

THINK GLOBALLY, GOVERN LOCALLY: DESIGNING A NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM ON NEAR-TERM CLIMATE RISKS AND POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS



Daniel Bodansky, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Arizona State University
Kelly Wanser, Executive Director, SilverLining

April 2021

There is a growing concern that the global response to climate change will be inadequate to avoid an unsafe global environment. Current climate policy focuses on decarbonizing the global economy and enhancing resilience to withstand growing impacts. Although essential for climate safety, this approach may not slow global warming or adapt fast enough to address significant near-term climate risks. Therefore, research is urgently needed to better understand these risks as well as the feasibility, effectiveness, and safety of possible responses, including those that leverage earth system processes to reduce warming, such as increasing the reflection of sunlight from the atmosphere, or solar climate intervention (SCI). Such interventions, if undertaken at all, should be implemented as safely as possible.

The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) and SilverLining have partnered to produce a series of papers from international environmental law experts to help inform this critical debate. While not endorsing or promoting the use of SCI, C2ES and SilverLining support expanding the knowledge base necessary to move toward the effective governance of SCI interventions in a manner that considers the safety of both the climate system and potential climate interventions, is science-based, and promotes cooperative international decision-making. The objective of the series is to explore considerations and develop practical possibilities for effective international cooperation and decision-making that engages the social justice issues and impacted communities.

A National Research Program On Near-term Climate Risks And Possible Responses

Think Globally, Govern Locally: Designing a National Research Program on Near-Term Climate Risks and Possible Interventions is the third paper in the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) and SilverLining series on research to better understand and address significant near-term climate risks. In this paper, authors Dan Bodansky and Kelly Wanser describe how the establishment of a responsible national research program on near-term climate risks and interventions supports scientific cooperation and sets a precedent for responsible climate intervention research internationally. The authors outline the elements of a model national program aimed at providing information in a timely, safe, and open manner to allow for evaluation by policymakers and the public.

Read the other papers in the series:

- In [Solar Climate Intervention: Options for International Assessment and Decision-Making](#), international environmental law experts Sue Biniiaz and Dan Bodansky assess the ability of existing international bodies to evaluate and, potentially, govern SCI.
- In [Climate Intervention: The Case For Research](#), Biniiaz and Bodansky delve further into decision-making regarding SCI, which would require a scientifically rigorous assessment of two “safeties,” the safety of the global climate and the safety of possible interventions to reduce or arrest global warming. They discuss the nature of the research required to support such science-based decision-making and address common objections to undertaking it.

Read the paper at C2ES [here](#).