How Nigerian Media Reports Biodiversity and Environmental Issues



Dataphyte Foundation

EARTH JOURNALISM NETWORK

Disclaimer

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About Dataphyte

Dataphyte Foundation is a social impact organisation driving Africa's development with DATA. We provide data access, policy insight, and hyperlocal research for businesses, governments, and development organisations to achieve their interconnected democratic and sustainable development outcomes. Its mission is to promote practices and policies that empower vulnerable and underserved groups and give voice to their experiences through actionable data, impact narratives, advocacy, and civic technology. We deliver our work through user-friendly websites, engaging infographics, and impactful social media campaigns, all of which serve as verifiable platforms for delivering on our commitments.
Dataphyte not only conducts insightful research but also contributes to capacity building and technological advancement, making a tangible impact across various sectors.

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Introduction

This media monitoring report assesses how selected Nigerian media outlets report on biodiversity-related issues, with a focus on editorial depth, geographic distribution, thematic emphasis, and authorship patterns. The goal is to understand not just how often biodiversity is reported, but how it is framed, who tells the story, and whose biodiversity challenges receive visibility.

Specifically, the report analyses the types of biodiversity stories published across media platforms, the dominant framing of biodiversity reporting, the themes and topics that receive the most attention, and the geographic spread of coverage, highlighting biodiversity hotspots that are most and least reported.
Using a media monitoring and content analysis approach, the study systematically reviews biodiversity-related reports to identify patterns, gaps, and editorial priorities across the selected outlets.

Context

Nigeria is one of Africa's most biologically diverse countries, spanning ecosystems that range from the arid Sahel savannahs of the north to expansive lowland rainforests, freshwater wetlands, and mangrove-lined coasts in the south. Covering an estimated 923,769 square kilometres, Nigeria's geography supports a remarkable concentration of species and ecological systems that are critical not only for wildlife but also for food security, livelihoods, climate regulation, and economic stability. According to the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime in Nigeria (2022–2026), Nigeria is home to at least 864 bird species, 117 amphibians, 203 reptiles, more than 775 fish species, 285 mammals, and over 4,715 vascular plant species, with many others likely still undocumented.

However, this ecological foundation is being steadily eroded. Over the past two decades, Nigeria has lost more than a million hectares of tree cover, a decline driven largely by agricultural expansion, logging, mining, oil extraction, and infrastructure development. This loss has diminished wildlife habitats and also released substantial greenhouse gas emissions, reinforcing the link between biodiversity degradation and the climate crisis. Forest-dependent species, particularly primates and endemic wildlife, are increasingly vulnerable as habitats become fragmented or disappear entirely.

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Environmental pressures are uneven but widespread. The Niger Delta, one of Nigeria's most ecologically significant regions, combines extensive mangrove systems and internationally recognised wetlands with decades of oil pollution that have damaged soil, waterways, and fisheries. At the same time, proposed large-scale infrastructure projects along the southern coast threaten to further disrupt fragile ecosystems. Elsewhere, biodiversity hotspots such as Cross River State face rapid deforestation, while northern ecosystems, including wetlands and savannahs, are strained by unsustainable water use, mining activities, and advancing desertification.

Beyond habitat loss, wildlife crime has emerged as a critical threat. Nigeria has become a major transit and exit point in global illegal wildlife trade networks, with repeated seizures of ivory, pangolin scales, timber, and other wildlife products linked to Nigerian ports. These activities point to weak enforcement, governance gaps, and the growing commercialisation of biodiversity exploitation.

The impacts of biodiversity loss extend well beyond conservation concerns. Declining ecosystems affect agricultural productivity, fisheries, water availability, and climate resilience, deepening poverty and food insecurity and, in some cases, fuelling social conflict. Despite these realities, biodiversity loss remains marginal in Nigerian media discourse. Coverage is often sporadic, event-driven, or disconnected from broader issues of governance, accountability, and climate risk.

This limited visibility weakens public understanding and policy prioritisation of biodiversity loss. In this context, examining how Nigerian media report biodiversity issues is critical for understanding whose environmental realities are amplified, which ecosystems are overlooked, and how effectively journalism contributes to informed public debate and environmental accountability.

Scope and Methodology

Media outlets monitored

- Econai Newsroom
- Punch Newspaper
- EnviroNews
- Nature News
- Premium Times
- The Cable
- Vanguard

These outlets were selected to reflect a mix of mainstream newspapers, digital-native platforms, and environmentally focused publications, based on their prominent role in environmental sustainability and development, as well as their scope of coverage. Each biodiversity-related story published by the selected outlets during the monitoring period constituted a unit of analysis. The review period spanned June 2015 to June 2025.

Variables analysed include the following:

- News type
- Number of biodiversity-related issues per state
- Author type
- Theme of focus
- News source

Limitations

This analysis is limited to selected national and digital media outlets and does not capture biodiversity reporting in local-language media, broadcast platforms, or community-based publications, where environmental issues may be framed differently.

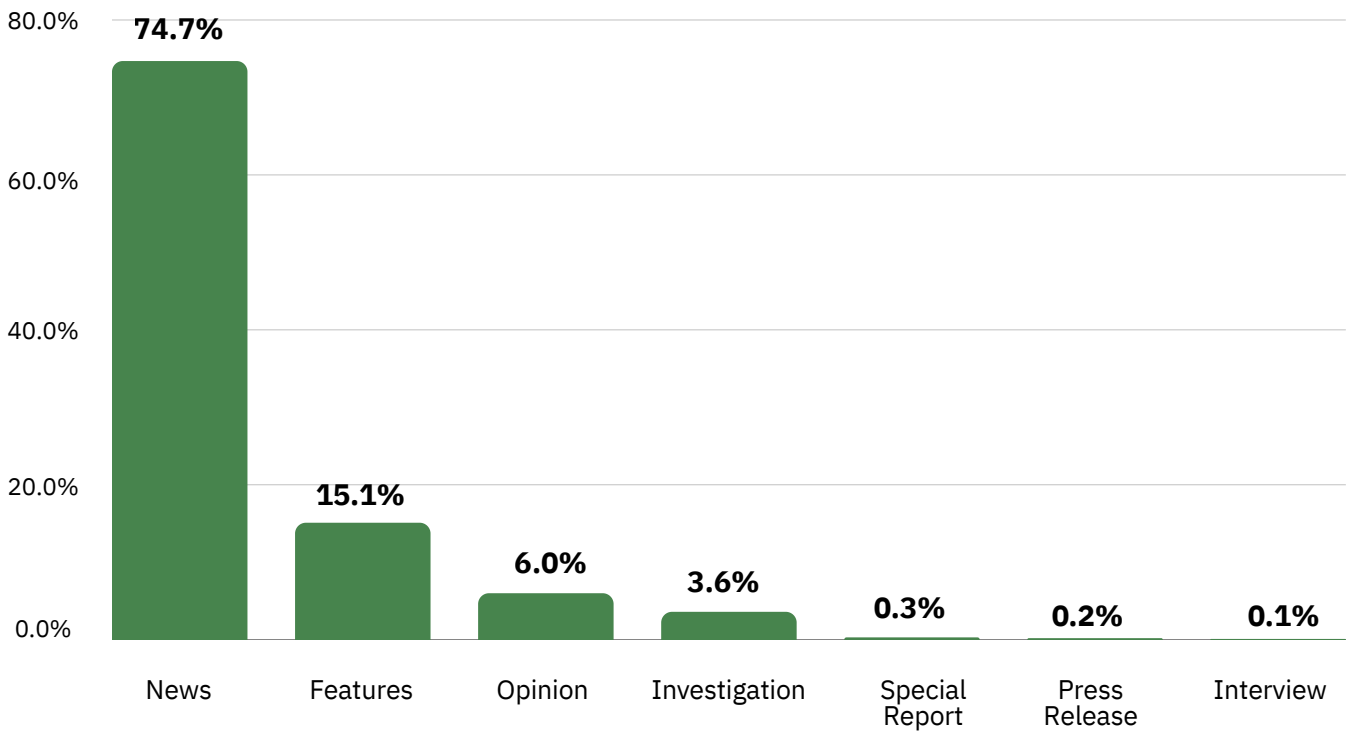
The report also relies on published content and does not account for editorial decisions behind story selection or resource constraints within newsrooms. Additionally, thematic classification reflects dominant framing and may not fully capture overlapping issues within individual stories.

Type of Biodiversity News Covered by the Media Organisations

Across the media outlets analysed, biodiversity is reported largely as a breaking or event-driven issue rather than one that demands sustained attention or deeper scrutiny. Most stories are triggered by government announcements, NGO activities, workshops, conferences, or international environmental observance days. This pattern points to a largely reactive approach to biodiversity reporting, where coverage follows events instead of proactively interrogating the forces shaping biodiversity loss.

While formats such as features and opinion pieces create space for context, analysis, and debate, their relatively limited presence suggests that biodiversity is not consistently prioritised for long-form or interpretive journalism. Investigative reporting is particularly scarce, indicating minimal editorial investment in accountability-driven coverage. As a result, underlying issues such as governance gaps, regulatory failures, weak enforcement, and long-term environmental consequences are rarely explored in depth.

Percentage of News Type in all Seven Media Organisations



Source: Dataphyte Research

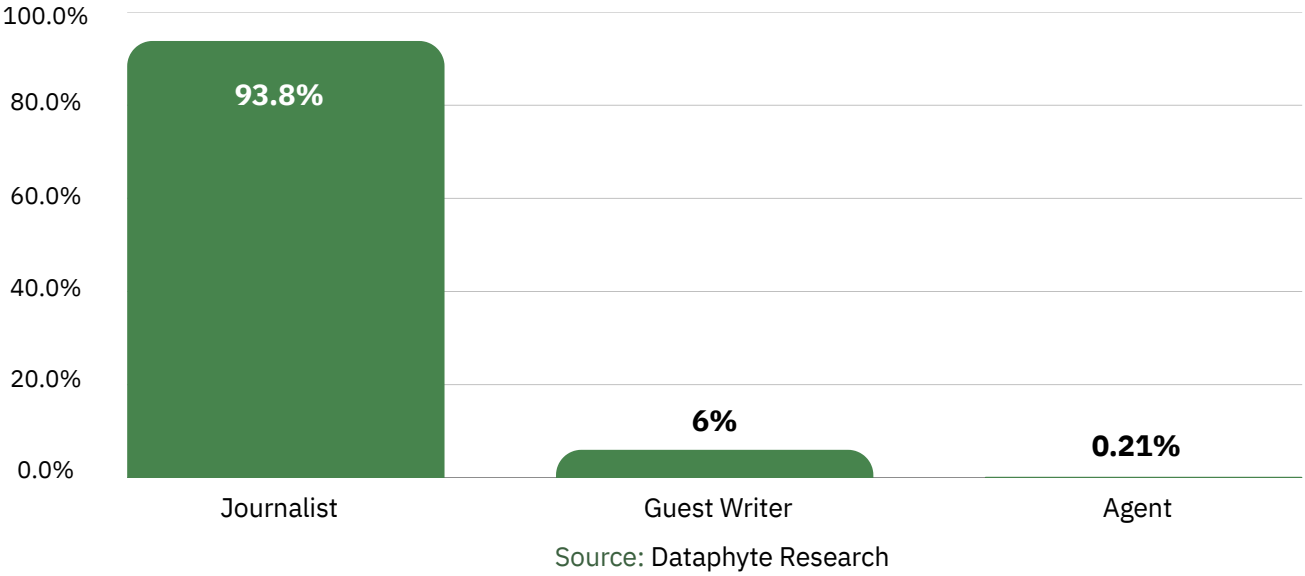
Out of 967 biodiversity-related stories analysed, 722, representing 74.7 per cent, were published as news reports. Feature stories accounted for 146 reports, or 15.1 per cent of coverage, while opinion pieces made up 58 stories, equivalent to 6 per cent. Investigative journalism was notably rare, with only 35 stories, just 3.6 per cent of total coverage. Other formats, including special reports, interviews, and press releases, were almost absent, together accounting for less than one per cent of all biodiversity reporting.

