BAFTA albert releases its third ‘Subtitles to Save The World’ report

* albert releases its third ‘*Subtitles to Save the World’* report looking at how often climate change and our solutions to tackling it were mentioned on our TV screens in 2020.
* Climate change mentions have decreased slightly since 2019 during a turbulent year which reflects the impact of lockdown on both the TV production industry and wider society.
* Words associated with positive individual actions have increased but there are fewer associated with the systemic change needed to help us reach net zero.

**Wednesday 15 September**: albert has today released its third *Subtitles to Save the World* report which looks into how often the UK’s TV industry talks about climate change and the solutions to tackling it, on screen.

The BAFTA-backed sustainability project works with the Film and TV Industry to support the reduction of its environmental impact in production as well as encouraging the development of on-screen content that is compatible with a sustainable climate.

The report was informed by Deloitte which analysed a year’s worth of subtitling data from 6 broadcasters: BBC, Sky, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and UKTV, from January 2020 to December 2020. Deloitte’s analysts examined the data to look at how often words associated with 5 key sustainability terms were mentioned: Energy, Travel, Food, Resources and Climate Change. News programming was excluded from the research.

The findings this year show that mentions of *climate change* have reduced by 10% from 14,068 mentions in 2019 to 12,715 mentions in 2020. Similarly, mentions of*global warming*have decreased by 19% from 2,157 in 2019 to 1,749 in 2020.

**Carys Taylor, Director of albert said**: “In any normal year, a drop in climate change mentions would be a worrying headline, but 2020 was no normal year; the increase in reruns and archive shows, coupled with the TV industry having to quickly grapple with a new way of working, will have had an impact. But the TV industry is critical to tackling climate change. Every genre, every programme can play its part and I’m excited to see how the industry will help society to understand the challenges we face and, importantly, how we can solve them – from how we heat our homes to how we get around – it’s crucial that the content we consume can help us to visualise the path ahead.”

This year’s report also reflects on how the climate crisis is being represented on our screens and whether content is empowering the public to take action or predominately talking about the problem. Together the terms climate change, climate emergency and climate crisis received 14, 540 mentions while climate justice, climate action and climate solution only received 296 mentions collectively.  

**Sandi Toksvig, President of the Writers’ Guild of Great Britain said:** “Yes we need policies, clever technological advances and brilliant scientists to help us reach Net Zero, but we also need stories. Words are powerful. They can shape us, change us and inspire us. Writers and content makers need to be at the forefront of this battle to save our planet. We can't do it without them."

The report looks at how the TV industry is representing the various different changes required as we move to Net Zero and points out that while terms such as recycling, reusing and veganism have all increased in mentions since 2019, terms such as wind power and solar power were mentioned under 500 times – comparable with banana bread and beer garden.

**Juliet Davenport, Founder of Good Energy and host of the Great Green Questions podcast said**: “2020 was originally meant to be the year of climate action. We all know only too well why attention shifted elsewhere but it is still frustrating to see the media discuss climate change less than the previous year, let alone that wind power got as much air time as banana bread. There are brilliant examples of broadcasters putting climate front and centre, like Sky News’ Daily Climate Show or Laura Tobin’s updates on Good Morning Britain, but there’s so much more to be done. The media has a huge power to influence, we need to be telling engaging stories about and accurately communicating not only the scale of the challenge but the exciting benefits of the solutions.”

The report is being released in the build up to COP26 which will see world leaders gather in Glasgow to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement. It is also looking back on the most turbulent year in recent history which saw more people turning to their TV screens than ever before for information, entertainment and distraction.Unsurprisingly, the terms *Coronavirus and Covid*  saw the biggest increase in mentions from 11 collectively in 2019 to 253,177 in 2020.

**George Johnston, Data Analytics Partner at Deloitte, said**: "Broadcasters have a powerful role to play in inspiring nationwide change by raising awareness of the climate emergency and encouraging millions of viewers to take personal action.

“Our research shows that during 2020, broadcasters quickly started and frequently began using relatively unknown words and phrases - such as furlough and social distancing – which helped viewers to adopt new behaviours that would protect their health as well as their household finances during the pandemic.

“Using and discussing words and phrases such as biodiversity and carbon offsetting more frequently on screen will help households to improve their understanding of climate challenges, the part they can play in sparking change and the personal benefits they may gain as a result of improving their awareness around sustainability issues.

“Improving how we talk about climate change will undoubtedly improve how quickly we can curb climate change.”

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The full report can be downloaded from albert’s website [www.wearealbert.org](http://www.wearealbert.org) and previous reports can also be found at [www.wearealbert.org/editorial](http://www.wearealbert.org/editorial)

Interviews can be arranged with Carys Taylor, Director of albert. Please contact Genevieve Margrett, Communications Manager, albert: [genevievem@bafta.org](mailto:genevievem@bafta.org)

About albert

albert is the screen industry authority on environmental sustainability. Founded in 2011, the project supports the industry in eliminating its environmental impact as well as developing on-screen content that is compatible with a sustainable climate.

A BAFTA, indie and broadcaster backed project, albert is proudly industry funded, meaning all our activities are available at the lowest possible cost to organisations and zero cost to individuals.

With events, online tools and training, practical guidance and thought leadership, albert is enabling all screen industry professions to identify and act upon opportunities on and off screen, for effective climate action. Find out more [www.wearealbert.org](http://www.wearealbert.org/)

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