



Catching up on my LegalPlanet reading after being gone for a couple of weeks (and who doesn't do that first?), I noticed [Dan's post](#) referencing the famous story about frogs not jumping out of hot water if you put them in when it's tepid. Referring to humanity's inability to combat climate change, Dan asks: "are humans smarter than frogs? Remains to be seen."

But actually it doesn't. Humans are unquestionably **dumber** than frogs because *frogs will in fact jump out of the water when it becomes hotter*. The whole non-frog-jumping story, like [its Mark Twain predecessor](#), is a complete fiction (although Twain's story was actually *good* fiction).

James Fallows over at The Atlantic [has been on this one for the last several years](#) (in addition to doing other things). And interestingly, [he has made the comparison of the frog myth to global warming](#) (although for different reasons)!

How do I know? Let's just say that, as with global warming, the scientific evidence is all on one side of this one. *Fast Company* magazine did an admirable early myth-busting story on the topic in its very first issue, more than a decade ago. The best quote (of many good ones) [in the article](#) was from the Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians at the National Museum of Natural History, who when asked about the boiled-frog story said: "Well that's, may I say, bullshit." There is much more to the same effect, eg [here](#). The most interesting scientific report [is on Google Answers](#), in response to a request for a "biologically valid" example of animal behavior that would illustrate the same point.

He concludes, in a LegalPlanet-like way, "Frogs have a hard enough time as it is, what with

diminishing swampland and polluted waters. Political rhetoric has its problems too. For the frogs' sake, and that of less-idiotic public discourse, let's retire this stupid canard, or grenouille." I couldn't have said it any better.

Frogs over human beings, by a knockout.