

## Topics / Global Warming / Global Warming: Timeline

**2012** - The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that July was the hottest month recorded in the continental United States since 1895.

**2012** - In June, a study by scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey calls the Eastern Seaboard a "hot spot" for rising sea levels. The study, published in *Nature Climate Change*, says that sea levels on the East Coast have been rising three to four times faster than the global average since 1990.

**2011** - On December 12, Canada announces that it is withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol.

**2011** - On November 30, the journal *Nature* reports that a group of international scientists believes that thawing permafrost will release greenhouse gases at a higher rate than previously believed and is therefore likely to accelerate global warming.

**2011** - The California Air Resources Board, on October 20, adopts cap and trade regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, making the state the first in the nation to adopt such measures.

**2011** - Oxfam International reports that more than 20,000 Ugandans have been forced off their land to make way for tree plantations in a lease deal between the Ugandan government and the British New Forests Company, which plans to sell carbon credits from the newly planted forests on the international market.

**2011** - In February, an inquiry conducted by the Commerce Department's inspector general finds no evidence that scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) manipulated climate data in order to support global warming. Accusations of data manipulation first arose in late 2009, when emails among scientists at NOAA (a part of the Commerce Department) were leaked on the Internet.

**2011** - A study published in a February edition of the journal *Nature* concludes that humans have partly contributed to the increase in heavy precipitation that occurred from 1951 to 1999, namely through emitting greenhouse gases that affect the atmosphere. Some climate scientists see the study as support for their predictions that the severe storms and floods seen in 2010 are likely to become more common in the future.

**2009** - Environmental Protection Agency officials identify carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride as harmful greenhouse gases that contribute to air pollution and climate change and endanger public health and welfare.

**2008** - California approves an extensive plan to cut its carbon emissions by 30% to match its 1990 level by 2020. The plan calls for one-third of the state's electricity to come from renewable energy sources, a cap-and-trade system, limits on urban sprawl, and higher fuel efficiency standards.

**2008** - At the Group of Eight summit, the leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States pledge to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2050.

**2008** - The United States lists the polar bear as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, marking the first time a species is placed on the list because its habitat is threatened by global climate change.

**2007** - Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work in raising awareness of man-made climate change.

**2007** - In its first examination of global warming, the Supreme Court rules in *Commonwealth of Massachusetts et al. v. Environmental Protection Agency et al.* that the EPA violated the Clean Air Act by refusing to regulate emissions standards for new vehicles.

**2007** - On February 2, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) releases its 4th Summary to Policymakers, which presents stronger scientific evidence that humans cause global warming.

**2006** - New studies released in December show that global warming may cause the Arctic Ocean to be mostly open water by summer 2040.

**2006** - A report released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in November states that the livestock industry generates more greenhouse gases than all forms of transportation combined.

**2006** - *An Inconvenient Truth*, a documentary film about climate change featuring former Vice President Al Gore, debuts in theaters on May 24.

**2005** - Global warmth returns to almost the same level as 1998, even without the help of an El Niño.

**2001** - President George W. Bush withdraws from the Kyoto Protocol because he believes it will strain the U.S. economy.

**1998** - The El Niño oscillation increases global temperatures, making 1998 the warmest year of the 20th century.

**1997** - The Kyoto Protocol commits industrialized nations to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases by 5.2 percent by 2010.

**1995** - The IPCC's second assessment reports shows clear human influence on the trend of increased global warming.

**1992** - The United Nations' Earth Summit produces several international agreements concerning the global environment, including the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

**1991** - The eruption of Mount Pinatubo forms a global layer of sulfuric acid that decreases the earth's temperature by 0.5 degrees C (32.9 degrees F) over the next 2 years.

**1990** - The first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that under current conditions, the rate of global warming in the next century will be greater than any climate changes from the past 10,000 years.

**1988** - The United Nations establishes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to assess and respond to the risks of human-induced emissions on climate change.

**1979** - The World Meteorological Association sponsors the first World Climate Conference, which adopts climate change as a major international issue.

**1957** - Scientists Roger Revelle and Hans Suess publish a paper suggesting that human carbon dioxide emissions cause global warming.

**1945** - Over the next thirty years, the earth's temperature cools by 0.2 degrees C (32.36 degrees F), sparking scientific discussion of a new ice age.

**1896** - Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius publishes the first calculation of global warming from human emissions of carbon dioxide.

**1827** - French mathematician Joseph Fourier discovers that gases in the atmosphere might increase the earth's temperature, a phenomenon later known as the greenhouse effect.

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[back to top](#)    **Entry ID: 914127**