



# GE ENGINEERING :

**What we know and  
what is left out of  
discussions**

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**C2G2 workshop**  
Montreal, December 2017



# COP dec. XIII/14 on climate related geoengineering

## *The Conference of the Parties*

- 1. **Reaffirms** paragraph 8, in particular its subparagraph (w), of decision **X/33, and decision XI/20;**
- 2. *Recalls* paragraph 11 of decision XI/20, in which the Conference of the Parties noted that the application of the **precautionary approach** as well as customary international law, including the **general obligations of States with regard to activities within their jurisdiction or control and with regard to possible consequences of those activities**, and requirements with regard to **environmental impact assessment**, may be relevant for geoengineering activities **but would still form an incomplete basis for global regulation;**

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*The Conference of the Parties*

- 3. **Recalling** paragraph 4 of **decision XI/20**, in which the Conference of the Parties **emphasized that climate change should primarily be addressed by reducing anthropogenic emissions by sources** and by increasing removals by sinks of greenhouse gases under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, noting also the relevance of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other instruments, and **also recalling** paragraphs 8 (j)-(t) of decision X/33, and paragraph 5 of decision XII/20, *reaffirms* its encouragement to Parties to **promote the use of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation**;

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- 4. *Notes* that very few Parties responded to the invitation to provide information on measures they have undertaken in accordance with decision X/33, paragraph 8(w), and further invites other Parties, where relevant, to provide such information;
- 5. *Also notes* that more **transdisciplinary research and sharing of knowledge** among appropriate institutions is needed in order to better understand **the impacts of climate-related geoengineering on biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, socio-economic, cultural and ethical issues and regulatory options**;
- 6. *Recognizes* the importance of taking into account **sciences for life and the knowledge, experience and perspectives of indigenous peoples and local communities** when addressing climate-related geoengineering and protecting biodiversity.



# Components of CBD Decision X/33 (w): call for precaution – a *de facto* moratorium

- (w) **Ensure**, in line and consistent with [decision IX/16 C](#), on ocean fertilization and biodiversity and climate change,
- in the absence of **science based, global, transparent and effective control and regulatory mechanisms** for geo-engineering, and
- in accordance with the **precautionary approach** and Article 14 of the Convention,
- **that no climate-related geo-engineering activities<sup>76</sup> that may affect biodiversity take place,**
- until there is an adequate scientific basis on which to justify such activities and
- appropriate consideration of the associated **risks for the environment and biodiversity**
- and **associated social, economic and cultural impacts,**
- with the exception of **small scale scientific research studies** that would be conducted **in a controlled setting**
- in accordance **with Article 3 of the Convention**, and
- only if they are justified by the need to gather specific scientific data and are subject to a **thorough prior assessment of the potential impacts on the environment**

# Decision XI/20

- Ecosystem restoration
- *Acknowledging* that, while biodiversity and ecosystems are vulnerable to climate change, **the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the restoration of ecosystems can play a significant role in climate-change mitigation and adaptation, combating desertification and disaster risk reduction,**
- (...)

# Decision XIII/14

- 6. *Recognizes* the importance of taking into account **sciences for life and the knowledge, experience and perspectives of indigenous peoples and local communities** when addressing climate-related geoengineering and protecting biodiversity.
- **Need to develop research on real mitigation and real alternatives, many of which exists and needs to be supported and further developed to confront new challenges.**

# Note the context

- The decision “**noting**” (**not inviting, not requesting**) that transdisciplinary research is needed on the impacts of geoengineering on biodiversity **has a context and shouldn't be extracted from it.**
- The context is the moratoria and all its components and further decisions, incl. mention to small scale experiments only if carried in controlled setting, with prior EIA and only for scientific purposes.



# Reasons to be concerned

- Two proposals for **outdoor experiments** –that would be in violation of Dec X/33 (w) are proposed in US institutions– **SCoPEX** and **Marine Cloud Brightening**
- Ocean fertilization is proposed by **Oceaneos**, a company in Chile (Previously Haida Gwaii, Canada)
- **BECCS** considered by some parties and IPCC
- **Most initiatives** for research and experiment are from institutions **in the USA** a non Party to CBD.
- USA left Paris Ag, is not doing mitigation, is dismantling environmental and biodiversity regulation/programs. **Congress considers program on geoengineering.**

# Do we need more research?

- **Geoengineering research: a “moral hazard”**
- **Deviates resources** and attention of real causes and alternatives
- A **dangerous distraction** in climate negotiations from reducing GHG emissions which is **a significant threat to biodiversity**
- CDR already acting as a deviation, some proposals **in violation of moratorium** (Dec. X/33 w)

## Can geoengineering R & D/ deployment be separated?

- Research /experiments on technologies lead to social **“entrenchments”** : as there is research and investments, they “must” continue
- **Create slippery slope** to more research and experiments
- **Governance of research as a bridge to develop more geoengineering.** “A modest [partial] regulatory burden” can be accepted because it will give geoengineers freedom to proceed.  
*(Keith/Parson 2013)*
- **No aspects of geoengineering governance should be voluntary** or isolated from the explicit and inherent aims of geoengineering

# CBD's perspectives

- CDR/SRM divisions are **not useful categories for CBD**. Impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, scales, socio-economic, cultural aspects is CBD's approach.
- BECCS impacts on biodiversity, socio economic, cultural impacts needs to be **independently** research
- Some modelling research may be useful- but **no outdoor experiments**.

# CBD research priorities

- CBD has many **other priorities that are more needed and urgent** than this “noted” paragraph in decision.
- Any research on impacts, eg on **BECCS**, must be **under CBD and SBSTTA**, with CBD lines for review, with full participation of CSOs and indigenous peoples.
- **Geoengineers**, particularly those that have economic interests in the issue (patents on technologies, shares in companies, financed research to develop a technology, etc) **should not participate in any studies, and should not appear as “independent experts”**.
- Eg: **IPCC** has converted itself in a **bad example of Conflict of interest**. Oil industry write reports and geoengineers write and review studies on geoengineering.



# Signals to the geoengineering research community:

- Scopex, Marine Cloud Brightening, ocean fertilization, **violates CBD dec. X/33 (w)**
- No controlled setting
- Transboundary impacts / indigenous land
- No for scientific research on climate or biodiversity (try equipment/technologies/commercial reasons)
- Appear to be **“proof of principle”** to get funds for more research
- **No geoengineers** as experts in CBD

## A precautionary approach on biodiversity and livelihoods

- Civil society at CBD, through the CBD Alliance and as individual members, **supports moratoria** on geoengineering
- **Open air experiments should not be allowed**
- **Ban on geoengineering**, because of its potential weaponization, mega-scale impacts on ecosystems and livelihood; unfair and unequally distributed impacts; giant distraction to address the real causes of climate change and the drivers of biodiversity loss.

**Thank you!**

**New report:**

**“The big bad fix”**

**The case against climate  
geoengineering**

**ETC Group**

**Heinrich Boell Foundation**

**Biofuelwatch**

**2017**

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