Author Type of Biodiversity Reports Covered by Media Organisations

Across the media outlets analysed, much of the interpretation, advocacy, and solutions-focused framing around biodiversity sits outside the core reporting structure. The relatively small number of journalist-authored analytical and investigative pieces suggests that specialist environmental reporting is not yet a strong institutional priority. As a result, deeper analysis and long-term storytelling on biodiversity are often left to external voices rather than being developed within newsrooms.

A review of author bylines across the 967 biodiversity-related stories shows that coverage is majorly produced by newsroom journalists. Journalists wrote 907 stories, accounting for 93.8 per cent of all reporting, while guest writers contributed 58 stories, or 6 per cent. Only two stories, representing 0.21 per cent, were attributed to agents. At first glance, this points to biodiversity reporting being firmly located within professional newsrooms rather than driven by outside contributors.

Percentage of Author Type for all Seven Media Outlets

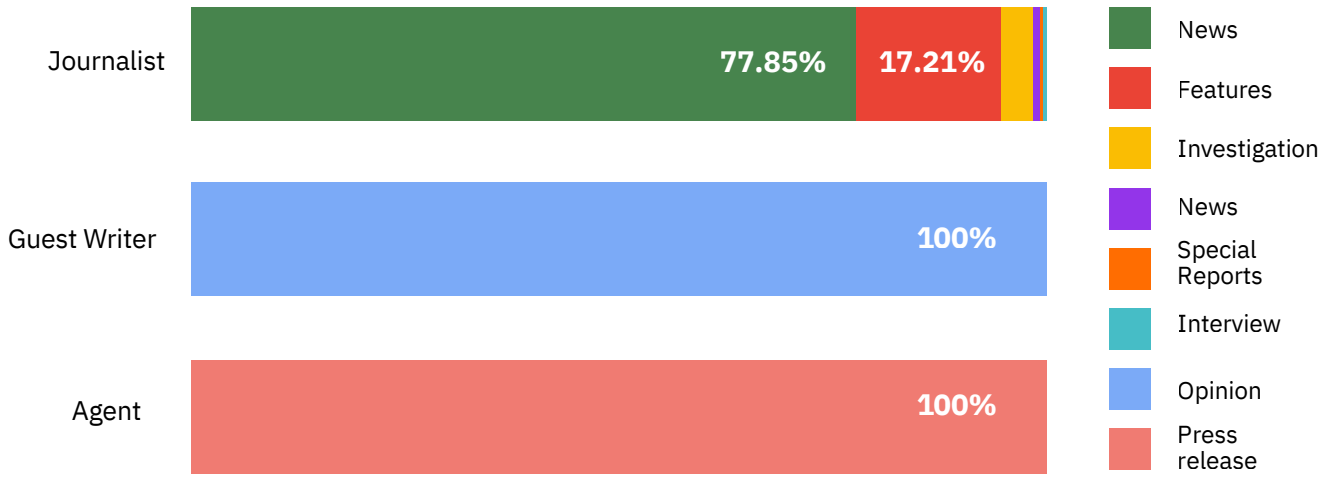


Source: Dataphyte Research

However, this dominance becomes more revealing when examined alongside how different voices are used. Journalists are largely responsible for routine, straight news coverage, reinforcing the event-driven pattern that characterises much of biodiversity reporting. Guest writers, though few in number, are more prominent in opinion, explanatory, and solutions-oriented pieces, often drawing on the perspectives of environmental experts, NGO practitioners, and advocates. In addition, organisational bylines and generic "staff reporter" attributions appear frequently, particularly in content that closely mirrors press releases, further underscoring the limited space given to in-depth, journalist-led analysis.

Overall, the authorship pattern suggests that while biodiversity receives regular attention in the news cycle, sustained editorial investment in interpretation, accountability, and specialist reporting remains limited.

Percentage of news type by author type



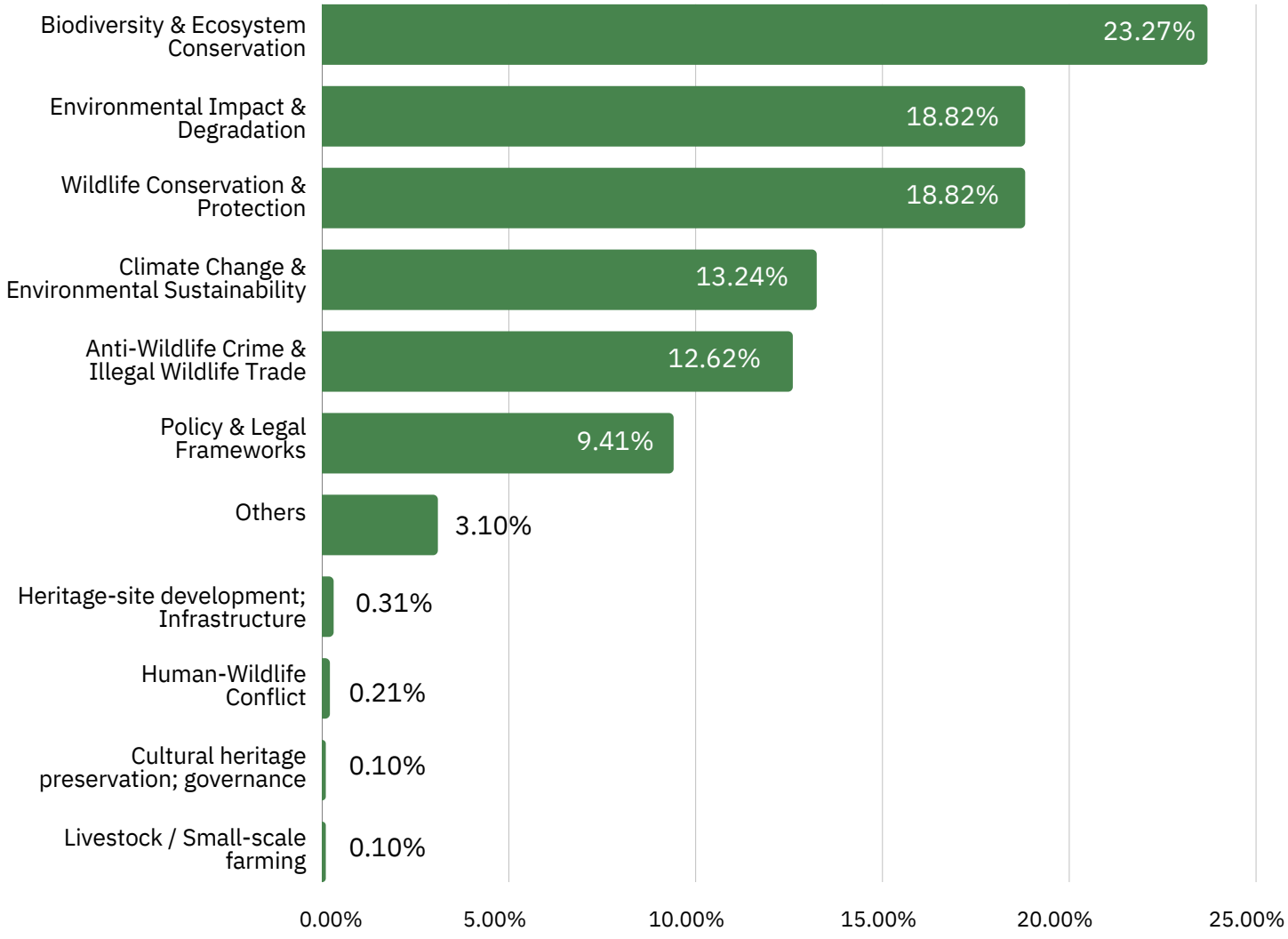
Source: Dataphyte Research

Theme of Focus in Biodiversity Reports Covered by Media Organisations

An analysis of biodiversity coverage by theme reveals a strong concentration around a relatively narrow set of issues. Stories focused on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation account for the largest share of coverage at 23.27 per cent. This is closely followed by reporting on environmental impact and degradation, as well as wildlife conservation and protection, each of which makes up 18.82 per cent of all stories. Taken together, these three themes account for more than 60 per cent of biodiversity-related reporting.

Climate change and environmental sustainability feature in 13.24 per cent of stories, while coverage of anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade accounts for 12.62 per cent. Policy and legal frameworks appear less frequently, making up 9.41 per cent of coverage. All other themes combined represent just over 3 per cent, with issues such as infrastructure and heritage-site development, human–wildlife conflict, cultural heritage preservation, and livestock or small-scale farming barely visible in the data.

Percentage of Theme of Focus for all the seven media outlets



Source: Dataphyte Research

This thematic pattern suggests that biodiversity reporting is largely shaped by conservation-led narratives that are highly visible, project-based, and often driven by institutions. Issues that fit neatly into crisis or protection frames tend to dominate attention, while topics linked to political economy, corporate accountability, land use decisions, and community livelihoods receive far less coverage. As a result, the structural and socio-economic drivers of biodiversity loss remain underexplored in much of the media reporting.

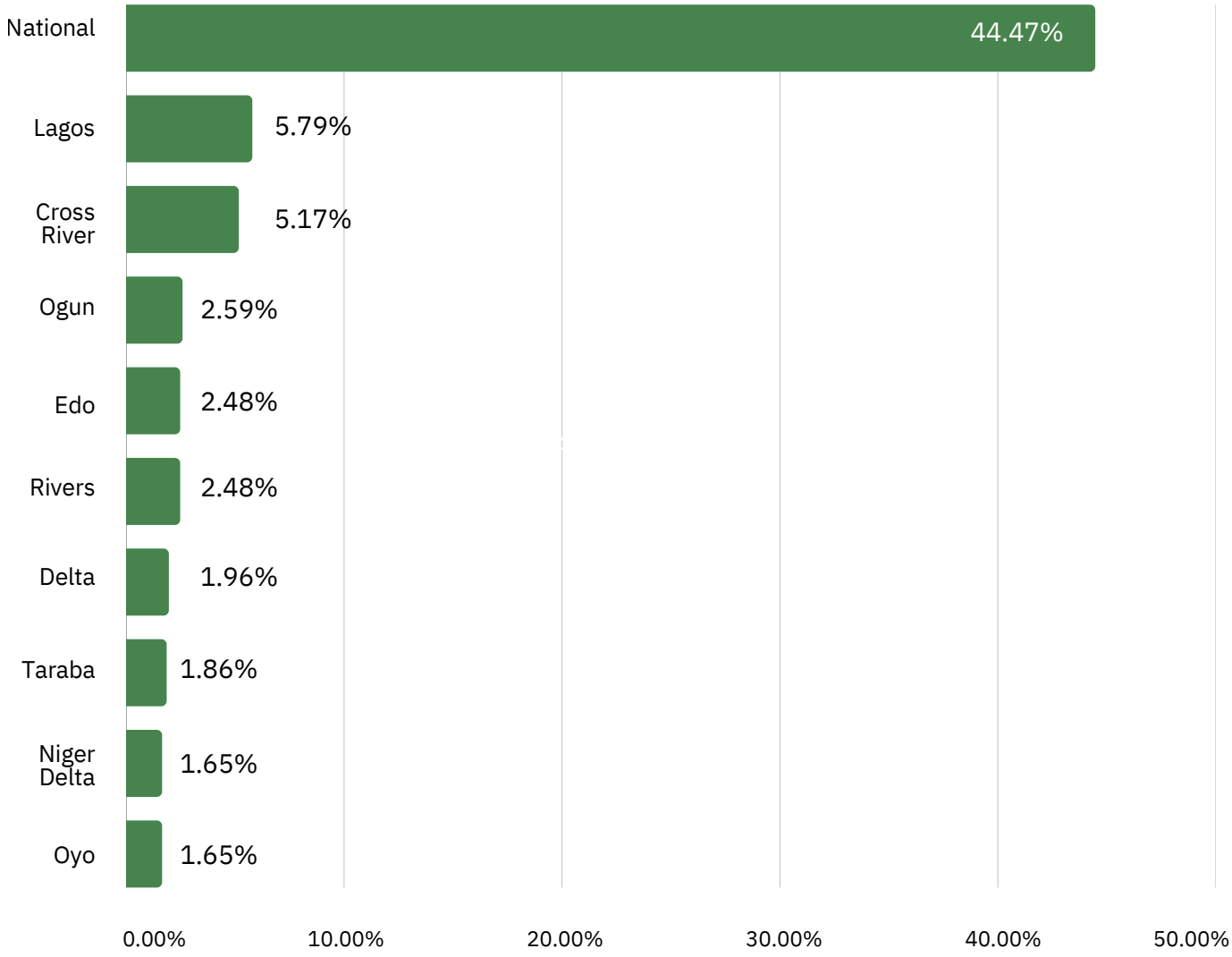
Geographic Focus of Biodiversity Reporting

The geographic distribution of biodiversity reporting is heavily skewed toward national-level narratives and a small cluster of states, revealing a clear imbalance in how environmental issues are made visible in the media. Nearly half of all stories, 44.47 per cent, are tagged as national, pointing to a strong preference for countrywide framing driven by federal institutions, national policies, donor programmes, and international observance days. While this approach helps position biodiversity as a national concern, it often abstracts the issue from the specific places and communities where environmental degradation is most acutely felt.

