4 July - 8 July 2022

According to Google:

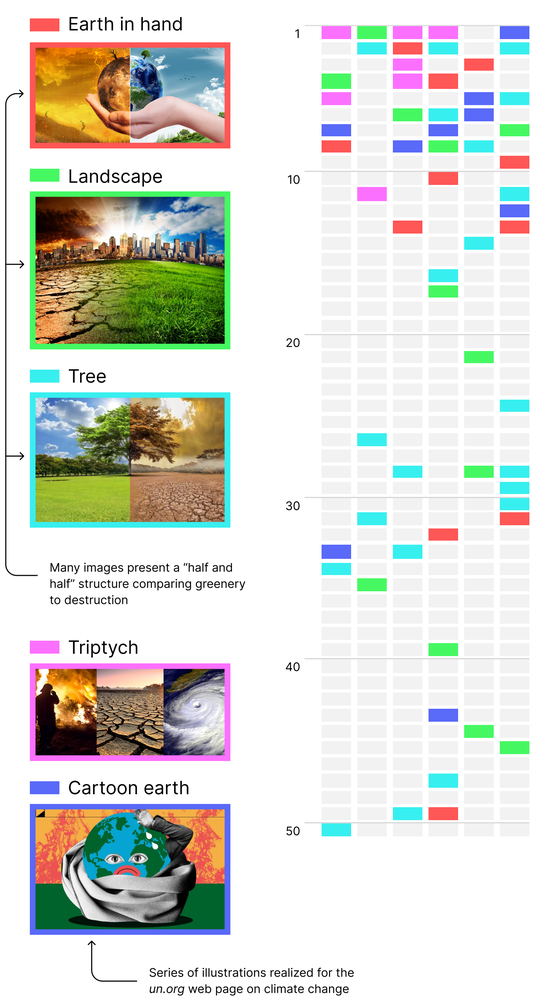
Visual epistemologies of climate change and biodiversity loss

Top 50 Google Images results for climate change and biodiversity loss in different countries

Climate change

Country (VPN)	Domain	Query
Australia	.com.au	Climate change
Netherlands	.nl	Klimaatverandering
Nigeria	.com.ng	Climate change
Mexico	.com.mx	Cambio climático
China	.com.hk	气候变化
Brazil	.com.br	Mudanças climáticas

Distribution of the most recurring images (slight variations included)



Many images present a "half and half" structure comparing greenery to destruction

Series of illustrations realized for the *un.org* web page on climate change

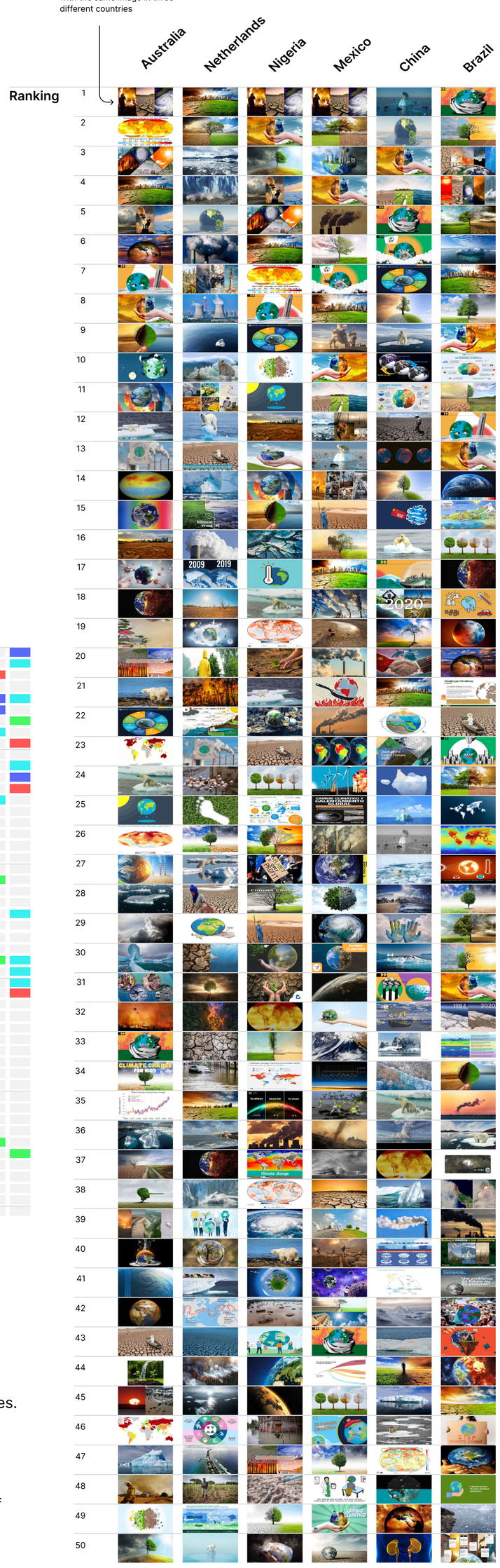
Main findings:

Many images repeat across different countries.

