

RESISTANCE TO GEOENGINEERING: A TIMELINE

November 28, 2014

Civil society has been questioning and opposing geoengineering for almost 20 years. What began as a reaction to technocratic hubris rapidly evolved into worldwide protests against attempts to initiate ocean fertilization and a consensus of civil society and Global South opposition at the 2010 People's Summit in Cochabamba.

In this time, the movement to stop geoengineering has scored several major victories:

- Two geoengineering projects were prevented from continuing
- Significant opposition was raised against three others
- International moratoria have been established at the UN Convention on Biodiversity and the London Convention
- Reports have consistently anticipated and exposed new geoengineering techniques as false solutions

A complete timeline follows.

1996

Scientists For Global Responsibility publishes report "[Climate Engineering: A critical review of proposals, their scientific and political context, and possible impacts](#)"

1999

Greenpeace report "[Ocean Disposal/Sequestration of Carbon Dioxide from Fossil Fuel Production and Use: An Overview of Rationale, Techniques and Implications](#)" touches on Ocean Fertilization.

2002-2006

Geoengineering discussed at civil society gathering "[What Next?](#)" convened by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation to discuss future scenarios to 2050.

2007

February: ETC Group releases "[Gambling with Gaia](#)" report.



Sea Shepherd sends a vessel to intercept Planktos ships near the Galapagos Islands.

May: [Planktos](#) announces plans to dump tonnes of iron filings in the ocean near the Galapagos, and an international coalition forms to oppose the experiment. Accion Ecologica, ETC Group, ICTA, Greenpeace, IUCN, IEN, Carbon Trade Watch, The Durban Group, Sea Shepherd and others take part. International bodies condemn the plan, and Sea Shepherd sends a ship to “intercept” the Planktos ship. The Planktos ship changes course to Spain and the Canary Islands.

June: ETC and Greenpeace bring the topic of ocean fertilization to the scientific groups of the [London Convention](#), with supporting letters from World Wildlife Fund and International Union for Conservation of Nature. This initiates the process that leads to the current London Convention/Protocol framework on geoengineering.

[Activists hold protests](#) to oppose ocean fertilization at London Forum meetings.

ETC and Greenpeace bring ocean fertilization to the UN Convention on Biodiversity’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) for the first time.

November: Australian company Ocean Nourishment Corporation announces plans to dump urea into the Sulu Sea near the Philippines. Philippine civil society groups – including SEARICE Third World Network, WWF Phil, Fishers groups – [mobilize to stop it](#), while Greenpeace, IUCN and WWF intervene through the London Convention/Protocol.

2008

February: At the UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)’s 13th SBSTTA meeting, ocean fertilization is put on the agenda for the first time.

October: CBD Conference of Parties in Bonn [calls for ocean fertilization moratorium](#) after push by civil society organizations including SEARICE, ETC, Econexus, Third World Network, Ecoropa, and Biofuelwatch.

November: United Kingdom House of Commons hold committee hearings on geoengineering. Greenpeace testifies.

2009



LOHAFEX sets sail on the Polarstern.

January: Indo-German research project LOHAFEX sets sail with plans to dump six tonnes of iron into the Southern Ocean. The project is opposed by a broad international coalition, including South African, German, Indian, South American and International Civil Society Organizations, the African Center for Biosafety, WWF, Greenpeace, ETC, IUCN, Bund, German NGO Forum, Third World Network, International Collective in Support of Fishworkers and others. Those opposed [say it violates the moratorium called for by the Convention on Biodiversity](#), of which Germany and India are members. Subsequently, the German Environment Ministry calls for the [project to be suspended](#). However, the project (under the authority of the Science Ministry) continues.

February: BiofuelWatch releases report, [Biochar for Climate Change Mitigation: Fact or Fiction?](#)

March: At the World Social Forum in Belem, Brazil, 80 civil society organizations release a statement entitled "[The better world we seek is not Geo-engineered](#)," opposing ocean fertilization as LOHAFEX continues dumping iron.

Rising Tide North America releases [Hoodwinked in the Hothouse: False Solutions to Climate Change](#).

April: The Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change brings together 400 Indigenous people from 80 countries. The resulting "[Anchorage Statement](#)" called on States to abandon geoengineering as false solution.

May: 70 civil society organizations sign on to a statement opposing the privately-organized [Asilomar Geoengineering Conference](#).

