

SCoPEX in Sweden: first step down the slippery slope of risky solar geoengineering experiments

December 22, 2020



Hands Off Mother Earth! (HOME) Campaign Statement

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On December 15th, the Stratospheric Controlled Perturbation Experiment (SCoPEX), a solar geoengineering project of Harvard University, announced its plan to conduct part of a geoengineering experiment in Kiruna, Sweden, with the Swedish Space Corporation.

Because of the serious environmental, social and geopolitical risks and impacts that solar geoengineering carries, the Hands Off Mother Earth (HOME) Campaign strongly opposes the proposed experiment.

As expressed in the Hands off Mother Earth (HOME) [Manifesto](#) against geoengineering of 2018:

“Geoengineering, whether on land, in the oceans or in the atmosphere, puts ecosystems, biodiversity and human communities at risk of potentially devastating impacts and side effects. We reject any further entrenchment of fossil fuel economies. We reject geoengineering as an attempt to uphold a failed status quo and divert attention from emissions reductions and the real solutions to the climate crisis. (...)

Geoengineering perpetuates the false belief that today’s unjust, ecologically- and socially-devastating industrial model of production and consumption cannot be changed and that we therefore need techno-fixes to tame its effects.”

SCoPEX researchers declare that they intend to conduct a balloon flight to test equipment in Sweden in June 2021, to be followed by further experiments disseminating reflective particles in the air. SCoPEX hopes to conduct future launches in both Sweden and within the US.

The HOME Campaign points out that these experiments are not conducted in isolation. As stated in the Hands Off Mother Earth Manifesto:

“[Geoengineering is] untestable. To know if geoengineering proposals would have an effect on climate change, it would need to be deployed at such a large spatial and temporal scale (to differentiate it from other ongoing climate phenomena) that it wouldn’t be an experiment – it would be outright deployment, with all its potential intended and unintended impacts. Therefore, small scale experiments only serve the purpose of testing hardware and tools to advance research and investments that will then be used to justify “the need” for larger experiments and eventually deployment. There are several SRM open air experiments planned, leaving computers and labs and moving into the environment and indigenous territories. The proposed experiments in the US are in indigenous territories. All of them are in contravention of the CBD moratoria.”

The project researchers claim that they are consulting an “Advisory Committee” on the project, which has been organized by the research project itself. The HOME Campaign has denounced this committee. Besides being organized by SCoPex team itself, all are US citizens and mostly academics. The Advisory Committee serves as a cover-up to avoid any real and meaningful participation, democratic deliberation and critical perspectives from around the world, including from civil society and social movements.

We call on all people’s and social movements and organizations that work with a climate justice agenda to be on alert to stop SCoPEx, including the proposed experiments in Sweden.

More information:

Hands Off Mother Earth! (HOME) Campaign Manifesto : <http://www.handsoffmotherearth.org/>

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