

REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

29 – 30 MARCH 2023 | HYBRID EVENT | GENEVA & ONLINE



SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE TEMPLATE

Event title

Solar Radiation Modification and Youth Perspectives on its Governance

Background and Rationale

As global temperatures continue to rise exponentially and current climate action struggles to reduce global emissions fast enough, the case for potentially radical high-risk measures such as Solar Radiation Modification (SRM) grows stronger. The recent IPCC sixth assessment report has made it clear that emission reductions alone are unlikely to prevent the detrimental impacts of climate change. Under these circumstances, some actors globally are calling for research and the potential development of a viable last-resort option, such as SRM.

Tampering with highly complex ecological systems is sure to have unpredictable consequences. Regardless of whether or not SRM technologies are administered, structured governance is imperative to ensuring that decisions about research and deployment are informed and unbiased. Governance frameworks can also help soothe current concerns around SRM, paving the way for consolidated collective action.

Too often youth voices remain an afterthought in the development and implementation of policy and planning, highlighting the need to create enabling environments for young people to engage in local, regional and international policy-making frameworks. Youth involvement would ensure that SRM technologies are implemented in responsible and sustainable manners, aligned with the values and priorities of future generations.

SRM lies at the nexus of many of the sustainable development goals. Significant research is required on SRM, bringing relevance to SDG9. Ethical, social, and environmental concerns, including geopolitical risks, are raised by ungoverned SRM, making it relevant to SDG16. Similarly, international cooperation and coordination across governments, civil society, including youth, and the private sector, link it to SDG17.

(250-word count)

Session objectives and expected outcomes

This side event aims at raising awareness in the UNECE region about the governance of SRM while highlighting the importance of youth involvement.

The event will explore a better understanding of the limits and potential benefits of SRM, but also of the dire need for governance around these emerging technologies, which requires

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transparent and participatory governance frameworks to ensure that it is consistent with international law, including human rights and environmental principles.

Highlight the need for intergovernmental institutions to take responsibility for managing SRM, whilst ensuring the full participation of youth and the Global South.

Present the potential negative environmental impacts and geopolitical risks deriving from unilateral SRM deployment, especially in times of multiple crises.

Raise discussions on whether focusing on SRM could hinder efforts to mitigate climate change or reduce emissions, and how youth voices could be better included in its governance.

The expected outcomes of the side event would be to raise awareness among youth and the wider public about SRM, but also to bring attention to training and capacity building among youth, with evidence from science, in order to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for the technology, leading to a more informed and engaged public.

(200 words)

Organizers

Lead organizers: Aasima Kamal Mowni, Loann Marquant, Ishita Yadav

Contributors: Youth Voices for Emerging Climate Governance

Focal points: Aasima Kamal Mowni

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Agenda and Structure:

Session Agenda

Introduction/setting the scene to the session by the moderator

Experts' interventions:

- What's happening in the UNECE regional landscape on SRM research.
- Why do we need to know more about SRM?
- From a science perspective risks and limits of SRM - Could a focus on SRM threaten efforts to mitigate climate change?
- From a youth perspective risks and limits of SRM - Could a focus on SRM threaten efforts to mitigate climate change?
- Governance frameworks and youth involvement - How to better include youth voices in the governance of SRM

Q&A and interactions

Closing remarks

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List of Panellists and their biographies

Mohammed Mofizur Rahman: Mohammed Mofizur is a Bangladesh-born Environmental Scientist and an educator. He is currently working as a Scientist at Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), in Germany. Before joining PIK, he was an Alexander Von Humboldt International Climate Protection Fellow and a Research Associate at the Institute for Resources Management for the Tropics and Sub-tropics. Mofizur is also an alumnus of the Beahrs Environmental Leadership program of the University of California Berkeley, USA, and the Asia Pacific Environmental Leadership Program of the University of Tongji, China. He is engaged with the capacity development of youth through teaching and mentorship such as educating in the summer camp of Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative. In the past, he taught field courses on climate adaptation to high school students under the USA-Bangladesh exchange program. He brings his field research into the classroom to educate the new generation, using trans-disciplinary methodologies and combining natural-social science disciplines.

Hal Agar: Hal Agar is an Environmental Science undergraduate at the University of York, where he has been studying for three years with some great lecturers. Throughout his studies, he has delved into a wide range of topics such as natural disasters, climate change, biodiversity, and geochemistry. Hal's current interests lie in exploring how knowledge of environmental threats, particularly climate change, is constructed, and the interplay between knowledge and policy. He is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Environmental Data Science, with a focus on machine learning approaches to mitigating environmental risks.

