Timeline of International Climate Change Milestones

1824: Fourier calculates that the Earth would be far colder if it lacked an atmosphere.
1861: Tylor discovers and suggests that changes in the concentration of gases that block infrared could bring climate change.
1889: International Meteorological Association (IMO) established from predecessor IMD.
1910: Ice Age Cause Hypothesized - Milankovitch proposes orbital changes as the cause of ice ages.
1920: Callendar argues that CO2 emissions not absorbing excess CO2 emissions.
1921: Milankovitch proposes orbital changes as the cause of ice ages.
1938: Planetary Green House Effect Discovered.
1945: Milankovitch proposes orbital changes as the cause of ice ages.
1950: World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) established from predecessor IMO.
1956: First Global Atmosphere Model - Milankovitch proposes orbital changes as the cause of ice ages.
1957: Global Warming Debate Begins: Revelle discovers the ocean is not absorbing excess CO2 emissions.
1960: Keeling accurately measures CO2 in the Earth’s atmosphere and detects an annual rise The level is 315 ppm.
1967: First International Organization to Study Climate - International Global Atmospheric Research Program (GARP) established, mainly to gather data for better short-range weather predictions, but including climate.
1978 The First World Climate Conference - takes place at the International Workshop on Climate Issues, held under the United Nation’s World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) auspices in Vienna. World Climate Research Programme launched to coordinate international research.
1988: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).Created by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). Toronto conference calls for strict, specific limits on greenhouse gas emissions; UK Prime Minister Thatcher is first major leader to call for action.
1990: The First World Climate Conference - takes place at the International Workshop on Climate Issues, held under the United Nation’s World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) auspices in Vienna. World Climate Research Programme launched to coordinate international research.
1995: First International Consensus on Climate change. First International Consensus on Climate change.
1996: IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. IPCC published its first report
1997: Fourth IPCC declares Humans Cause Global Warming - report warns that serious effects of warming have become evident; cost of reducing emissions would be far less than the damage they will cause.
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2009: Copenhagen conference of the parties (COP 15) fails to negotiate binding agreements; end of hopes of avoiding dangerous future climate change.
2012: Fifth IPCC declares Humans Cause Global Warming - report warns that serious effects of warming have become evident; cost of reducing emissions would be far less than the damage they will cause.

For more detailed information and history, please see "The Discovery of Global Warming", a hypertext history of how scientists came to (partly) understand what people are doing to cause climate change.

Online Link: The Discovery of Global Warming