At the subnational level, coverage is uneven and selective. Lagos and Cross River stand out, together accounting for just over 10 per cent of all reporting. Lagos's visibility reflects its status as a media hub and a site of intense environmental pressure, particularly around coastal erosion, wetlands loss, and urban expansion. Cross River's prominence is closely tied to its reputation as a biodiversity hotspot, especially its rainforests and endangered species such as the Cross River gorilla, which attract sustained attention from conservation groups and international partners.

Beyond these states, coverage drops sharply. States like Ogun, Edo, Rivers, Delta, and Taraba receive some attention, often linked to extractive activities, forest loss, wetlands, or protected areas. However, reporting in these locations remains episodic rather than sustained, typically triggered by specific events such as policy announcements, conflicts, or project launches rather than ongoing ecological trends.

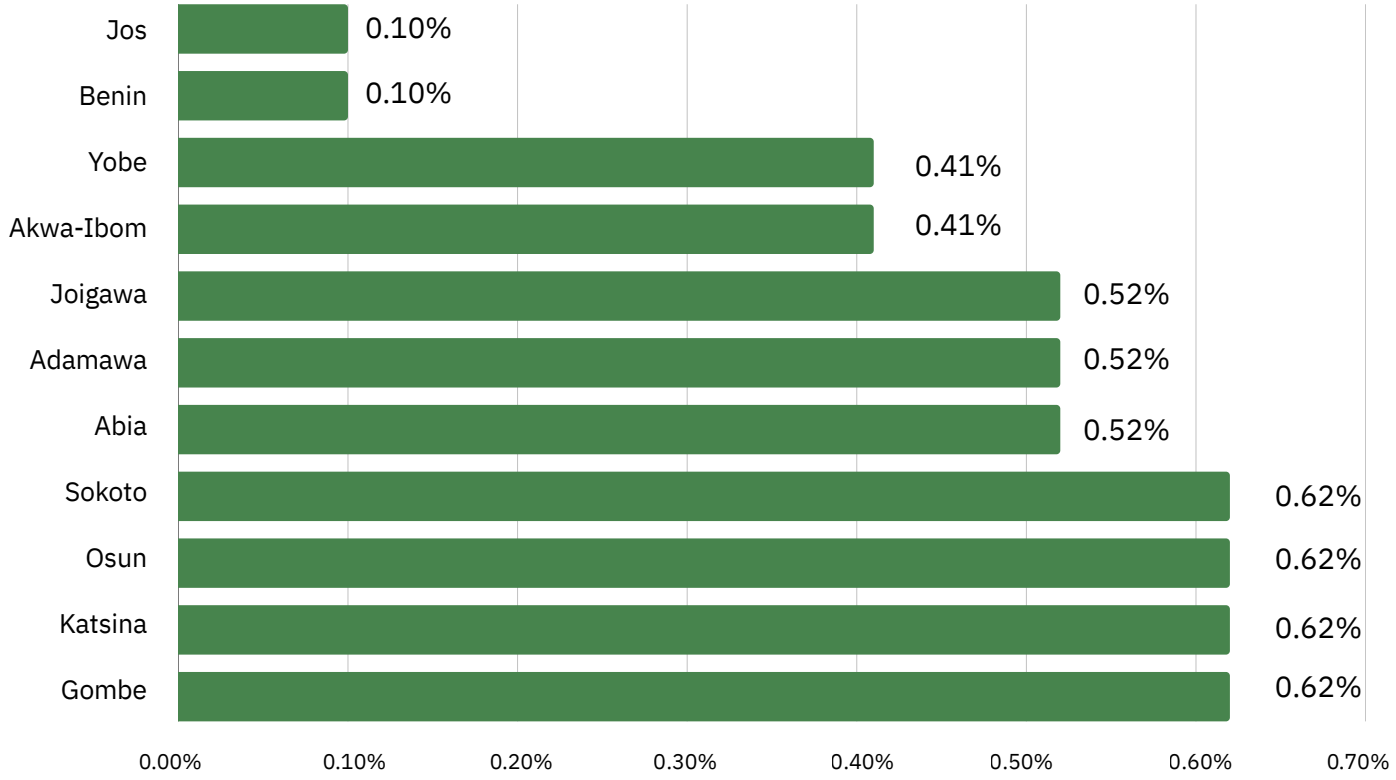
Percentage of states with the highest number of reports covered by all seven selected media outlets



Source: Dataphyte Research

The near absence of coverage in states such as Jos, Benin, Yobe, Akwa Ibom, and Jigawa is particularly telling. These states account for less than one per cent of total reporting, despite facing significant biodiversity-related challenges, including wetland degradation, desertification, mining impacts, deforestation, and human–wildlife conflict. Their limited visibility suggests that biodiversity stories are far more likely to emerge where media presence is strong, civil society actors are active, or donor-funded projects exist, rather than where ecological risk is necessarily highest.

Percentage of states with the lowest number of reports covered by all seven selected media outlets



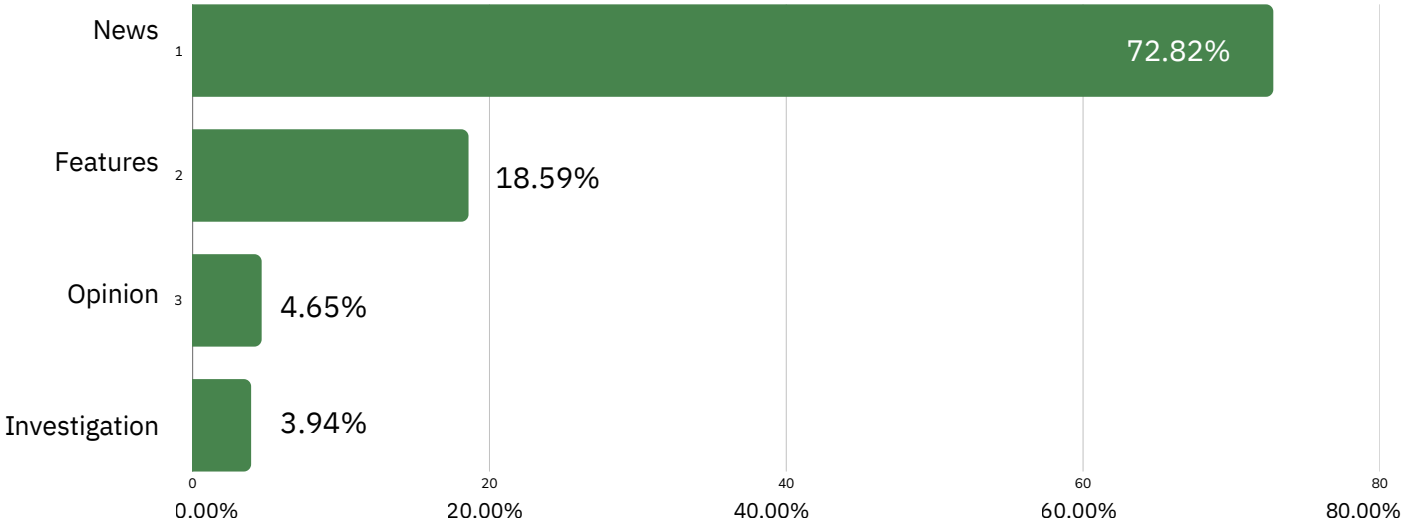
Source: Dataphyte Research

Analysis of Biodiversity Reporting across media outlets

EnviroNews: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

Overall, EnviroNews' biodiversity reporting is marked by high volume, a strong conservation lens, and a clear preference for straight news formats. The platform plays an important role in keeping biodiversity issues visible within Nigeria's media space, particularly through consistent coverage of conservation activities and environmental degradation. That said, the limited presence of investigative reporting, policy-focused analysis, and diverse authorship points to missed opportunities to deepen public understanding of the structural and governance drivers behind biodiversity loss. Expanding coverage in these areas would strengthen the platform's accountability role and its influence on public debate.

Percentage of news type published on EnviroNews

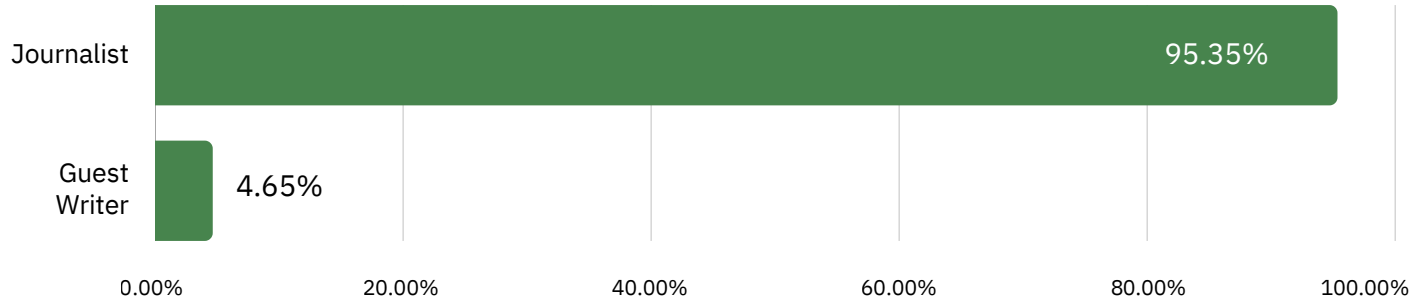


Source: Dataphyte Research

As shown in the chart above, EnviroNews relies heavily on straight news reporting. Nearly three-quarters of all biodiversity-related stories during the monitoring period were published as news items, with 517 out of 710 stories falling into this category. This reflects a strong emphasis on immediacy and event-driven coverage, with reporting often triggered by incidents, official statements, conservation campaigns, workshops, or enforcement actions as they occur. Biodiversity, in this context, is largely treated as a current affairs issue, rather than one that demands sustained investigation or long-form explanation.

