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Umwelt, Verkehr, Energie und Kommunikation UVEK

**Bundesamt für Umwelt BAFU**  
Abteilung Internationales

# UNEA Resolution Geoengineering and its Governance

**Submitted by Switzerland**

Supported by Burkina Faso, Federated States of  
Micronesia, Mali, Mexico, Niger

Briefing GEN, 4.2.19 | Felix Wertli



# What is Geoengineering ?

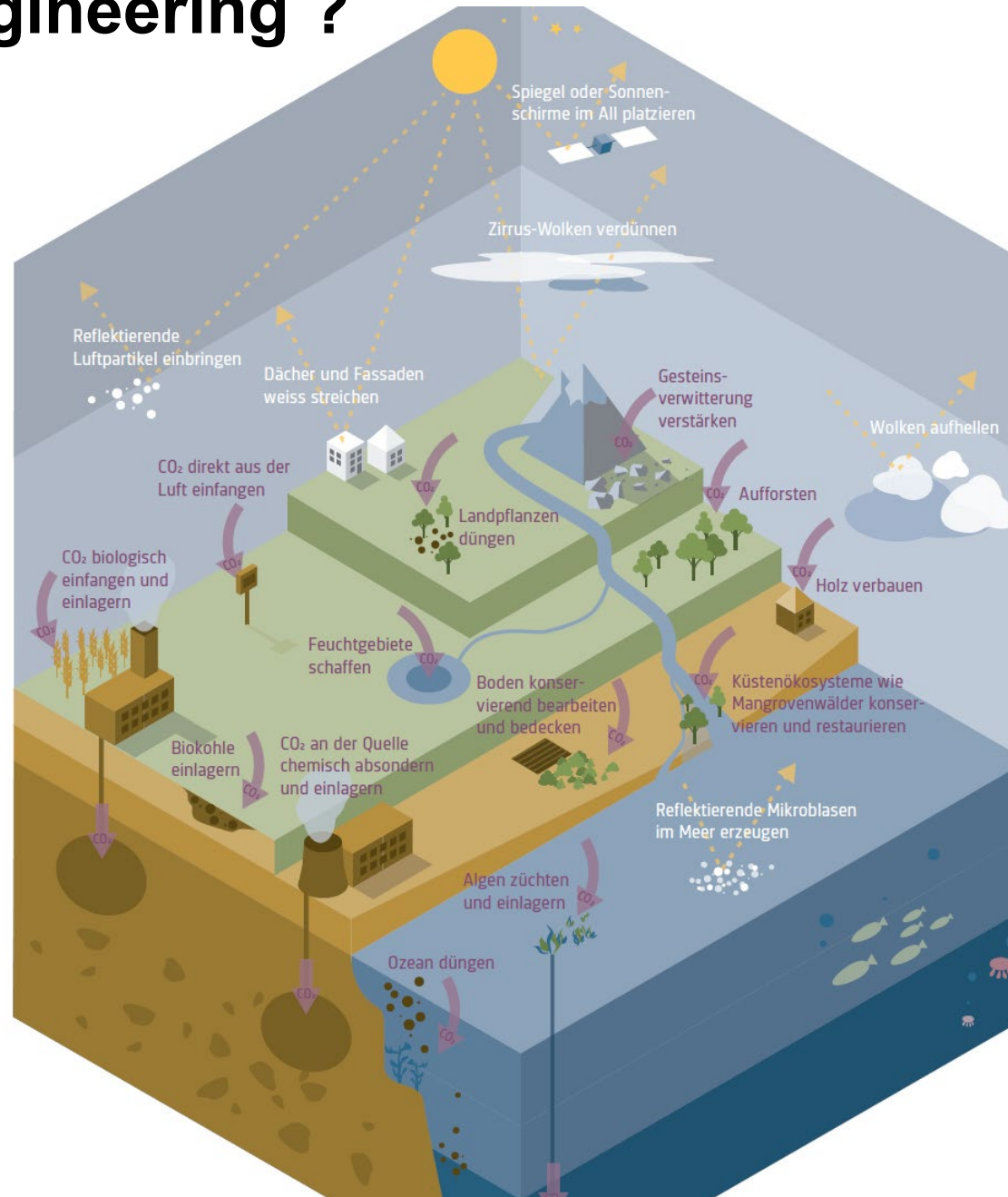
Man-made and deliberate technical interventions in the climate system; aiming at global temperature reduction

## Carbon Dioxide Removal

Capture of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere

## Solar Radiation Management

Manipulation of the solar radiation in the atmosphere





# Concerns & discussions

- Risks and uncertainties outweigh their potential benefits
- Knowledge gaps, in particular on solar radiation management
- Possible significant, not fully understood interference with the balance of the global ecosystem
- Prevention of unilateral utilization
  
- Deliberations and decisions in **other fora**, mainly with a sectorial focus:
  - Convention on Biological Diversity
  - Montreal Protocol
  - World Meteorological Organization
  - London Convention
  - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
  - Etc .



# Discussions in other forums

- **UN Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)**
  - Moratorium on geoengineering has a wide application scope, allows for small-scale experiments under very specific conditions
- **London Convention and London Protocol**
  - Marine Geoengineering, including ocean fertilisation, the adoption of its Protocol in 1996 makes it an international agreement, regulating the use of wastes and other materials at sea
- **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**
  - Necessity to have a strong, science-based opinion to steer the growing interest in geoengineering
- **Intergov. Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**
  - Unlikely that rise in global temperature will remain within the 1.5°C target without the use of controversial solar radiation geoengineering (Solar Radiation Management)



# Operative Part of the Swiss Resolution

(Co-sponsors Burkina Faso, Mali, Mexico, Micronesia and Niger)

*Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to*

**OP1.** *Prepare an assessment of the status of geoengineering technologies, in particular carbon dioxide removal technologies and solar radiation management, to include, inter alia:*

- a. criteria which define these technologies;
- b. the current state of the science, including research gaps;
- c. the actors and activities with regard to research and deployment;
- d. current knowledge of potential impacts, including risks and benefits and uncertainties with regard to each geoengineering technology;
- e. challenges related to current, and potential governance frameworks for research, potential deployment and control, including activities by the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies, for each geoengineering technology;
- f. conclusions on potential global governance frameworks for each geoengineering technology.

**OP2.** *Call for proposals of and select participants for an Ad Hoc Independent Expert Group to advise the Executive Director on the development of the abovementioned assessment.*

**OP3.** *Engage the relevant entities of the United Nations, including treaty secretariats, in the above.*

**OP4.** *Submit the assessment, no later than by August 2020, for consideration at the fifth session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly.*