TV Industry finding its feet but terms such as socks, toe and footsteps still mentioned more than carbon footprint on screen.

\*albert revisits subtitle data for a second year to look at how often climate change is mentioned in our TV Shows

\*Key findings in ‘Subtitles to Save the World 2’ show that the climate was discussed on-screen four times more frequently in 2019 than 2018

\*However, environmental mentions still trail behind discussions of climate-damaging activities such as eating beef and air travel

**Weds 18 November.** Today albert – the BAFTA backed sustainability initiative for the TV and Film industry, releases its second *Subtitles to Save the World* report which investigates how often climate change is mentioned on TV screens in the UK. The release comes a year after the first report which highlighted that words such as ‘picnic’ and ‘cats’ were mentioned more often on TV than ‘climate change’.

To conduct the research, albert worked with Deloitte who took subtitling data from five broadcasters, from September 2018 to August 2019 and analysed the data to look at how often words associated with five key sustainability terms were mentioned: Food, Travel, Resources, Climate Change and Energy.

This year, subtitle data from Channel 5 was included alongside BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky to help give a more complete picture of how terrestrial channels are talking about the climate.

This year’s findings show that climate change was mentioned four times more often than last year, an increase from around 3,000 mentions to over 13,000 mentions. Although an improvement, the findings show that this figure is still dwarfed by many other terms such as ‘wedding’ (84,870) or ‘cake’ (72,737).

More urgently, words related to climate are still mentioned far less often than those related to high carbon activities such as beef consumption (21,307) or air travel (43,945). Not only this but when a random sample of 100 references to ‘beef’ and ‘flying’ were investigated further, 0% were in connection to the environment and the high carbon tag attached to these activities.

Aaron Matthew, albert’s Head of Industry Sustainability said: “It’s encouraging to see climate rising up the agenda but we now need to see commissioners and content producers taking an active role in how we talk about climate on screen. It cannot be siloed away into the natural history programming slot; we need to see the climate brought into every conversation, from food programmes to travel shows. If the science tells us we need to reduce our meat intake then we can’t keep promoting meaty recipes on our cookery shows without, at the very least, recognising the environmental impact”.

While [last year’s report](https://wearealbert.org/planet-placement/subtitles-to-save-the-world/) measured the frequency of climate change mentions, this year’s report goes a step further and looks at how often environmental terms are brought into the conversation alongside topics which are critical to our transition to a sustainable society. The study looked at programmes which discussed food, travel, homes or the latest consumer product and then scanned these programmes further for the presence of key terms (e.g. sustainability, the environment, climate crisis). The results revealed that these programmes only meaningfully brought associated environmental terms into the conversation 5.7% of the time.

Since 2014, albert has awarded certificates to those programmes which have made efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of their programme. From 2021, the threshold for receiving either 1, 2 or 3 star certification will be increased with programme required to show how their production’s editorial ambition is also compatible with a sustainable climate. The change has been introduced with the support of the BAFTA albert consortium and directorate who support the development and implementation of albert’s strategy and industry wide objectives.

The change comes as new surveys conducted by the key broadcasters shows that overwhelmingly, audiences want to see increased environmental programming; an ITV YouGov study in June 2020 showed that seven out of 10 ITV viewers want to see media companies doing more to communicate how viewers can reduce their environmental impact.

Peter Bazalgette, executive chairman of ITV noted: “True stories help us all understand ourselves and the world around us. The potential for new narratives to help British audiences navigate the climate crisis cannot be underestimated. If we get it right, following the dictates of responsible journalism, the implications will be truly global.”

Dorothy Byrne, Editor at Large at Channel 4 added: “We know climate change is a real concern for our audiences, particularly younger viewers, which is why we have committed to a range of measures to reduce our environmental impact including a target of being carbon net-zero by 2030. There is still much to do and we are committed to improving the way we reflect and talk about climate on screen.”

**ENDS**

Notes to Editors:

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Full Report can be downloaded here {LINK}

Subtitles to save the world 1 (2018’s report) is available [here](https://wearealbert.org/planet-placement/subtitles-to-save-the-world/)

The event to accompany this report’s release takes place on Wed 17 November. Details and booking link [here](https://wearealbert.org/event/content-for-climate-subtitles-event/)

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/)