Carnegie Climate Geoengineering Governance Initiative

An initiative of CARNEGIE COUNCIL for Ethics in International Affairs

GEO-GOVERNANCE MATTERS

C2G2 PRIORITY ONE: Governance of Research

"To encourage the development of governance for research on climate geoengineering that is balanced between enabling and regulatory aspects"

- A growing body of scientists are saying that the world will not be able to stay below the 1.5-2°C goal of the Paris Agreement by mitigation and adaptation alone. This means that some form of carbon removal will be necessary. Some scientists claim the world may also need to turn to some form of solar geoengineering.

- Technologies for carbon removal and solar geoengineering are in their infancy. More research is needed to address whether these technologies are safe, feasible tools to manage climate risk, and if so, under what conditions, and with what risks, costs and benefits to society.

- Much of the research is taking place—and will continue to—without appropriate oversight. Existing governance of research often does not apply, and some technologies, in particular solar geoengineering, raise completely new governance challenges.

Objectives

- **Achievement of a CBD-approved Geoengineering Research Framework.** The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has specifically addressed geoengineering through different decisions. In the CBD's December 2016 COP, it called for "more transdisciplinary research" into geoengineering, but was silent on its content. There is an opportunity to define that content at the November 2018 COP in Egypt.

- **Preparations for a UNFCCC-approved Geoengineering Research Framework.** Guidance from UNFCCC Parties would be very helpful to frame ongoing and future research programmes, including on geoengineering. Discussions are needed with the secretariat and key government representatives to create a "community of practice."

- **Development and encouragement of the use of "codes of conduct" of geoengineering research.** A Draft Code of Conduct for Responsible Scientific Research involving Geoengineering has been prepared by the University of Calgary. We encourage the further development and voluntary uptake of codes of conduct, and the development of internationally agreed mandatory approaches for certain aspects of geoengineering research.

- **Encourage the development and application of geoengineering research frameworks by non-state actors.** Most geoengineering research is taking place in large cities or within sub-national states or regions. There is considerable opportunity to govern (i.e., to enable and regulate) research at non-state level through local authorities, such as governments of sub-national states or cities.