

Science meets politics: the rise of climate engineering Colloquium 11 December, 2023

Julia Schubert

CAB G11, <https://ethz.zoom.us/j/69325788431>

Abstract

For the past decade, the buzz around so-called climate engineering measures has grown louder. Experts now largely seem to agree that the ambitious temperature targets of the Paris agreement can no longer be achieved without drawing significant amounts of already emitted CO₂ from the atmosphere and permanently storing it underground. Some even assume that the introduction of reflective particles into the stratosphere might become necessary at some point the future in order to prevent dangerous levels of global warming. But how has it come to this? How have these controversial measures arrived on scientific and political agendas? The talk provides a bigger picture of the current debate over so-called climate engineering measures. It traces the rise of these measures from the late 1950s to the first decades of the new millennium. Rather than emerging as a 'last resort' or 'Plan B' against climate change, this perspective suggests how hopes to modify and even control the climate have provided a central motif for science-policy relations since the very beginnings of the climate science field.

About

Julia Schubert is postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Science Studies and Management at the University of Speyer. Her research explores the interrelation of science and politics as well as notions of expertise. She has worked on issues of climate science and policy with a particular focus on proposals to modify or engineer the climate. In January 2024 she will start a new position at the University of Frankfurt, where she will investigate the role of climate attribution science in society and politics.



Further reading

Book (open access) Engineering the Climate

<https://www.matteringpress.org/books/engineering-the-climate>

Summary paper:

<https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.801>

