

# Solar Geoengineering (SRM) Governance

SRM Americas Conference

University of the West Indies, Kingston Jamaica

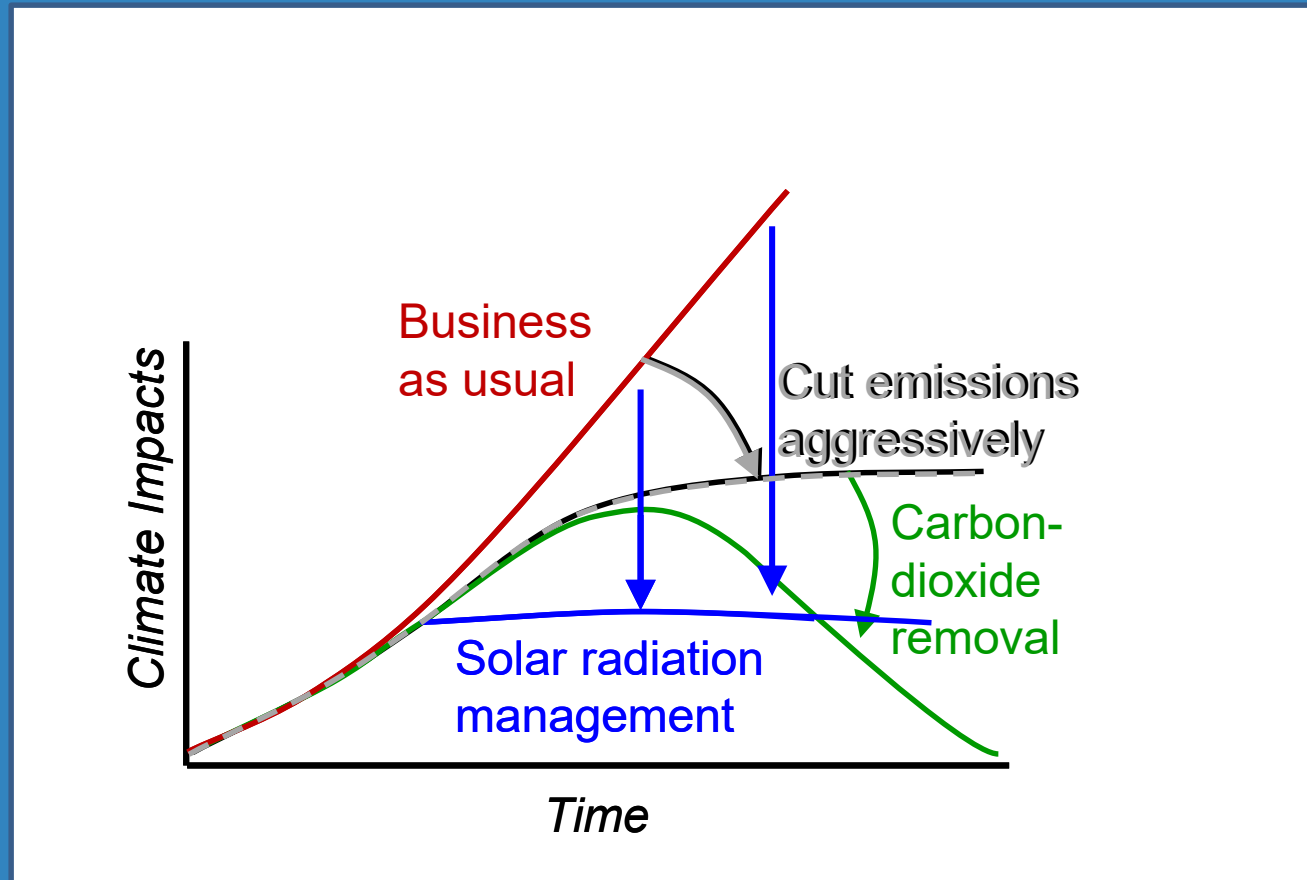
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# How SRM can help: an optimal climate strategy (if the world were rationally and justly governed ...)



Governance: How do you make that work in this world?

## ***The SRM “Governance” Debate: Not exactly Governance ...*** *(Plausible stories how SRM could help or hurt)*

It could **Help** because ...

- Reduce risks in ways other responses cannot – mostly because fast
- E.g., that “Optimal Strategy” diagram, plus ...
- Arctic sea ice, Hurricanes, Cut acid pollution, Great Barrier Reef, etc.

It could **Hurt** because ...

- Imperfect climate correction (incl time mismatch), other impacts/risks
- ***Could*** Undermine other responses – Mitigation displacement
  - Extreme form: Termination shock
- ***Could*** Provoke conflict: Nations disagree whether, when, how to use
  - Extreme form: Regional rivalry, weaponization (unlikely, but ...)
- ***Could*** Worsen global injustice (by material impacts or unequal control)
- Even Research ***Could*** make Slippery Slope to deployment

Upshot: Could help or hurt, depending on ***how used + uncertainties***

## ***The SRM Governance Debate: What do we Know?***

### ***Three Prominent Claims about SRM Governance:***

- High leverage, Global Effects → Global Governance Essential
- Governance does not presently exist
- Governance needs are Novel and Severe → Need big new capacity
- To advance debate: **MUST** distinguish gov of *Research* from *Deployment*
  - (Must also distinguish CDR/NETs from SRM, but this conference got it right)

## ***Governance of SRM Research:***

- Recent controversies: Scopex, proposed US + other research programs

## ***Applying the Three Claims to Governance of Research***

- Global Governance (of SRM research) Essential?
  - Some proposals: Research governance ~ Prohibit/deter Research
  - Depends on claims of (trans-border) harm or injustice done by research itself
  - OR on assumed slippery-slope, lock-in mechanisms: Research = = Deployment
- Governance/capacity does not exist?
  - National, non-state, hybrid governance of research – Widespread, feasible
  - International research projects and programs
- Governance needs Novel and Severe – need BIG strengthening
  - Requirements ~ obvious, widely agreed
  - Rigorous sci review, Scale limits, Risk asst, Transparency, Consultation, Int'l Coop'n
  - Not that difficult – but IMPORTANT
  - Early efforts can help build needed long-term governance capacity

## *Governance of SRM **Deployment**: The Three Claims*

- Global Governance (of SRM research) Essential?
  - High Leverage, possible unilateral (“Free driver”): YES, global gov essential
  - Ideally – Gov is prospective, rational, principled
  - Less ideally – Gov might be reactive, urgent, ad hoc
  - Great value in thinking through decisions, risks, responses in advance.
- Governance/capacity does not exist?
  - Many treaties, int’l org’ns – Relevant/Related responsibilities, authorities
  - Early statements of concern, disapproval in CBD, LC/LP (“marine geoengineering”)
  - Int’l science/ass’t bodies (IPCC, Montreal): Can do assessment, have done a little
  - No int’l policy body with needed authority, capacity; Few strong precedents
- Governance needs Novel and Severe – need BIG strengthening
  - Decisions on deployment: Whether, when, how? (competent, prudent, legitimate)
  - Interactions with other responses – Don’t displace mitigation, get that diagram
  - Consequences: Monitor, adapt, deal with claims of harm (liability, compensation)
  - Deter, Respond to unilateral/unauthorized deployment, resolve conflicts
  - Transition: From research cooperation, governance to build big new gov capacity

# Questions, Discussion ...

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