Global warming has gotten so much attention lately that the public has largely overlooked another, independent consequence of rising CO2 concentrations: acidic oceans. As discussed by Dan earlier this year, for many years the oceans have been silently absorbing CO2 and thereby buffering against even higher atmospheric GHG levels, staving off more warming — but with potentially devastating consequences scientists have only recently begun to understand. The oceans, and the wildlife they shelter, are now feeling the strain. Waters are becoming acidic, inhibiting the formation of protective shells and skeletons and threatening everything from tiny shell-dependent plankton to marine life much further up the food web (here's a dated but clear summary of impacts).

Folks in the know are starting to clamor for more attention to this issue. Today, NRDC and the Discovery Channel are announcing a new short film, called Acid Test, aimed at awakening the broader public. Director Daniel Hinerfeld blogs about the movie and the problem here, and you can watch the terrific trailer here. Last week, a consortium of international scientists issued a statement asking that ocean acidification be addressed in Copenhagen. And last month, the Center for Biological Diversity filed the first lawsuit taking on EPA's failure to recognize acidifying waters as impaired under the Clean Water Act (press release here).