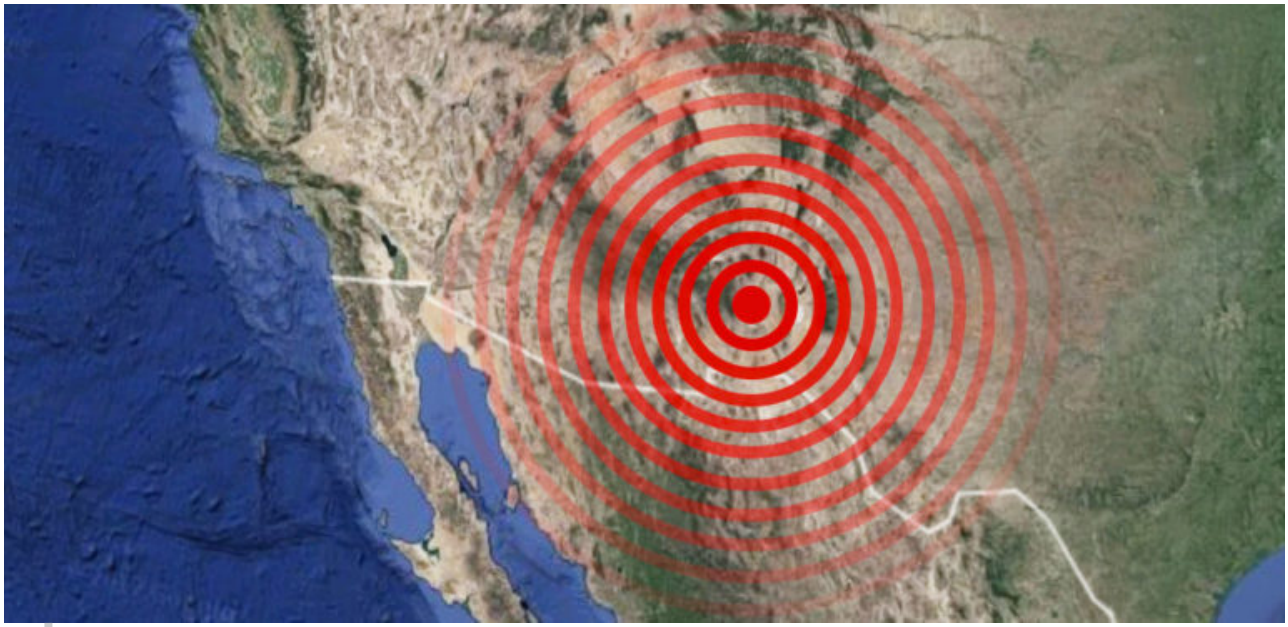
OPEN LETTER TO SCOPEX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 21, 2019



> To:
>
> **Louise Bedsworth**, Executive Director, California Strategic Growth Council (Chair)
> **Kevin Knobloch**, Former Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Energy (Vice Chair)
> **Michael Gerrard**, Andrew Sabin Professor of Professional Practice, Columbia Law School
> **Michael Kleeman**, Visiting Scholar, University of California San Diego and Senior Fellow, UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation
> **Robert Lempert**, Principal Researcher, RAND Corporation and Director, Frederick S. Pardee Center for Longer Range Global Policy and the Future Human Condition
> **Katharine Mach**, Senior Research Scientist, Stanford University Earth System Science and Director, Stanford Environment Assessment Facility
> **Raj Pandya**, Director, Thriving Earth Exchange, American Geophysical Union
> **Shuchi Talati**, Geoengineering Research, Governance, and Public Engagement Fellow, Union of Concerned Scientists

Dear Members of the SCoPEx Advisory Board:

We are writing because you have recently joined the Advisory Committee for SCoPEx, a project that aims to advance a solar geoengineering technology.

We appeal to you not to lend legitimacy to this project. Decisions about geoengineering require global, democratic, transparent governance, and while we understand the Advisory Committee's aim is to contribute to a consideration of some of the global dimensions of this project, it should be clear that an appointed body cannot replace global, democratic and transparent governance of a geoengineering project that has far-reaching implications.

The SCoPEx project aims to build infrastructure and technology that undermine emerging international governance of geoengineering, violating norms and laws worldwide.

There is a very profound concern about the political and military unpredictability of the current US administration in this respect, and the risk that it might be inclined to use such technological options as solar geoengineering as weapons of war.