August: New Zealand-based Sustainability Council releases report: [Restoring the Atmosphere: Dangerous Climate Change and the New Governance Required](#).

September: Royal Society releases report: [Geoengineering the climate: science, governance and uncertainty](#) – Biofuelwatch, ETC Group, Greenpeace and other other civil society organizations participating.

November: ETC and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation release report: [Retooling the Planet? Climate Chaos in the Geoengineering Age](#).

December: Civil society groups hold side events on geoengineering at the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen and at the alternative conference Klimaforum.

2010

March: the [Solar Radiation Management Governance Initiative](#) is launched by the Environmental Defense Fund (US).

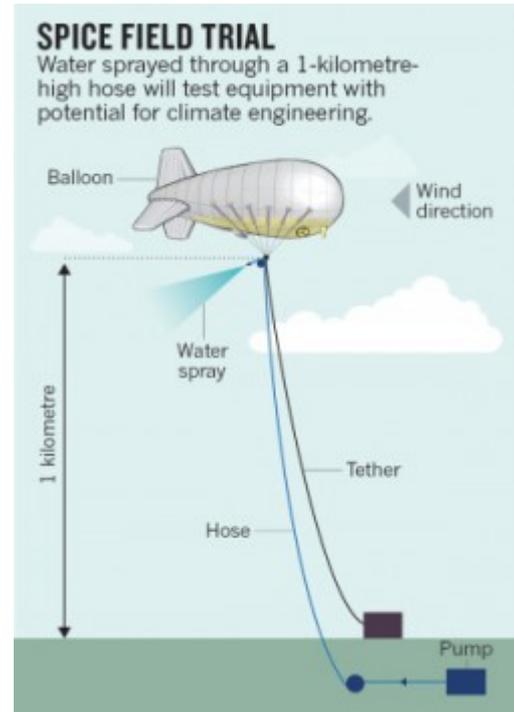
April: The World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Bolivia issues the [People's Agreement](#), denouncing geoengineering as a false solution.

The Hands Off Mother Earth campaign against open-air geoengineering experimentation launches, with over 100 organizations supporting, along with prominent signatories including David Suzuki, Bill McKibben, Naomi Klein, Vandana Shiva, Herman Daly, and Wes Jackson.

November: At the Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on Biodiversity in Nagoya, Japan, the assembled delegates agree on a [moratorium on geoengineering](#). Civil society organizations are involved in negotiations and organize side events.

Friends of the Earth (England/Wales/Northern Ireland) releases report: [Negatonnes – an Initial Assessment of the Potential for Negative Emissions Techniques to Contribute Safely and Fairly to Meeting Carbon Budgets in the 21st Century](#).

2011



June: 160 civil society organizations sign [letter asking Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) to tread carefully](#) with regard to geoengineering.

September: UK project Stratospheric Particle Injection for Climate Engineering (SPICE) aims to conduct open-air research about solar radiation management. Civil society groups launch [“Stop the Trojan Hose”](#) campaign, endorsed by 60 civil society organizations. Three days later, [the project is suspended](#). It is later [delayed](#) and finally [cancelled](#).

December: Biofuelwatch releases report: [BECCS: Climate saviour or dangerous hype?](#)

2012

June: At the Rio+20 meetings, civil society is active in negotiations and side events, including an intervention by Naomi Klein on geoengineering. The final declaration of the conference affirms the CBD moratorium.



Russ George: at it again in
Haida Gwaii.

October: ETC Group uncovers a [massive ocean fertilization scheme underway off the coast of Haida Gwaii](#). A coalition of civil society groups raise the alarm, including David Suzuki Foundation, Living Oceans Society, Greenpeace, CBD Alliance, Indigenous Environmental Network, Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and others.

2015

December: During the COP21 talks in Paris, organisations including Biofuelwatch, ETC Group, the Global Forest Coalition and other [Climate Space](#) member organisations make a rejection of false solutions to climate crisis such as “negative emissions technologies”, and in particular Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage, a central theme of their messaging. Biofuelwatch releases a new, in-depth and critical report into BECCS, “[Last-ditch climate solution, or wishful thinking?](#)“, and ETC Group initiates “[No to 1.5°C with geoengineering!](#)“, an international declaration to reject the outcomes of the Paris Agreement.