

As part of the continual fallout from last month's [Pew poll](#) on the country's "top priorities" for 2009, which ranked the issue of global warming dead last, I've found myself in several conversations recently about terminology. Assuming one believes that this ranking is too low, is part of the problem the poll's use of the term "global warming" instead of the more au courant "climate change"? Does warming seem gentle or even attractive, especially to those answering polls in the dead of winter? Or would climate change also have fared as badly, given the [generally precipitous decline](#) of environmental issues among voter concerns? What other words should we be using?

For those of us doing climate law and policy work, the bright spot in the poll was the placement of concerns about energy. Six in ten respondents believe that "dealing with U.S. energy problems" is a top concern, ranking it sixth among twenty issues overall—not bad given the gut-wrenching and palpable fears out there over rising health-care costs, a potential depression, and terrorism (energy outranked the first but not the latter two). Many groups have incorporated clean energy language into advocacy work on climate (see the [Repower America](#) example), and this poll will solidify that trend. But I'm wondering about folks' reactions to some other potential substitutes for the phrases "global warming" and "climate change." What should our shorthand reference be for the many problems caused by rising greenhouse gas emissions?

- Global weirding (courtesy of Hunter Lovins via [Thom Friedman](#), a great lineage but I've never liked the term)
- Global wilding (I forget where I heard this, but it stuck)
- Carbon pollution (no one likes pollution, right?)
- I assume the "greenhouse effect" is dead?

Any other good ideas out there?