If implemented at a large scale, solar geoengineering has the potential for massive negative impacts on the world's most vulnerable populations. Droughts in Africa and disruptions to monsoons in Asia are two of the major risks identified by computer modelling. The sources of food and water for 2 billion people could be disrupted in unexpected ways. Depending on the chemistry of the substance eventually used, the ozone layer, already at risk, could be damaged further.

For all these reasons, an international UN moratorium states that "no geoengineering activities should be carried out" until a "global, transparent and effective control and regulatory mechanisms for geo-engineering, in accordance with the precautionary

approach" can be put in place. The decision, passed by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) allows exceptions for "small-scale experiments," on several conditions, including that they are conducted under "controlled settings." The CBD's conditions are not met by SCoPEx.

Legal, moral and Indigenous-rights obligations require the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples from projects that could modify the land, water or air of their territories. Provisions for meaningful participation and consultation with all local communities that could be impacted by these projects must be assured. A public consultation by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) in the UK recently decided that a technology with implications for all should not be developed without consultation with all. We agree with this position.

The most devastating effect of your participation in SCoPEx, however, may be psychological and political. It gives political leaders a false but enticing way to avoid confronting the carbon giants. The fossil fuel industry has been promoting and funding several forms of geoengineering projects for years for one simple reason: it will allow them to continue with their oil, gas and coal business, and avoid addressing the root causes of climate chaos.

David Keith, the most prominent proponent of SCoPEx, has, through his startup Carbon Engineering, tied his financial interests to those of Chevron, Occidental Petroleum and tar sands billionaire N. Murray Edwards. At a time when fossil fuel companies are pouring millions into political lobbying to protect and expand their extractive interests, the existence and development of solar geoengineering undermines the pathway to the climate transition that the world urgently needs.

As pressure mounts for real climate solutions, the development and promotion of solar geoengineering undermines the political will and unity required to face down the fossil fuel lobby and other climate-disrupting industries. That's why fossil fuel and other companies have been pursuing geoengineering, even as they funded climate denial.

Over 100 civil society and movement organizations from around the world have signed the Hands Off Mother Earth (HOME) manifesto, which specifically demands a stop to unilateral experiments like SCoPEx.

As those newly recruited to provide SCoPEx with legitimacy, you face a stark decision. Your current role legitimizes a project that furthers the interests of climate disrupting forces, such as the fossil fuels industry. We urge you to break your complicity with this path, and to withdraw your participation from the SCoPEx Advisory Committee.

Sincerely,

- Abibiman Foundation, Ghana
- Acción Ecológica, Ecuador
- Alianza Biodiversidad, Latin America
- Association Nigérienne des Scouts de l'Environnement (ANSEN), Nigeria
- Base IS, Paraguay
- Biofuelwatch, USA
- Bürgerinitiative gegen CO2-Endlager e.V., Germany
- Centro Ecológico, Brazil
- CESTA, Friends of the Earth, El Salvador
- Climate Justice Alliance, USA
- Connecticut Coalition for Economic and Environmental Justice, USA
- Corporate Europe Observatory, Europe
- Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
- Econexus, UK
- ETC Group, International
- Federación Costarricense para la Conservación del Ambiente FECON, Costa Rica
- Fórum Mudanças Climáticas e Justiça Socioambiental, Brasil
- Friends of the Earth International
- Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, International
- Global Forest Coalition, International
- Global Justice Ecology Project, USA
- Grassroots International, USA
- GRIP (Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité), Belgium
- Heinrich Boell Foundation, International
- Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas, Brazil
- Indigenous Environmental Network, International
- Khpal Kore Organization(KKO), Pakistan

- La Vía Campesina Support Group, Colombia
- Mom Loves Taiwan Association, Taiwan
- Movement Generation: Justice and Ecology Project, USA
- Narigrantha Prabartana, Women's resource center, Bangladesh (UBINIG)
- Observatorio Petrolero Sur, Argentina
- Oilwatch Latinoamérica, International
- Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum, Pakistan
- Red de Coordinación en Biodiversidad, Costa Rica
- Reforest the Earth, UK
- TONATIERRA, USA
- Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), International
- What Next Forum, International
- White Rabbit Grove RDNA, USA

Sign the Open Letter to SCoPEx advisors

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%%your signature%%

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