

## Climate Engineering – Saving the Sky, Or Playing God?

Should humans try to control the climate? Climate Engineering (CE), the purposeful intervention into the global climate system, increasingly raises the hope that the effects of climate change could be compensated with the help of technology. However, these methods, even if they are able to affect global mean temperatures quickly and significantly, also involve large uncertainties and risks that are by far not sufficiently explored. They also raise questions such as: Are people allowed to put their hand on the climate? In the media, climate engineering therefore is sometimes compared to “playing God”.

The IASS is convening a workshop on **“Religious and Spiritual Perspectives on Climate Engineering”** from **April 24 to 26, 2013** addressing the following questions:

- How do different religious and spiritual thought traditions frame the human-environment relationship, and how does climate engineering fit into or challenge this?
- How do these traditions weigh the potential alleviation of current and future suffering through climate change against the risks and uncertainties of climate engineering?
- Is it already possible to make conclusive statements about how acceptable or unacceptable climate engineering will be viewed within individual religious and spiritual traditions?

The event builds on previous workshops aimed at understanding the more basic relationship between religions and the climate change we are already facing, as well as building on current work being done at the IASS cluster “Sustainable Interactions with the Atmosphere” (SIWA) on understanding the impacts, uncertainties and risks of climate engineering.

**On the evening of April 25<sup>th</sup>**, there will be a public panel discussion **starting at 5.30pm** at the IASS on the topic of religion and climate engineering, titled **“Climate Engineering: Saving the Sky, or Playing God?”** In the focus of the discussion is particularly the question on the relationship between climate engineering, the deliberate manipulation of the global climate system, and religious and spiritual traditions.

The discussion deals with the following questions:

- What is the relationship like between religion and climate engineering?
- How relevant is climate engineering for religious and spiritual communities?
- How do some religious and spiritual groups understand the potential of climate engineering in order to compensate the effects of climate change in the context of its risks?

The discussion will be chaired by PD Dr. Mark Lawrence (Scientific director at the IASS) and feature:

- Dieter Gerten (Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research)
- Shlomo Shoham (Former Commissioner for Future Generations, Parliament of Israel)
- Michael Northcott (University of Edinburgh)
- Venerable Vivekananda (Panditarama Lumbini International Vipassana Meditation Center)

**Attendance is by appointment only! Please register with Stefan Schäfer ([Stefan.schaefer@iass-potsdam.de](mailto:Stefan.schaefer@iass-potsdam.de)) for the panel discussion. Media representatives please register with [media@iass-potsdam.de](mailto:media@iass-potsdam.de). The workshop and panel discussion will be in English.**