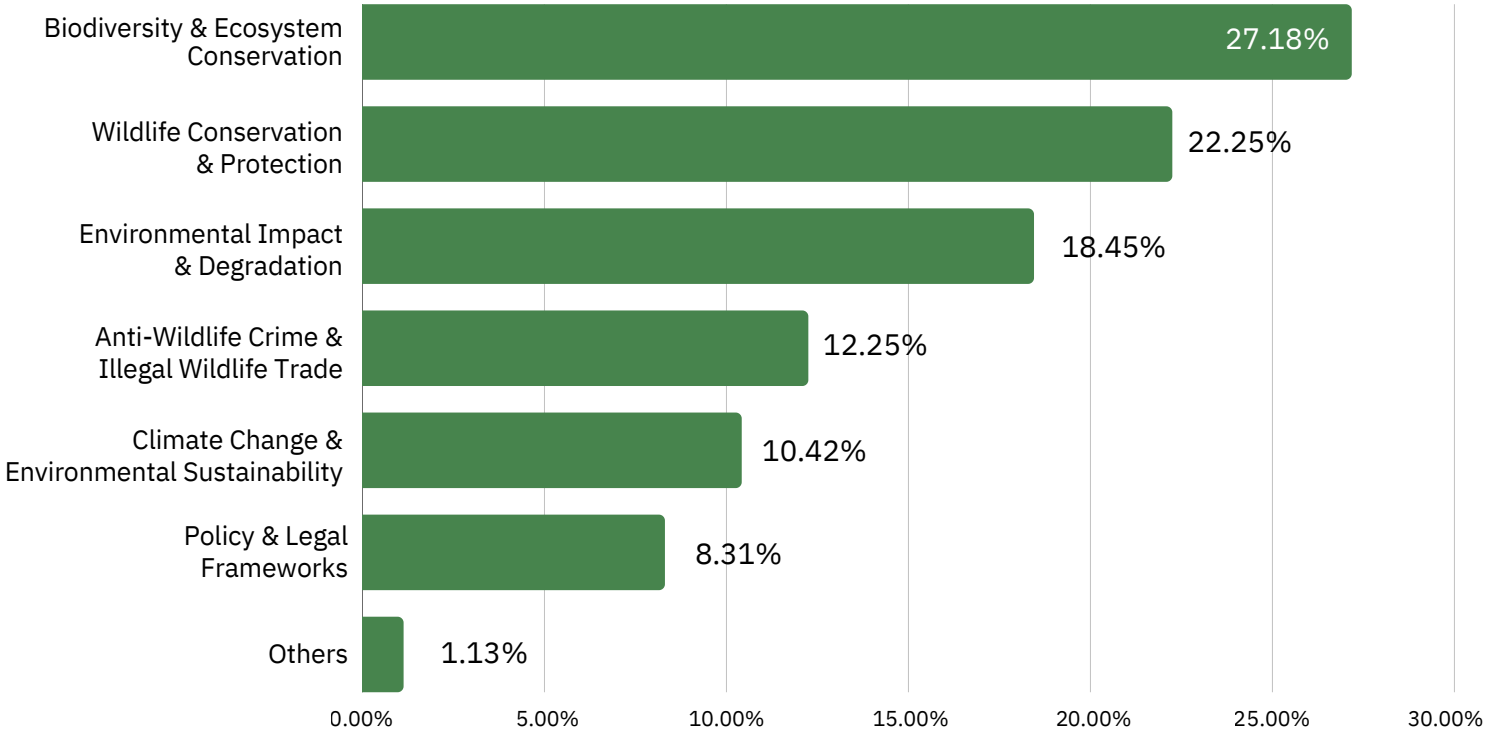
Feature stories form a secondary but still notable part of EnviroNews' biodiversity output, accounting for just under one-fifth of total coverage. These pieces tend to offer broader context, drawing attention to ecosystem threats, conservation challenges, or community-level environmental impacts. However, when set against the dominance of straight news, the proportion of feature articles suggests that deeper narrative exploration remains limited. Opinion and investigative reporting together make up less than nine per cent of total coverage. This points to a significant gap in critical scrutiny of biodiversity governance, enforcement failures, and accountability mechanisms, particularly striking in a country facing persistent challenges with illegal wildlife trade, forest loss, and weak regulatory oversight.

Percentage of news type published on EnviroNews



Authorship patterns, illustrated in the chart above, further reflect EnviroNews' editorial structure. Biodiversity reporting on the platform is journalist-led, with more than 95 per cent of stories written by in-house or staff reporters. Guest contributions are rare, accounting for fewer than five per cent of published items. While this indicates strong internal reporting capacity and editorial consistency, it also limits the range of voices shaping biodiversity narratives. The low level of guest authorship reduces opportunities for researchers, conservation practitioners, policy experts, and affected communities to contribute specialised insight, potentially constraining the technical depth and interdisciplinary scope of the coverage.

Percentage of theme of focus published in EnviroNews



Source: Dataphyte Research

The thematic distribution of stories, shown in the chart below, highlights EnviroNews' clear conservation-oriented focus. Reporting on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation represents the largest share of coverage, closely followed by wildlife conservation and protection. Together, these themes account for nearly half of all biodiversity-related stories, reflecting the platform's role in promoting conservation awareness and environmental protection. Environmental impact and degradation, including pollution, habitat loss, and land-use change, also feature prominently, reinforcing EnviroNews' emphasis on documenting the ecological consequences of human activity.

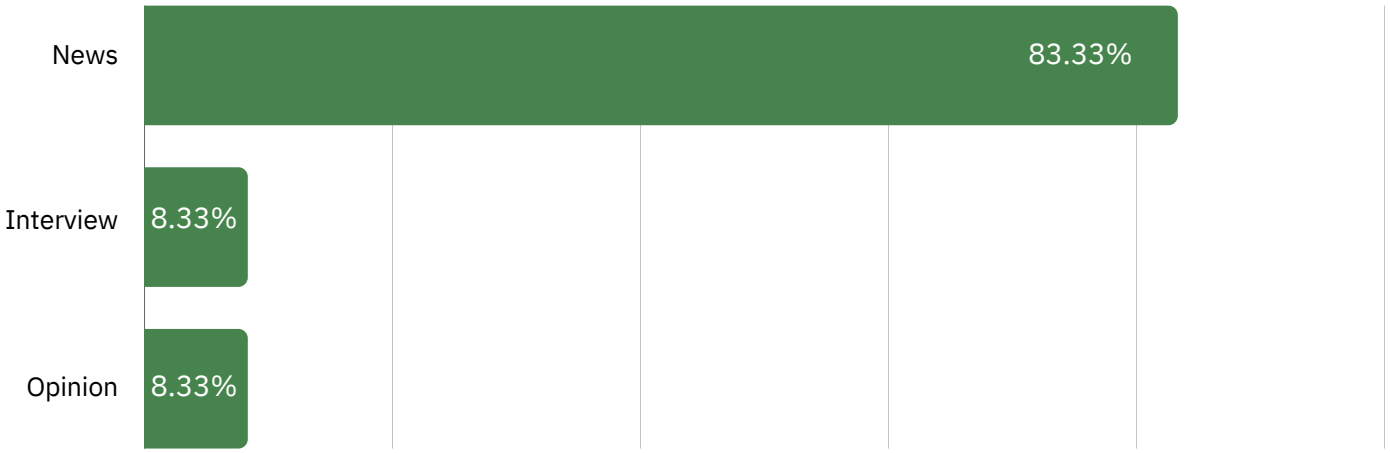
Coverage of anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade, while smaller in scale, remains a significant component of reporting, reflecting some attention to the criminal dimensions of biodiversity loss. In contrast, stories that directly engage with policy frameworks, legal enforcement, and governance responses make up less than ten per cent of total coverage.

Vanguard: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

Vanguard's biodiversity reporting during the monitoring period is limited in volume and largely event-driven, offering only a narrow window into how the outlet engages with environmental issues. With just 12 biodiversity-related stories identified, coverage is relatively sparse, especially when compared to platforms with a stronger environmental focus. Where biodiversity does feature, it is mostly treated as a momentary news event rather than a subject requiring sustained attention or deeper examination. This low frequency of coverage limits Vanguard's ability to shape public understanding of biodiversity loss as a long-term and systemic challenge.

Most of Vanguard's biodiversity stories are published as straight news reports, reflecting a strong preference for episodic coverage tied to official statements, isolated incidents, or one-off events. This approach reinforces a reactive framing, where biodiversity enters the news cycle only when triggered by external developments. Interview and opinion formats appear occasionally, suggesting some effort to vary storytelling approaches, but their minimal presence means there is little space for reflection, interpretation, or debate around biodiversity issues.

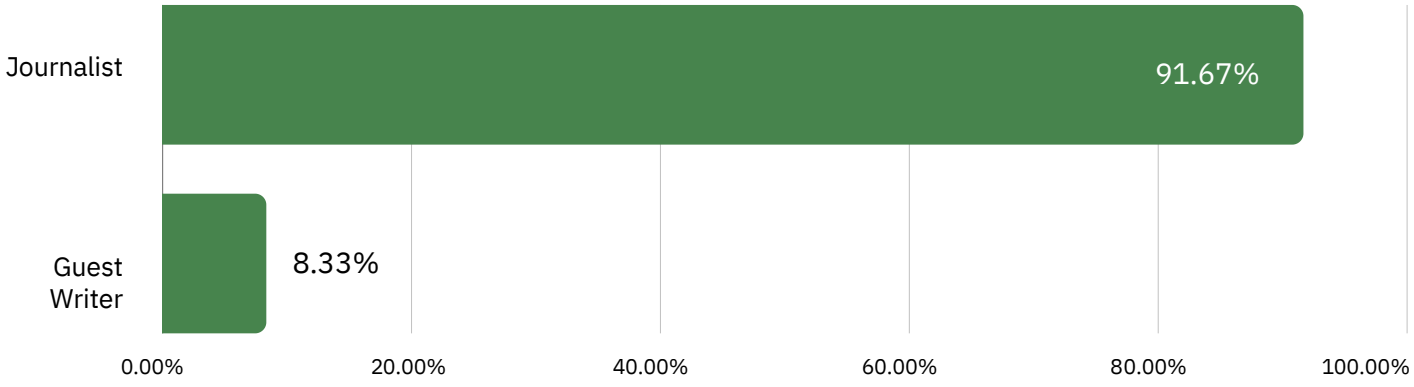
Percentage of news type published by Vanguard



Source: Dataphyte Research

Authorship patterns further reinforced this narrow framing. Biodiversity reporting at Vanguard is produced by in-house journalists, who account for more than 90 per cent of the stories reviewed. Guest contributions are rare, indicating limited engagement with environmental experts, researchers, civil society actors, or practitioners who could provide specialist insight or alternative perspectives. While this reflects a conventional newsroom structure, it also restricts the diversity of voices shaping how biodiversity issues are presented to readers.