Generic representation through 'split' stock images showing a montage of perspectives (e.g. earth in hand, landscape).

Google presents a global visual vernacular of climate change: timeless, placeless, human-less, cause-less.

The first results are homogeneous, with the same image in three different countries



Biodiversity loss

Country (VPN)	Domain	Query
Australia	.com.au	Biodiversity loss
Netherlands	.nl	Verlies van biodiversiteit
Nigeria	.com.ng	Biodiversity loss
Mexico	.com.mx	Pérdida de biodiversidad
China	.com.hk	生物多样性丧失
Brazil	.com.br	Perda de biodiversidade

Distribution of the most recurring images (slight variations included)

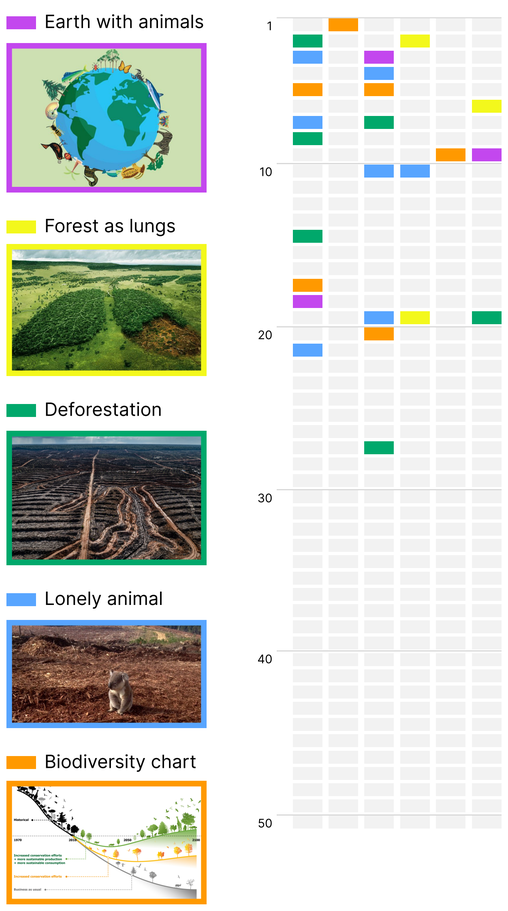


Image taken from: Leclère, D., Obersteiner, M., Barrett, M. et al. *Bending the curve of terrestrial biodiversity needs an integrated strategy*. Nature 585, 551–556 (2020).

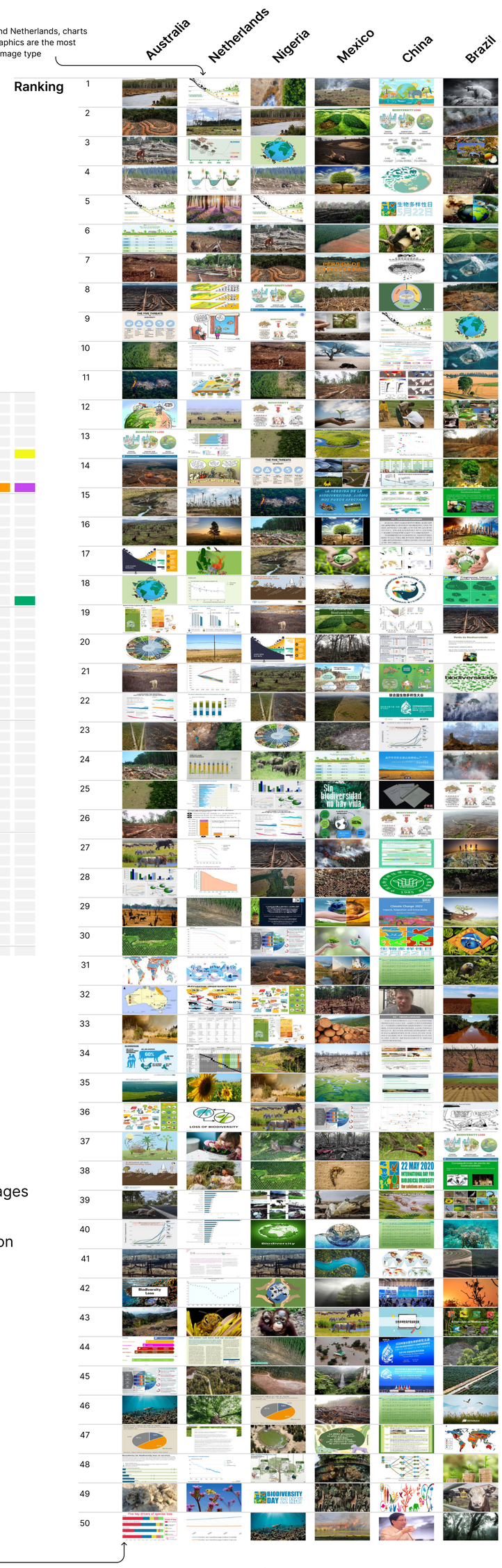
Main findings:

Some repeating images, but more country-level diversity.

Stock imagery less dominant, but "split" images still popular (e.g. "forest as lungs").

Deforestation as the dominant representation of biodiversity loss.

In China and Netherlands, charts and infographics are the most prevalent image type



Mexico #29

Two images representative of the *climate change* results can be found also in the *biodiversity loss* images.

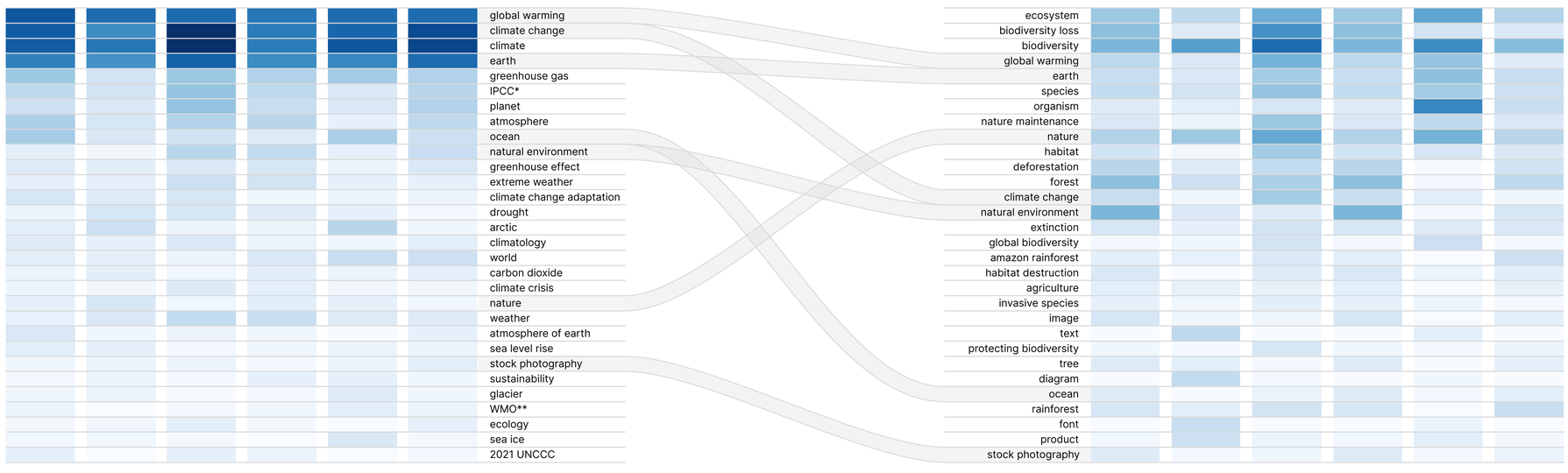
Brazil #18

30 Most frequent web entities associated with the top 50 Google Images results according to Google Vision API

Frequency of the web entity

1 — 48

Shared web entities



Web entities are the 'references' that Google assigns based on the site-specific textual environments in which matching images are found around the web.

Just 7/30 entities are shared, climate change and biodiversity loss defined as largely discrete phenomena.

Web entities for climate change are focused on a smaller number of generic references. Biodiversity loss refers to a broader range of issues.

* Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ** World Meteorological Organization

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Scan to get to the wiki page of the project:

https://wiki.digitalmethods.net/Dmi/AccordingToGoogleImages