

NEWS RELEASE

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New Report on Geoengineering a “Significant Milestone” – SRMGI

International Scientists’ Group Praises Effort by U.S. National Academy of Sciences

(February 10, 2015) A report released today marks the first time the U.S. government has requested guidance on geoengineering technologies and their impacts, and represents a significant milestone in public exploration of geoengineering issues, according to an international group of experts.

The U.S. National Academy of Sciences (NAS) released the report, [Climate Intervention: Reflecting Sunlight to Cool Earth](#), today. Experts with the [Solar Radiation Management Governance Initiative \(SRMGI\)](#) praised the underlying significance of the report.

“The billions of tons of climate pollution that we put into our atmosphere every year are causing serious changes to the climate,” said [Steven Hamburg](#), Chief Scientist for Environmental Defense Fund and co-chair of SRMGI. “The way to address the problem is cut the pollution. But given the urgency of this challenge, some are also exploring geoengineering. We come to this issue very concerned about the danger of unintended consequences, but agree that further discussion makes sense. And also believe it is critically important to have strong rules in place to govern the exploration of this topic.”

NAS is charged with providing independent, objective advice to the United States on matters related to science and technology. It has published more than a dozen [previous reports on climate change](#), but today’s report is the first study commissioned by the U.S. government that explains our understanding of the science, ethics, and governance issues presented by geoengineering (also known as “climate engineering”) technologies.

Geoengineering is the deliberate large-scale manipulation of the Earth’s climate system to counteract anthropogenic climate change. Geoengineering covers a wide range of ideas, including technologies such as “albedo modification” (AM), also known as “solar radiation management” or SRM.

SRMGI experts say today’s report should spur the U.S. and other governments to take the governance challenges of geoengineering technologies seriously.

“An important next step is to foster wider dialogue, including developing countries, on how to responsibly manage AM research,” says Romain Murenzi, Executive Director of TWAS and a member of SRMGI. “We welcome this NAS report as important input for achieving just that.”

The issues involved in geoengineering are necessarily global, and discussions about them need to be global as well. To date, however, most discussions have taken place in developed countries -- even

though people in developing countries are the most vulnerable both to climate change and any potential efforts to respond to it.

SRMGI was formed in 2010 by [the Royal Society](#), [Environmental Defense Fund](#) , and [TWAS](#) (The World Academy of Sciences) in response to that discrepancy. SRMGI is an international NGO-driven initiative to expand international discussions on albedo modification, particularly to include developing countries.

“SRMGI promotes early and sustained dialogue among diverse stakeholders around the world, informed by the best available science, in order to increase the chances of any albedo modification research, should it occur, being managed responsibly, transparently, and cooperatively,” said John Shepherd of the Royal Society, a co-chair of SRMGI.

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The Royal Society is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's most distinguished scientists drawn from all areas of science, engineering, and medicine. The Society's fundamental purpose, as it has been since its foundation in 1660, is to recognize, promote, and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity.

The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) is a global science academy based in Trieste, Italy, working to advance science and engineering for sustainable prosperity in the developing world.