Percentage of theme of focus published by Vanguard

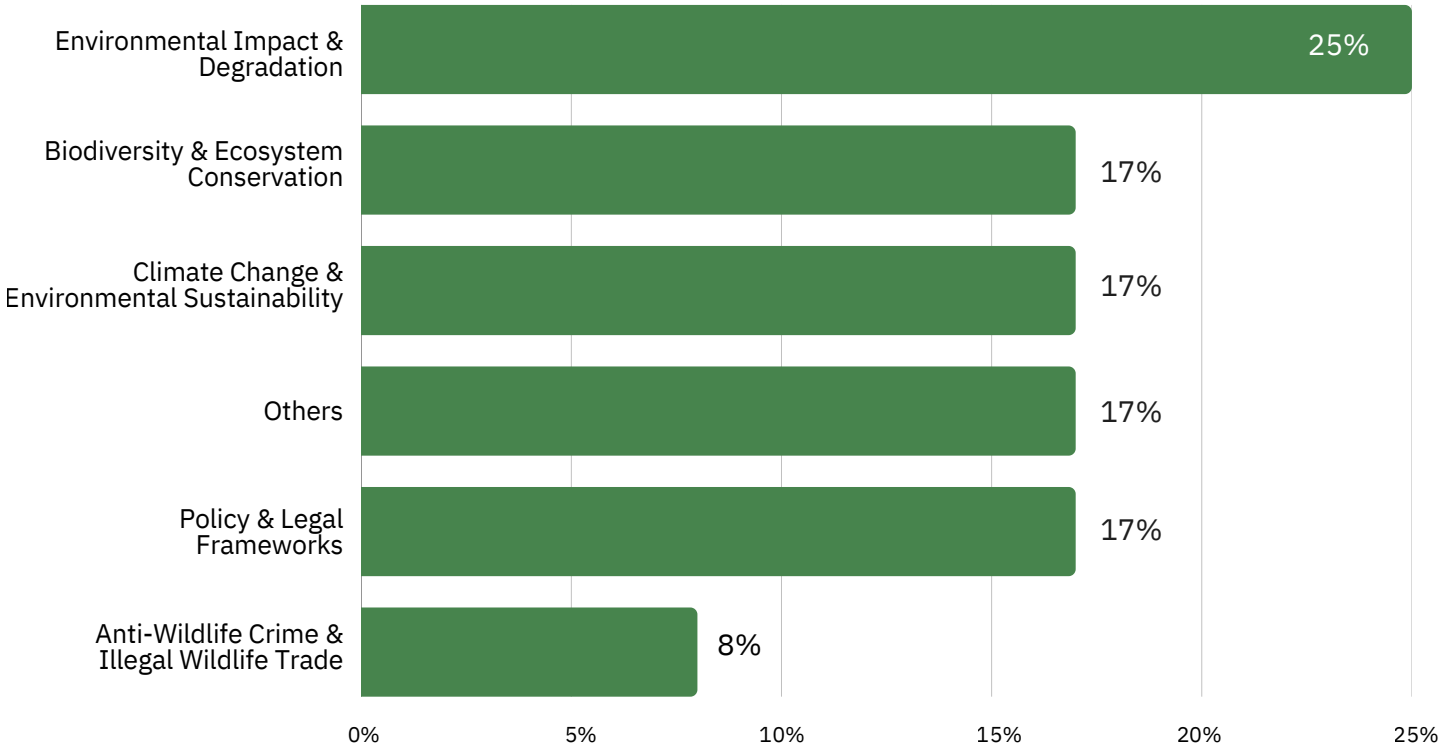


Source: Dataphyte Research

The thematic spread of Vanguard's biodiversity coverage is fragmented, with no single issue area clearly defining the outlet's editorial focus. Environmental impact and degradation appear most frequently, pointing to some attention to pollution, land degradation, and ecosystem damage linked to human activity. Beyond this, coverage is dispersed across biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, climate change and environmental sustainability, policy and legal frameworks, and a residual category capturing miscellaneous biodiversity-related topics. This scattered distribution suggests that biodiversity is not approached through a consistent editorial lens but rather emerges sporadically within broader environmental or policy reporting.

Notably, anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade receive very limited attention, with only one story addressing these issues. Given Nigeria's well-documented challenges with wildlife trafficking and weak enforcement, this represents a missed opportunity for accountability-driven journalism. Similarly, the relatively low emphasis on policy and legal frameworks indicates that questions of governance, regulation, and institutional responsibility are not central to Vanguard's biodiversity narrative.

Percentage of theme of focus published by Vanguard



Source: Dataphyte Research

Overall, Vanguard's biodiversity reporting is characterised by low frequency, event-based framing, and limited thematic depth. While the outlet acknowledges biodiversity-related concerns across several issue areas, the absence of sustained coverage, investigative ambition, and expert-driven perspectives constrains its capacity to present biodiversity loss as an urgent and systemic problem.

Econai Newsroom: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

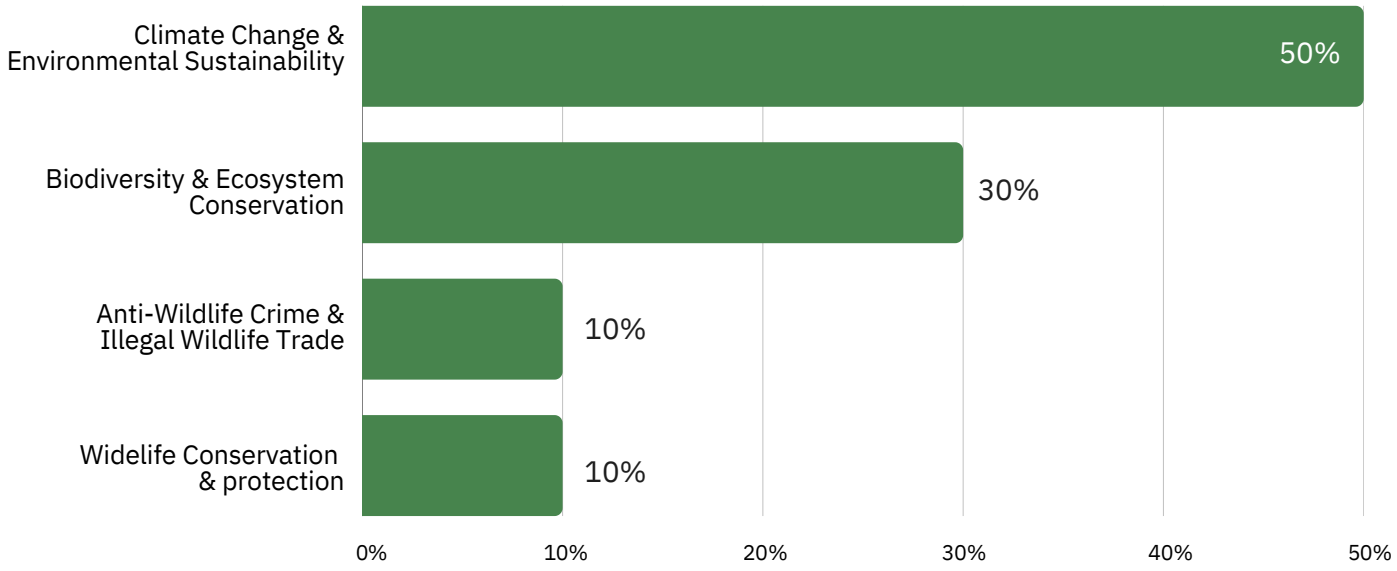
Biodiversity reporting on Econai Newsroom during the monitoring period is limited in scope and tightly defined by both format and authorship. All identified biodiversity-related stories are published exclusively as straight news reports, with no features, opinion pieces, or investigative stories recorded. This narrow formatting suggests an editorial approach that treats biodiversity mainly as a hard-news subject, covered in response to immediate developments, official announcements, or events, rather than as an issue that benefits from deeper explanation, long-form storytelling, or sustained scrutiny.

Authorship follows a similarly concentrated pattern. Every biodiversity story reviewed was written by in-house journalists, pointing to internal newsroom capacity to cover environmental issues. However, the absence of guest writers or expert contributors means that coverage rarely draws on the perspectives of researchers, conservation practitioners, or civil society actors. As a result, biodiversity narratives are shaped almost entirely within a conventional newsroom framework, which may limit technical depth and reduce opportunities for more nuanced or field-informed analysis.

The thematic focus of Econai's biodiversity coverage is heavily weighted toward climate-related narratives. Half of all biodiversity stories frame the issue through the lens of climate change and environmental sustainability, reflecting a strong tendency to link biodiversity loss to broader climate concerns. While this connection is important and increasingly relevant, the dominance of this framing risks subsuming biodiversity into the climate agenda, rather than treating it as a distinct ecological and policy challenge with its own drivers, governance gaps, and social impacts.

Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation emerge as a secondary theme, accounting for just under one-third of the stories. These reports likely highlight conservation efforts or ecosystem protection initiatives, but remain relatively few. Other critical issues, such as wildlife conservation and protection, anti-wildlife crime, and illegal wildlife trade, receive very limited attention, appearing only once each. Given Nigeria's exposure to wildlife trafficking, habitat loss, and weak enforcement systems, this limited focus points to significant gaps in accountability-driven reporting.

Percentage of theme of focus published y Econai Newsroom



Source: Dataphyte Research

Overall, Econai Newsroom's biodiversity coverage is small in volume, climate-heavy in framing, and confined to basic news formats. While the outlet demonstrates an understanding of the climate–biodiversity connection, the lack of thematic diversity, investigative depth, and varied storytelling limits its ability to fully reflect the scale, complexity, and urgency of biodiversity loss in Nigeria.

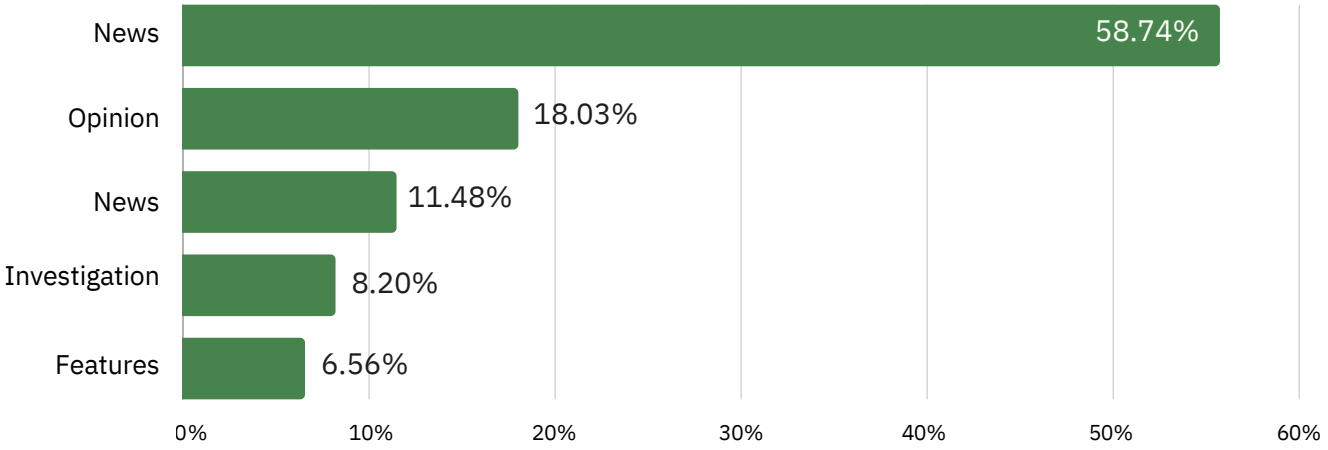
The Cable: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

The Cable stands out among the outlets reviewed for the relative breadth and depth of its biodiversity reporting. While straight news remains central to its coverage, the inclusion of opinion pieces, investigative reports, and features creates space for more layered storytelling. This mix allows biodiversity to be examined not only as an environmental concern, but also as a governance, policy, security, and development issue that requires sustained public attention.

Biodiversity coverage on The Cable reflects a more deliberate editorial effort to move beyond purely event-driven reporting. Although news stories still make up the largest share of coverage, their dominance is less pronounced than in many other newsrooms. This suggests that while biodiversity is often reported in response to unfolding events, policy announcements, or enforcement actions, there is also room for interpretation and analysis. Opinion articles form a significant portion of coverage, indicating an openness to critique, reflection, and agenda-setting around environmental issues. These pieces are likely where questions of political will, regulatory failure, and public responsibility are more directly addressed.

Investigative and feature stories, though fewer in number, are particularly notable within The Cable's biodiversity output. Their presence points to efforts to uncover deeper dynamics around issues such as wildlife crime, environmental degradation, and weak enforcement structures, as well as to provide explanatory narratives that situate biodiversity loss within broader social, economic, and institutional contexts. This signals a level of editorial investment that goes beyond surface-level reporting.

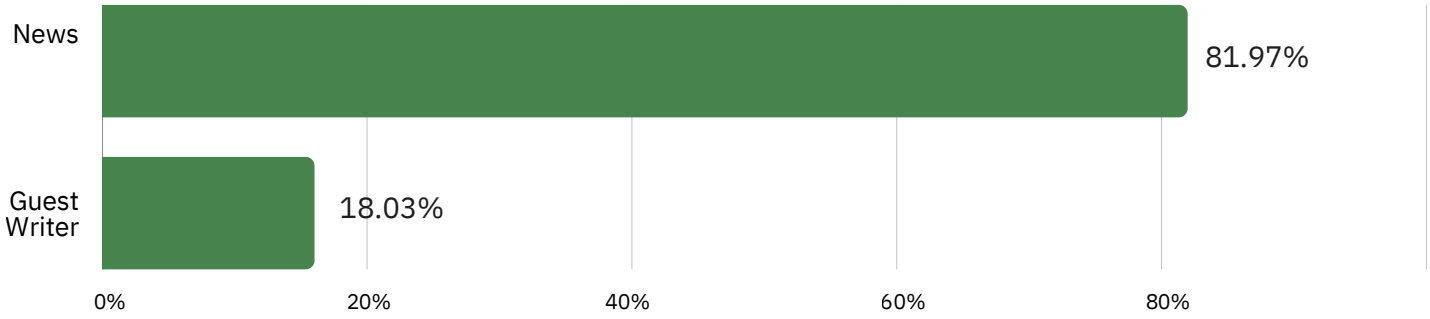
Percentage of news type by The Cable



Source: Dataphyte Research

Authorship patterns reinforce this diversity in approach. While in-house journalists produce the majority of biodiversity stories, a meaningful share of content comes from guest writers. This openness to external contributors suggests a willingness to draw on specialised knowledge and perspectives from environmental advocates, researchers, and policy analysts, enriching the overall quality and range of biodiversity discourse on the platform.

