

To: Members of the SCoPEX Advisory Committee

cc:

Swedish Space Corporation
Government of Sweden

Please find attached an open letter from Swedish environmental organisations and the Saami Council, representing Saami indigenous peoples' organisations in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, to the SCoPEX Advisory Committee regarding SCoPEX plans for test flights at the Swedish Space Corporation in Kiruna, Sweden.

We ask you to forward the letter to Ms Shuchi Talati for whom we can not locate an e-mail address after her transition to the US government.

We also ask the Swedish Space Corporation as well as Ministers Bolund, Baylan and Ernkans in the Swedish government (copied) to take note of our concerns as elaborated in the letter.

Sincerely, and on behalf of the signatories



Christina Henriksen
President
Saami Council

24 February 2021

To:
The SCoPEX Advisory Committee

Cc:
The Swedish Space Centre
Government of Sweden

Regarding SCoPEX plans for test flights at the Swedish Space Corporation in Kiruna

We are writing this letter to SCoPEX's Advisory Committee as representatives of Swedish environmental and Saami indigenous peoples' organizations to express our rejection of the Harvard project's plans for test flights related to research and development of Stratospheric Aerosol Injection (SAI) technology at the Swedish Space Corporation.

We note that SAI is a technology that entails risks of catastrophic consequences, including the impact of uncontrolled termination, and irreversible sociopolitical effects that could compromise the world's necessary efforts to achieve zero-carbon societies. There are therefore no acceptable reasons for allowing the SCoPEX project to be conducted either in Sweden or elsewhere.

We furthermore note serious problems in terms of governance and decision-making in relation to SCoPEX.

- We find it remarkable that the project has gone so far as to establish an agreement with SSC on test flying without, as we understand, having applied for any permits or entered into any dialogue with either the Swedish government, its authorities, the Swedish research community, Swedish civil society, or the Saami people, despite the controversial nature of SCoPEX. The first flight's direct purpose to enable release of particles in a later test can not be treated in isolation to SCoPEX overall intentions. We request the Advisory Committee to ensure that SCoPEX does not continue pursuing such hollow claims, but instead treat the test flight as integral to the overall goal of SCoPEX.
- It is noteworthy that Harvard University considers it reasonable for a committee whose role it is to decide whether this controversial project should go ahead, to not have any representation from the intended host country, Sweden. Instead, the committee is composed of almost exclusively US citizens and/or residents.
- We note that SCoPEX "independent" Advisory Committee appears to be extremely homogeneous, is far from representative and appointed through Harvard itself, without any inclusion of affected groups and without directly critical and non-US voices.
- The SCoPEX project's comment on its Advisory Committee's draft "Engagement Process for SCoPEX" highlights core issues and shows the project's problematic approach to ethics, responsibility and decision making. The SCoPEX project states that no one research project should have to answer questions such as "Does solar geoengineering research or deployment pose a moral hazard? Is it ethical to deploy solar geoengineering, and who should decide? Can solar geoengineering deployment be governed, and can we trust that governance? Is research a slippery slope to deployment?". The SCoPEX project states that under such requirements research would have to halt, and complains that this has not been the case for other areas of research, and therefore "should not be the burden for solar geoengineering research".

We state that precisely because of the extraordinary and particular risks associated with SAI¹, this technology and SCoPEX cannot be treated like other research. The type of key issues cited above must be considered first, and in forums that are significantly more representative and inclusive than the SCoPEX Advisory Committee. Experimentation and technology development through projects such as SCoPEX must therefore be halted.

We call on the SCoPEX Advisory Committee as well as SSC to recognise these shortcomings, and to cancel the planned test flight in Kiruna.

The SCoPEX plans for Kiruna constitute a real moral hazard, and threaten the reputation and credibility of the climate leadership Sweden wants and must pursue as the only way to deal effectively with the climate crisis: powerful measures for a rapid and just transition to zero emission societies, 100% renewable energy and shutdown of the fossil fuel industry.

Stratospheric Aerosol Injection research and technology development have implications for the whole world, and must not be advanced in the absence of full, global consensus on its acceptability.

Yours sincerely,

Christina Henriksen,
President, Saami Council

Johanna Sandahl
President, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation

Mikael Sundström
Chairperson, Friends of the Earth Sweden

Isadora Wronski
Programme Manager, Greenpeace Sweden

¹ For example, risks for devastating, unintended impacts on global weather patterns and ecosystems, including food and water supplies for billions of people; irreversible technology lock-in over millennia to avoid the danger of termination shock; impossible requirements for continuously functioning and centralized governance regimes over hundreds and thousands of years; risks of weaponization and new, unmanageable geopolitical tensions, and not least, unavoidable moral hazard effects that could cause the world to miss its chance to incur rapid, transformative changes in time.