Ben Santhouse James: Ben Santhouse-James is Energy Contact Point at YOUNGO, the UNFCCC Youth Constituency, and works with a broad range of non-profits and youth climate organisations to promote systems thinking and interdisciplinary approaches to solving the climate crisis. He has been involved with YOUNGO for three years, previously serving on the Global Coordination Team and leading the COP27 and COP26 Energy and Sustainable Consumption & Production Global Youth Statements respectively. He holds an MSc in Energy Systems from the University of Oxford, where his research focused on carbon removals, and a BSc in Earth Science (Geophysics) from Imperial College London. In his day job, Ben works as a Sustainability Consultant across sustainable finance, carbon management, and climate tech, and has previous work experience in environmental policy and growth capital investing across energy transition and circular economy assets.

Gideon Futerman: Gideon Futerman is a 19-year-old undergraduate student, currently on a yearlong break from his studies in Earth Sciences at the University of Oxford to research the interaction of SRM and existential risk. He is currently a visiting researcher at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge, where he is working on building scenarios of plausibly catastrophic near-futures involving SRM driving or mitigating catastrophic risk. He has been involved in issues around SRM since he was 15, first advocating for governance of the technology and youth inclusion in debates around SRM, and later on in a more academic capacity, which has culminated in the past year of research. This has involved interaction with key actors in the SRM space, with Gideon having presented at a variety of events in the SRM space, having been interviewed for a number of media articles and having hosted a number of podcast episodes on SRM. Gideon has presented his work on SRM at CEC21, AGU21 and EGU22, as well as presenting on SRM at fPET23 and EGU23 in the near future.

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Nicola Rosca: Nicola Rosca is a Master student at the University of York, studying Computer Science with Artificial Intelligence. She is conducting her research in climate tech and geoengineering. Her aim is to help the climate crisis with the power of software.

Sarah Kwerit: Kwerit is a student of Community Psychology and Psychotherapy from Lira University, Uganda. Having done extensive research on climate change during her participation in a series of climate Change essay writing competitions, Kwerit came to the realization that the lack of awareness among her peers was one of the main reasons why most youth were not engaging in any form of climate change activism. She therefore developed an unwavering interest to raise awareness among the youth in Africa. She is the founder of Climate Change Action Africa an initiative that has been raising climate change awareness in institutions of learning in Uganda. Through the initiative she has been able to establish proactive Climate change Action clubs in eighteen secondary schools in Uganda to help young people recognize and lift the contextual and individual barriers that hampers them from adopting more comprehensive and friendly lifestyle to the environment as a result more youth are demanding for accountability from their leaders and also engaging in climate related innovation.

Ishita Yadav: Ishita Yadav is a deeply passionate youth advocate for climate equity and a social-justice activist. She serves as South Asia's Regional Focal Point at the SDG7 Youth Constituency under United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth and facilitates YOUNGO's (youth constituency to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) Cities Working Group. At the SDG7 Youth Constituency, Ishita coordinates at the Youth Sustainable Energy Hub. As a former One Earth Fellow, Ishita has written numerous award-winning pieces on climate solutions journalism on climate mitigation efforts led by grassroot communities. Ishita has been involved in the climate governance sphere for several years and specializes in renewable energy, geoengineering and sustainable intergenerational policymaking.

Moderators:

Aasima Kamal Mowni: Aasima Kamal Mowni is a dedicated advocate for environmental governance and is a Youth Climate Voice on the Carnegie Climate Governance Initiative (C2G) Youth Voices for Emerging Climate Governance project. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Management from Independent University, Bangladesh and has actively participated in high-level panel discussions on climate action. One notable event featured the state minister for the Ministry of Power, Energy, Mineral, and Resources of Bangladesh. Previously, Aasima worked as a research assistant in collaboration with a Ph.D. student from the Department of Anthropology at Pennsylvania State University, USA. Currently, she is an intern at icddr,b, where she continues learning and expanding her knowledge while further developing her expertise in the field.

Loann Marquant: Currently on a gap year to explore international relations and the governance of sustainable development, Loann has been studying engineering in France, where he started addressing environmental questions from a scientific perspective. Last year, he became a trainee and then a policy adviser at the European Union Delegation to the UN in New York, where he participated in international discussions on the environment and sustainable infrastructure. This experience allowed him to learn more about diplomatic dynamics surrounding environmental topics and to support European Member States delegations during negotiations. Loann has earned a BSc in Engineering from Ecole Centrale

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de Lyon and a degree in Economics from Université Lyon 2. He now continues to dive further into environmental topics and climate change at the UN in Geneva, but also as a *Youth Climate Voice* at C2G.

[Sign-up / Registration Link](#)

When: Mar 30, 2023 11:00 - 13:00 UTC | 13:00 - 15:00 CET

Topic: Solar Radiation Modification and Youth Perspectives on its Governance

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://c2g2-net.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_NX_YwRQheevhW4bkcBxw

<https://www.c2g2.net/solar-radiation-modification-and-youth-perspectives-on-its-governance/>