and Development (1 = event, 0 = no event), EU summits (1 = event, 0 = no event), Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate summits (1 = event, 0 = no event), G8 summits (1 = event, 0 = no event), Ministerial meetings of the Gleneagles dialogue (1 = event, 0 = no event)
- International scientific/political events: Publication of IPCC assessment reports (1 = event, 0 = no event)
- Cultural events: International and national premiere of selected movies (An Inconve-

nient Truth, The Day after Tomorrow, The Great Climate Swindle) on climate change and the Live Earth concert (1 = event, 0 = no event)

Social feedback
- Domestic political activity: Composite index of number of parliamentary papers and parliamentary debates on climate change (India: only parliamentary debates; Germany: parliamentary debates only from November 2005 onwards)
- International ENGO activity: Mean value index of number of press releases issued by Greenpeace International and WWF International
- Domestic ENGO activity: Mean value index of number of press releases issued by national Greenpeace branch and a second ENGO (Australia: Australian Conservation Fund; Germany: BUND; India: Center for Science and Environment)
- International scientific publication activity: Mean value index of number of research articles on climate change in Science and Nature
- Domestic scientific publication activity: Number of research articles published by domestic scientists and refereed in ISI Web of Knowledge

Domestic business activity: Mean value index of number of press releases issued by big, carbon-intensive national companies from the energy, automotive and resource sectors (Australia: AGL Energy, Origin Energy, True Energy, BHP Billiton; Germany: e.on Energie, RWE, EnBW, Vattenfall, BEE, VDA; India: Tata Power, Reliance Infrastructure, Hindalco, Indian Oil)

Reliability: -
Codebook: Table 2 in Schäfer et al. (2014)

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