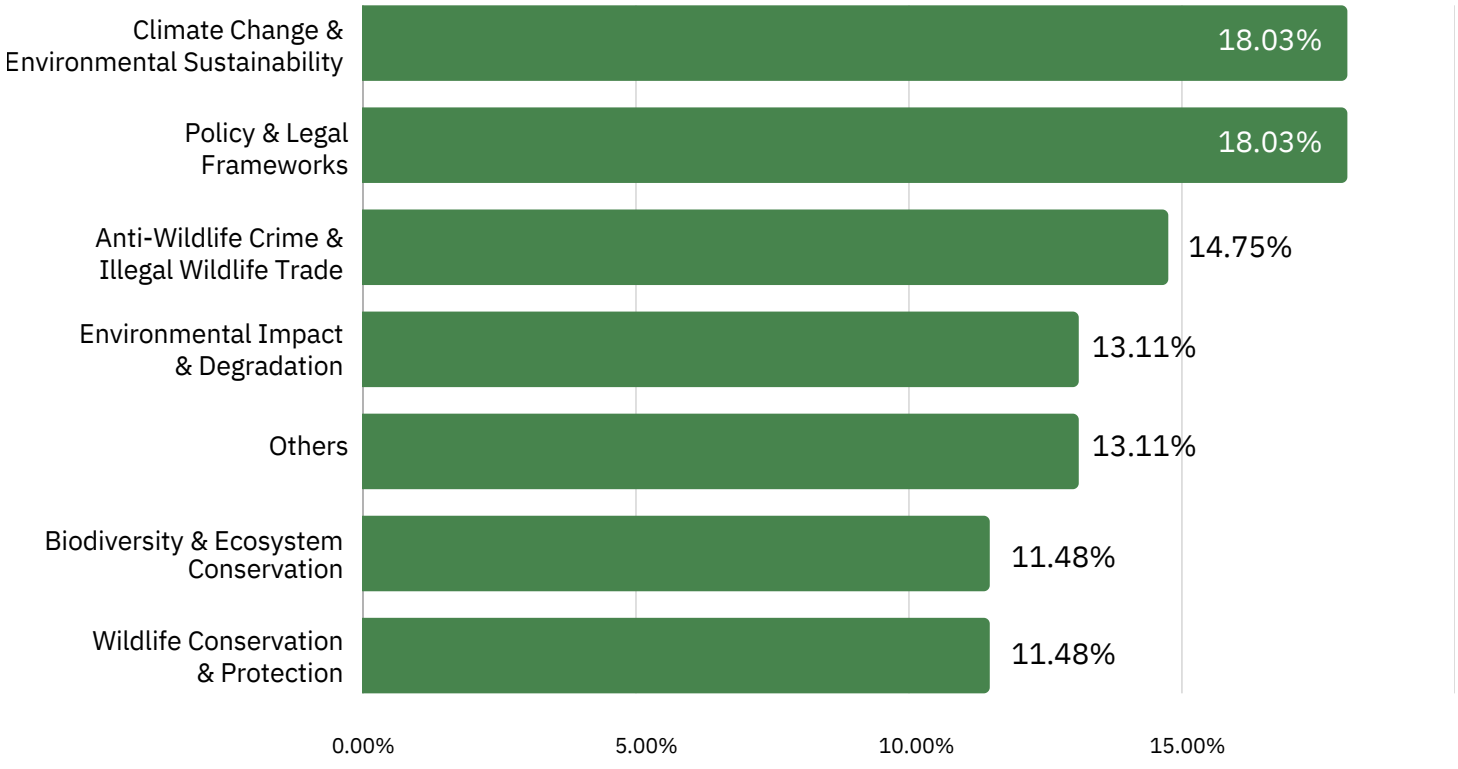
Percentage of author type published by The Cable



Source: Dataphyte Research

Thematic distribution further highlights the breadth of The Cable's coverage. Climate change and environmental sustainability, alongside policy and legal frameworks, emerge as the most prominent themes, underscoring a strong focus on governance, regulation, and long-term environmental management. Coverage of anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade is also relatively robust, reflecting attention to enforcement gaps, transnational crime, and accountability. Stories on environmental impact and degradation add another layer, documenting pollution, habitat loss, and ecosystem stress linked to economic activity. At the same time, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, as well as wildlife conservation and protection, receive balanced attention, reinforcing the multifaceted nature of biodiversity reporting on the platform.

Percentage of theme of focus published by The Cable



Source: Dataphyte Research

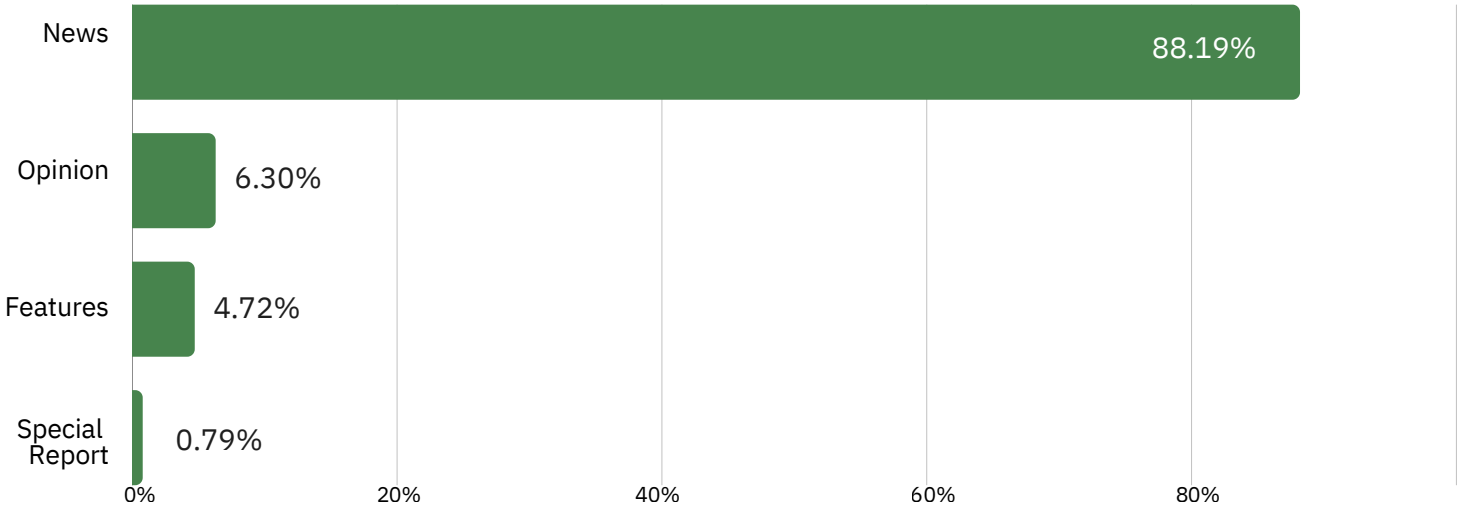
The Punch: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

Punch's biodiversity coverage is largely shaped by an emphasis on environmental degradation and climate-related stress, with reporting anchored in breaking news and institutional sources. This approach helps keep biodiversity issues visible in the news cycle, but it also limits the space for deeper investigation, community-centred narratives, and solutions-oriented storytelling. As a result, biodiversity often appears as a problem to be reported rather than a systemic challenge requiring sustained public engagement and policy-driven responses.

Biodiversity reporting on Punch is dominated by straight news formats, with close to nine out of every ten stories published as conventional news reports. This pattern reflects an editorial preference for event-led coverage, where biodiversity enters the news agenda through incidents, government actions, court rulings, official statements, or environmental crises. While opinion pieces and features are present, they account for a much smaller share of coverage, suggesting that opportunities for reflection, interpretation, and long-form exploration of biodiversity loss remain limited. The inclusion of a special report is notable, but its singular [illegible] in-depth biodiversity reporting is within the outlet's broader editorial output.

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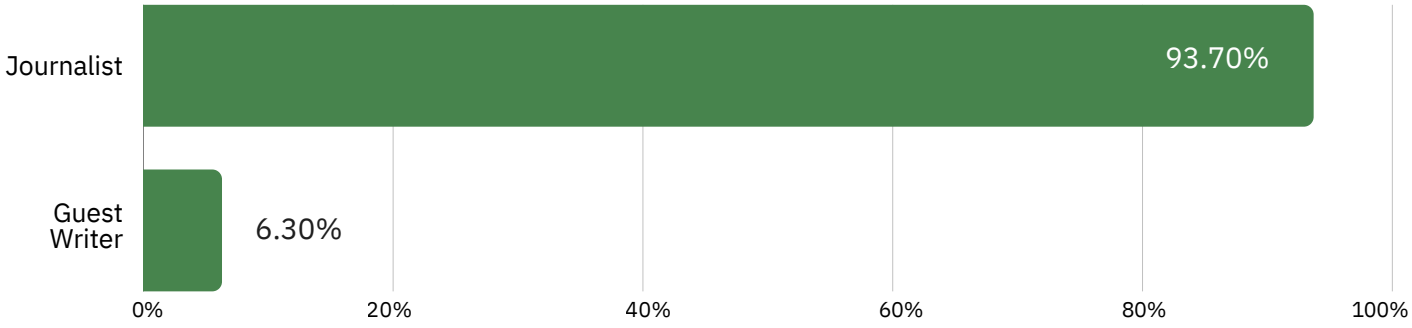
Percentage of news type published by The Punch



Source: Dataphyte Research

Authorship patterns further reinforce this newsroom-driven approach. The vast majority of biodiversity stories are written by staff journalists, pointing to strong internal control over environmental narratives and limited reliance on external expertise. Guest contributions exist but remain marginal, suggesting fewer opportunities for researchers, conservation practitioners, or community voices to directly shape biodiversity discourse on the platform.

