

# PRESS RELEASE: CIVIL SOCIETY CALLS FOR A STOP TO GEOENGINEERING OUR OCEANS

May 30, 2024



***\*Technofixes are a dangerous distraction from real climate action\****

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Over 70 civil society organizations including NGOs, climate justice networks, social justice movements, and Indigenous Peoples groups from across the world have expressed deep concerns about the growing number of open air and water marine geoengineering experiments in defiance of international agreements, and called on governments to prevent them from taking place.

In a statement released today they reiterated that these projects, often driven by carbon offsets, pose significant threats to marine ecosystems and communities. Techniques like marine cloud brightening and ocean carbon dioxide removal are unproven, risky, and a dangerous distraction from real climate action.

Despite a *de facto* moratorium on geoengineering under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), commercial interests linked to carbon markets or misguided attempts to tackle climate change have been a driving force behind many of these experiments.

Mary Church, Geoengineering Campaign Manager at the Center for International Environmental Law said, *“Testing these speculative technologies would necessitate large-scale deployment, posing widespread and irreversible harm to the environment and human rights and putting billions of lives at risk. Despite these well-documented risks, outdoor experiments are proceeding in defiance of the de facto global moratorium and the moves towards stringent regulation under the London Protocol. Governments must act decisively to uphold and enforce these agreements, sending a clear message that geoengineering is off-limits.”*

Most recently, an experiment to brighten the clouds in Alameda in California was paused by local authorities when environmental and health concerns were raised. This research, like many other experiments, appears to have been backed by unaccountable billionaires financing such projects. *“It would be a mistake to reopen the testing of equipment for marine cloud brightening in San Francisco Bay. This trial represents the thin end of the solar geoengineering wedge that we know comes with*

*significant environmental and human health risks,”* said Dr James Kerry from James Cook University, Australia and OceanCare, Switzerland.

In addition to potential impacts on marine life and the fragile ecosystem, marine geoengineering also brings new risks to the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples, traditional communities and fisherfolk who rely on marine and coastal ecosystems. *“Air and marine geoengineering experiments, predominantly conducted on Indigenous territories, pose a grave threat to the Sacredness of all life and the traditional values of Indigenous Peoples,”* said Panganga Pungowiyi, Geoengineering Organizer of the Indigenous Environment Network.

A Human Rights Council **report** found that *“the potential deployment of [geoengineering technologies] would have a massive and disproportionate impact on Indigenous Peoples whose traditional lands and territories are particularly exposed and at risk of experimental uses”*.

Panganga Pungowiyi added, *“Marine geoengineering initiatives proceed without the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous communities, perpetuating a cycle where companies profit by marketing them as carbon credits, enabling continued pollution by fossil fuel companies. The impending widespread implementation of geoengineering at scale not only endangers Indigenous lifeways and cosmovision but also undermines the delicate balance of Mother Earth. Indigenous Peoples who have lived in relationship with their ecosystems for time immemorial must be at the table to discuss climate crisis strategies. We have not been informed, asked, nor have we given our consent.”*

Geoengineering our oceans is a dangerous distraction from the real solutions to the climate crisis. *“As we head to UN climate talks in Germany next week, it’s time governments step up and take responsibility to prevent such experiments, uphold international regulations, protect marine ecosystems and dependent communities, and prioritize real climate solutions like providing climate finance and phasing out fossil fuels while supporting socially and ecologically sustainable alternatives that work for people and communities,”* said Eesha Rangani, Hand Off Mother Earth! (HOME) Alliance.

—ENDS—

#### **About Hands Off Mother Earth! (HOME) Alliance**

The Hands Off Mother Earth! (HOME) Alliance is a driving force in the fight against the growing threat of large-scale technological manipulation of the climate and biodiversity: geoengineering. We are an international civil society network of close to 200 organizations from over 45 different countries, from the Global South and the Global North. HOME was first launched as a global campaign in April 2010 at The World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Cochabamba, Bolivia. In October 2018 we released the **HOME Manifesto** denouncing geoengineering with a demand for an immediate stop to all open-air experiments. Follow us: [X](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#)

**For media enquiries please contact** Neha Gupta, Communications Coordinator [comms@handsoffmotherearth.org](mailto:comms@handsoffmotherearth.org)