

The [latest Gallup Poll on attitudes toward climate change](#) has a disturbing message for advocates of strong policies either to limit greenhouse gas emissions or to promote effective adaptation. Forty-one percent of respondents think that news coverage generally exaggerates the seriousness of global warming, the highest number since Gallup started asking the question in 1997. Worse, the partisan divide continues to grow — 66% of Republicans and 44% of independents, but only 22% of Democrats think coverage of global warming is overblown.

In addition, overall concern about global warming is down. Given a list of environmental problems, 60% of respondents reported that they personally worry at least a fair amount about global warming, but that was down from 66% a year ago, and put global warming at the bottom of the eight environmental problems the poll asked about (just below extinction of plants and animals). And although 53% believe global warming is already occurring, that's down from 61% last year and a record high number (16%) say it will never occur. A strong majority (60%) think global warming will not pose a serious threat to them or their way of life during their lifetime.

None of this bodes well for the prospects of strong climate change legislation in the short term. The only bright spot in the survey is that young adults (18-29) are least likely to think that claims of global warming are exaggerated.