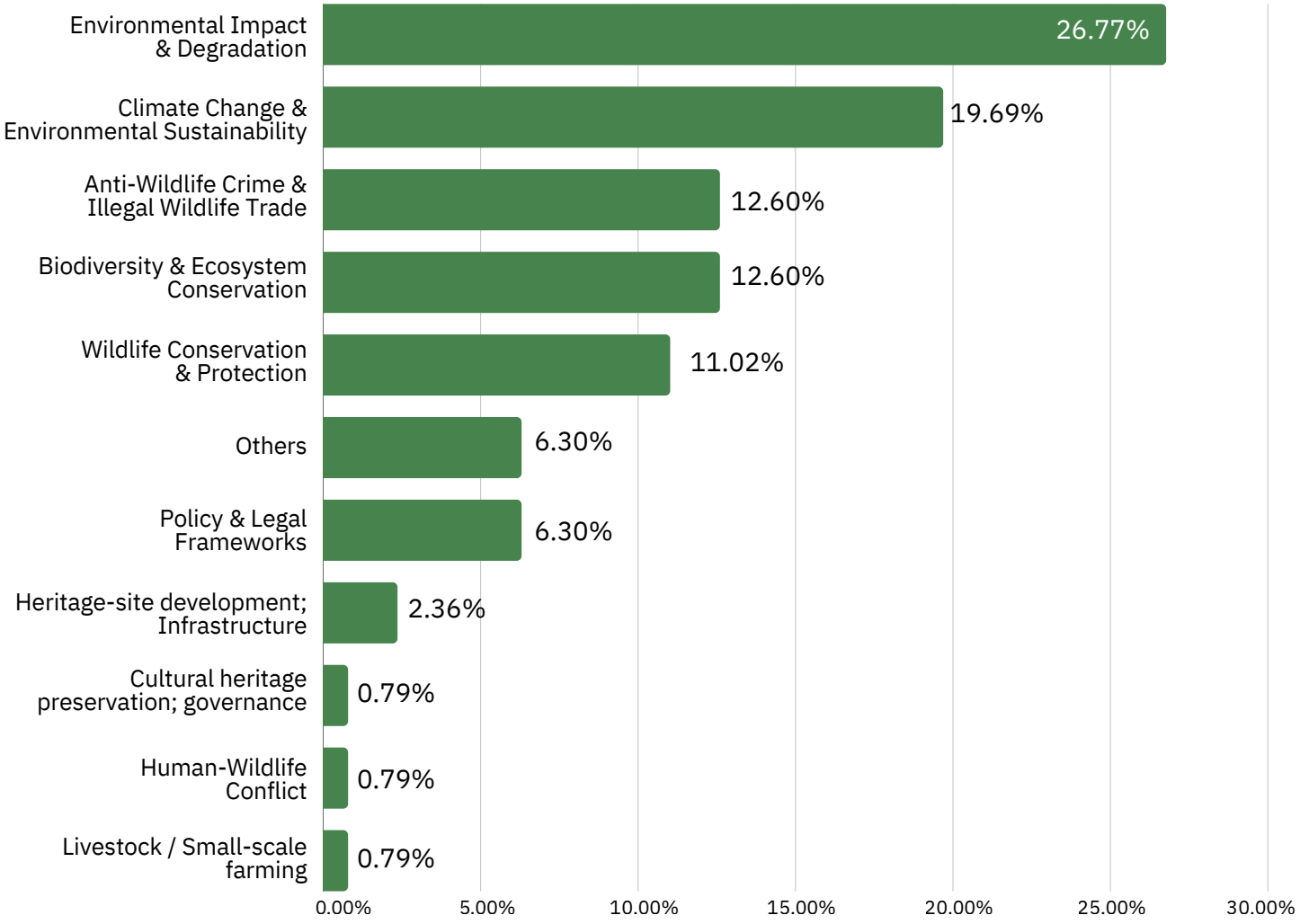
Percentage of news type published by The Punch



Source: Dataphyte Research

Authorship trends reinforce this newsroom-driven structure. Most biodiversity stories are written by staff journalists, indicating strong internal control over how environmental issues are framed and reported. Guest contributions appear occasionally but remain marginal, limiting the direct participation of researchers, conservation practitioners, civil society actors, or affected communities in shaping biodiversity narratives. This reliance on in-house reporting can constrain the range of perspectives and technical depth reflected in coverage.

Percentage of theme of focus published by Punch News



Source: Dataphyte Research

The thematic orientation of Punch's biodiversity reporting further clarifies its editorial priorities. Environmental impact and degradation emerge as the dominant focus, with stories frequently highlighting pollution, deforestation, land degradation, and ecosystem damage

resulting from human activity. Climate change and environmental sustainability follow closely, suggesting that biodiversity loss is often discussed within the broader context of climate risk and environmental resilience.

Issues related to anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade, as well as biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, receive moderate attention, indicating some engagement with enforcement and conservation efforts, though these themes are not central to the outlet's framing. Wildlife conservation and protection appear less frequently, pointing to a stronger emphasis on documenting damage and loss than on recovery, protection, or long-term stewardship.

More localised and socially embedded biodiversity issues such as human–wildlife conflict, cultural and heritage preservation, livestock-related pressures, and infrastructure-driven ecosystem disruption surface only occasionally. Their limited visibility suggests that community-level biodiversity challenges tend to receive attention mainly when they align with major national debates or high-profile development projects.

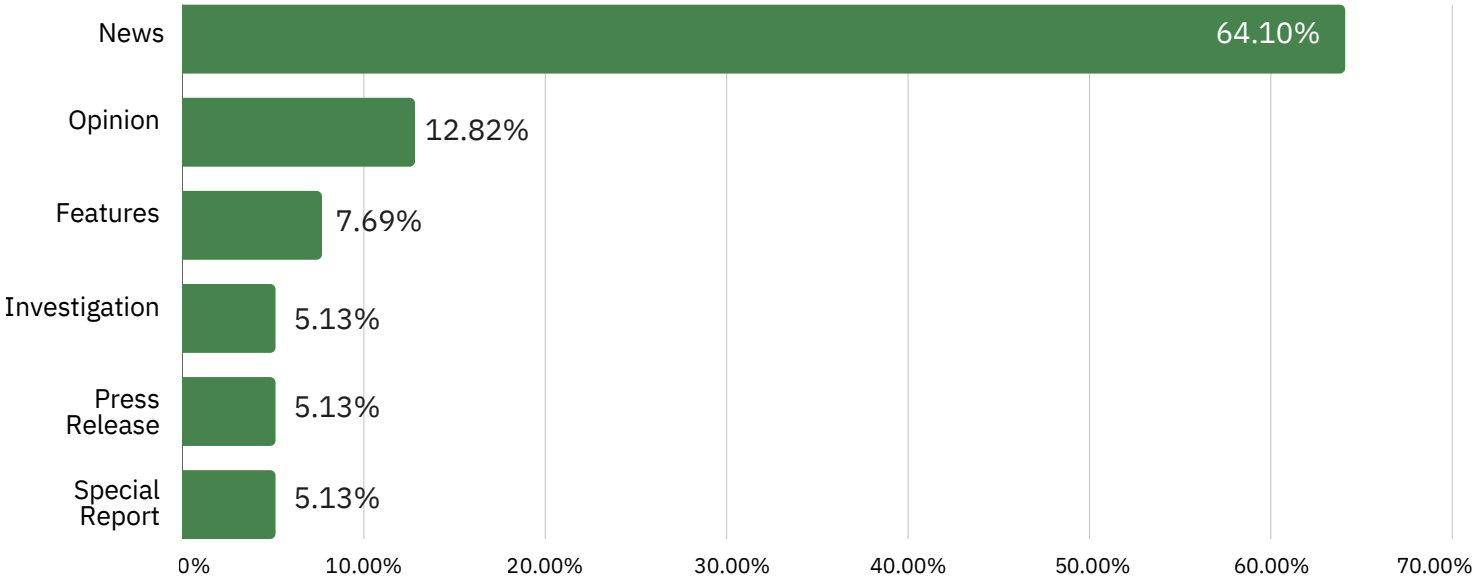
Premium Times: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

Overall, Premium Times frames biodiversity largely as a governance and accountability issue, closely connected to climate action, policy debates, and institutional responsibility. The outlet demonstrates a relatively balanced mix of story formats, creating opportunities for deeper engagement with biodiversity concerns. However, its strong reliance on externally sourced material highlights the need for more original, journalist-led investigations and locally grounded biodiversity storytelling.

Compared with several other outlets, biodiversity reporting on Premium Times shows a more varied editorial structure, even though straight news remains dominant. Roughly two-thirds of the stories appear as news reports, suggesting that biodiversity coverage is often driven by timely developments such as policy announcements, court cases, enforcement actions, and environmental incidents. At the same time, the inclusion of opinions, features, investigations, press releases, and special reports, each representing a meaningful share indicates an editorial willingness to go beyond breaking news. This diversity reflects an outlet that intermittently creates space for interpretation, accountability, and long-form storytelling, even if these formats still play a secondary role to conventional news reporting.

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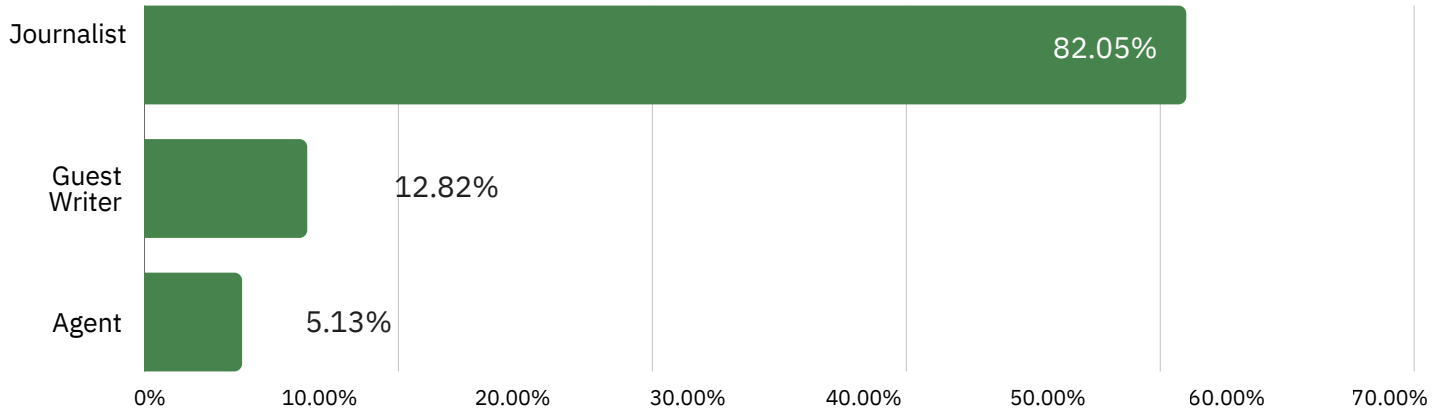
Percentage of news type published by Premium Times



Source: Dataphyte Research

Authorship patterns reveal an interesting dynamic in Premium Times' biodiversity coverage. While staff journalists remain central to content production, a considerable portion of stories comes from agents and guest writers. This suggests that biodiversity reporting is shaped not only by in-house editorial processes but also by syndicated and externally generated content. Although this approach can broaden thematic and geographic coverage, it may also result in variations in depth, framing, and editorial consistency.

