A metaphor for the basic mechanism of climate change

**Heat-Trapping Blanket**

*The story you’re telling:* When we burn fossil fuels for energy, we add more and more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This buildup acts like a blanket that traps heat around the world, which disrupts the climate.

Strategic way to redirect thinking away from patterns such as: Change Is Natural/Fatalism; It’s About the Ozone, Isn’t It?; Nature Will Fix Itself; Nature Works In Cycles; Solution = Recycling

**Concepts and ideas included in this frame element:**

- **The atmosphere is like a blanket that surrounds the earth:** establishing the blanket metaphor early, and making sure it is understood as a metaphor, helps translate the underlying science with fidelity.

- **When we burn fossil fuels like coal and natural gas for energy, we add carbon dioxide to this blanket, which is like thickening the blanket:** corrects the misconception that the problem is caused by the hole in the ozone; reinforces how human activities lead to warming, facilitating solutions thinking.

- **The thicker a blanket gets, the more heat it traps underneath:** establishes the basic mechanism, and paints a clear picture of where the heat gets trapped (under the blanket), as well as the idea that it becomes more difficult for heat to escape.

(Continued on reverse)

Read the original research behind this recommendation at FrameWorksInstitute.org