Percentage of author type published by Premium Times

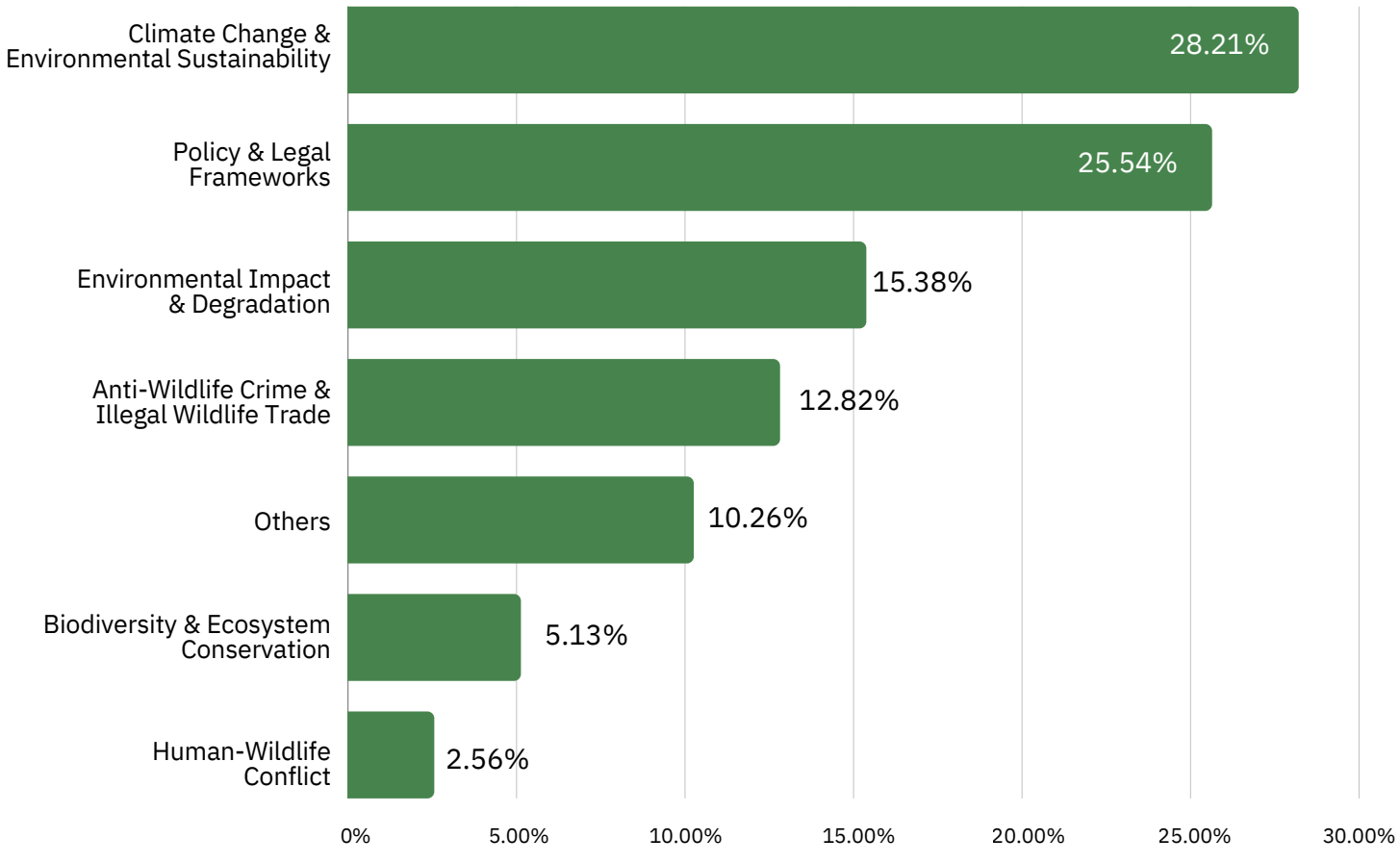


Source: Dataphyte Research

The thematic distribution of biodiversity stories further reflects a strong policy- and systems-oriented framing. Climate change and environmental sustainability dominate the coverage, showing that biodiversity is frequently discussed within broader debates on environmental governance and long-term resilience. Policy and legal frameworks also feature prominently, reinforcing the outlet's focus on legislation, court rulings, regulatory processes, and institutional responses to biodiversity challenges.

Environmental impact and degradation form another major pillar of reporting, with attention given to pollution, land-use change, habitat destruction, and ecological decline. Anti-wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade also receive notable coverage, highlighting enforcement gaps and the transnational dimensions of biodiversity loss. In contrast, human–wildlife conflict appears only marginally, indicating that community-level experiences and local conservation tensions remain relatively underexplored.

Percentage of theme of focus published by Premium Times



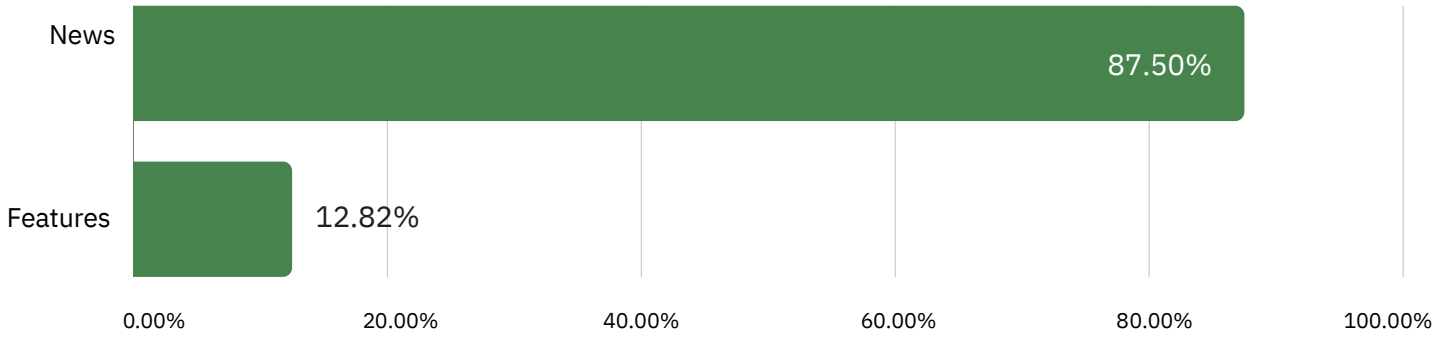
Source: Dataphyte Research

Nature News: Biodiversity Coverage Analysis

Nature News frames biodiversity primarily as a security and enforcement issue rather than as a broader socio-ecological or developmental concern. The limited volume of coverage, combined with a narrow thematic focus, restricts the outlet's ability to shape sustained public discourse on biodiversity loss. Expanding reporting beyond wildlife crime to include ecosystem degradation, community impacts, climate connections, and governance failures would significantly strengthen its contribution to biodiversity awareness and accountability.

Biodiversity reporting on Nature News is sparse but revealing in its editorial priorities. With only eight biodiversity-related stories identified, coverage appears irregular and limited, indicating that biodiversity is not a consistent reporting focus for the outlet. Straight news dominates the format distribution, reinforcing an event-driven approach to biodiversity storytelling. As a result, biodiversity is rarely explored through extended, analytical, or investigative narratives, with features playing only a minor role in shaping public understanding.

Percentage of news type published by Nature News

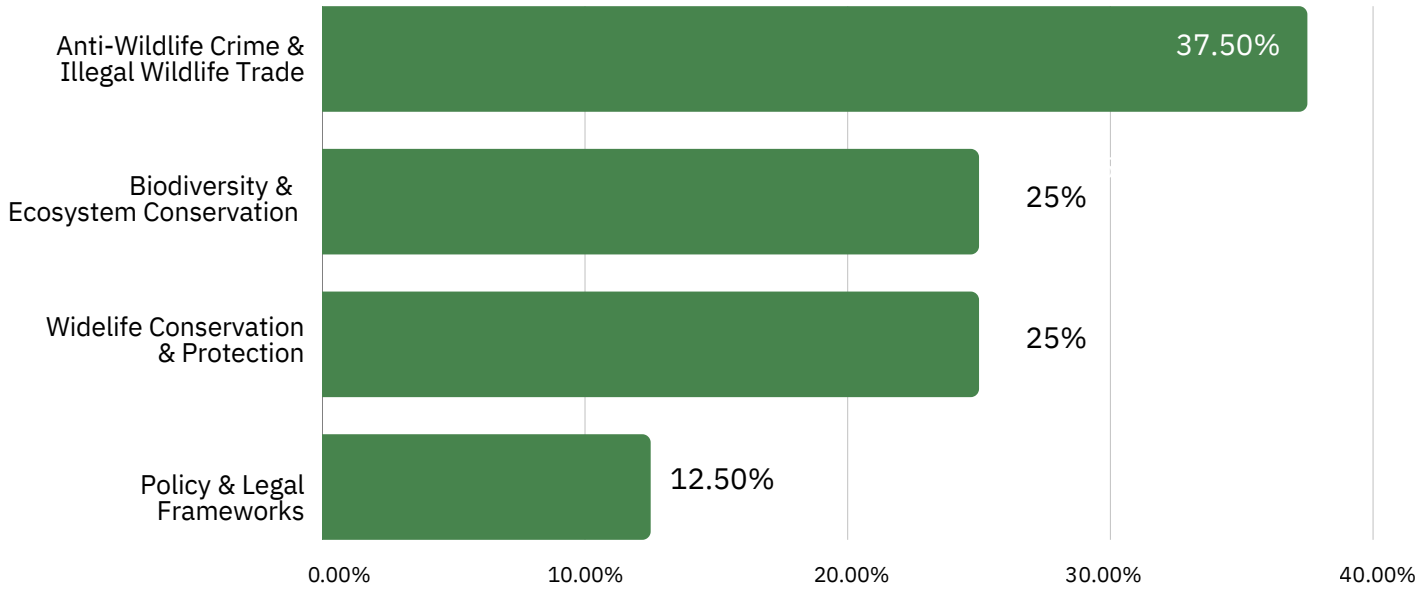


Source: Dataphyte Research

All biodiversity stories published by Nature News are written by in-house journalists. This points to strong editorial control and consistency in tone and framing. However, it also limits the diversity of perspectives, as the absence of guest contributors, experts, or collaborative voices reduces opportunities for deeper ecological, legal, and community-based insights that biodiversity reporting often demands.

Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, alongside wildlife conservation and protection, receive moderate attention, indicating some recognition of habitat loss, species preservation, and conservation efforts. However, these themes appear secondary to crime-focused narratives and are not explored at a scale that reflects the complexity of Nigeria's ecological challenges. Policy and legal frameworks appear intermittently, suggesting that institutional responses are acknowledged but not deeply interrogated or consistently followed.

Percentage of theme of focus published by Nature News



Source: Dataphyte Research

Recommendations

Media reporting on biodiversity and related issues can be enhanced in terms of quality and quantity when biodiversity stories are framed within a broader development context, and their intersections with other social themes are highlighted. This approach can strengthen reporting in terms of story type, depth, thematic focus, and analytical depth. Against this backdrop, the following recommendations are presented based on the key findings from this report.

1. Shift biodiversity reporting from events to systems: Newsrooms should move beyond workshops, observance days, and official statements to interrogate the political economy of biodiversity loss. This includes examining land-use decisions, extractive industries, infrastructure projects, budget allocations, and enforcement failures that shape ecological outcomes over time.
2. Invest in investigative and accountability-driven journalism: The scarcity of investigative reporting points to a need for dedicated editorial resources for long-form and watchdog journalism on biodiversity. This should prioritise illegal wildlife trade networks, regulatory capture, weak enforcement institutions, and the role of corporate and state actors in ecosystem degradation.
3. Strengthen subnational and community-centred reporting: Media coverage should better reflect where biodiversity loss is occurring, particularly in underreported states facing desertification, wetland degradation, mining pressures, and human–wildlife conflict. Supporting reporters outside major media hubs and encouraging place-based storytelling would help correct geographic imbalances.
4. Expand the range of voices shaping biodiversity narratives: Greater inclusion of researchers, environmental economists, conservation practitioners, community leaders, and affected populations would deepen analysis and reduce reliance on press releases and institutional framing. Guest contributions and collaborative reporting models can strengthen technical accuracy and local relevance.

Recommendations

5. Treat biodiversity as a governance and development issue, not only a conservation concern: Editorial framing should more consistently link biodiversity loss to food security, livelihoods/unemployment, public health, climate resilience, and social conflict. This would help position biodiversity as central to Nigeria's development trajectory rather than as a niche environmental topic.
6. Build newsroom capacity for specialist environmental reporting: Targeted training, data access, and editorial support for environment desks can help journalists move confidently into policy analysis, data-driven storytelling, and long-term ecological reporting, reducing dependence on reactive news cycles.

Conclusion

Overall, biodiversity reporting in Nigerian media remains visible but shallow. Coverage is frequent enough to signal awareness, yet it is dominated by episodic news, limited thematic range, and uneven geographic attention. The emphasis on events over systems, and conservation outcomes over governance processes, constrains public understanding of biodiversity loss as a structural and political challenge.

Outlets with stronger editorial diversity, such as The Cable and Premium Times, demonstrate that deeper and more accountable biodiversity journalism is possible. However, across the board, there is significant room for more investigative reporting, stronger policy interrogation, and greater inclusion of local and expert voices. Strengthening these areas would improve not only the quality of biodiversity journalism but also its ability to inform policy, influence public debate, and support environmental accountability.

Our Products and Key Initiatives:

Goloka

Goloka is the real-time hyper-local data collection platform, helps businesses and development organisations gain insights through their network of verified field agents.

Afani

Anfani is a social accountability platform that provides beneficial ownership data, linking government contracts to contractors. It empowers civic actors and journalists to demand accountability and improved service delivery

DataphyteHub

Dataphyte Hub offers inviting workspaces in a serene environment, featuring high-speed internet, 24/7 power and a professional studio equipped with top-quality sound and video editing facilities for post-shooting services.

DataPLEX provides both free and paid access to exclusive datasets on the economy, education, energy, environment, finance, health and security required for making informed business, policy, and development decisions.

NUBIA

Nubia is an AI platform that analyzes data to produce accurate newsroom-quality articles, helping newsrooms bettert utilize development data for stories they couldn't write before.

