



ETC Group
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TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO STOP CLIMATE CHANGE (and win a T-shirt)

Geo-Engineering Contest Heats Up as April Fools' Day Approaches

OTTAWA – March 4, 2009 – With less than a month left to enter ETC Group's Pie-in-the-Sky contest, people from all over the world are sending in their outlandish ideas to re-engineer the planet so it (and we) can survive climate change.

Some professional geo-engineers have real designs in the works to manipulate the earth, sea and atmosphere on a large scale – to make carbon disappear, to keep sunlight from hitting the earth and, of course, to profit from the carbon market. They're a busy bunch: pleading their case in the press and at meetings of international environmental bodies; dumping iron particles from ships to “fertilize” the ocean; applying for monopoly patents on schemes to increase the carbon-sequestering capacity of plants by applying proprietary insecticides(!);¹ and publishing articles in influential journals declaring that now is the time to “take geo-engineering out of the closet.”²

Activists and concerned people around the world are also ready to take geo-engineering out of the closet – to expose the climate-profiteers and their plans that, in the absence of precaution, could worsen climate chaos. If you agree that the future of the planet shouldn't be left to geo-engineering technophiles, join the campaign and send us your best/worst pie-in-the-sky example. In the first month since we launched our contest, we've received proposals to:

- Get everyone on the planet to have their teeth whitened so we can smile at the sun *en masse* (thereby reflecting the sunlight back to the atmosphere)
- Smoke a new brand of cigarette, CLIMAL (not to be confused with Camel), which sequesters carbon in its biochar filter. The butts should be stubbed out on the ground, which may fertilize the soils. Take up smoking for the health of the planet!
- Wrap large swaths of the Sahara, Arabian and Gobi deserts in white plastic sheets to reflect sunlight back into space.
- Have everyone on earth carry paper bags in which to re-breathe our exhaled CO₂ a few times so we don't exceed our PEA (Personal Emissions Allowance, of course)

One of the above submissions is a serious proposal. Can you spot which one? (Answer at end of news release.)

All submissions we've received so far can be viewed at: <http://pieintheskycontest.org>.

Can you come up with a loonier proposal? The winning submission will be original, ludicrous and contain at least a nano-shred of perverse logic. Since the truth of geo-engineering is stranger than fiction, contestants will not be penalized for hatching a nutty idea that scientists have already proposed. Submissions should be sent to geoengineer@etcgroup.org before April Fools' Day (April 1 2009). The winner will be announced on Earth Day, April 22 2009, on www.etcgroup.org

Submissions should be no longer than 200 words and can be submitted in English, Spanish, French or Portuguese. Sketches, designs or videos that help explain the technological strategy – or impact – are welcome. If you don't like to type, make a video in which you explain your idea, post it on YouTube and send us the link. The winning techno-fix will be crafted into a cartoon that ETC will publish on its website and elsewhere. The winner will receive a T-shirt emblazoned with his/her winning geo-engineering scheme.

Watch our contest announcements on YouTube in

English: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6rlPOyt3ks>

Spanish: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CnEQMew1rk>

French: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjBmyIXKENS>

And check out some wacky proposals discussed following a Reuters blog post about ETC's Pie-in-the-Sky contest at <http://blogs.reuters.com/environment/2009/02/10/save-the-planet-and-win-a-t-shirt/> and our event announcement on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=53838076670>.

But send in your proposal by April 1!

Answer: It has been proposed that 67,000 square miles of the world's deserts could be covered annually with a reflective material that would send solar radiation back into space³

¹ For example, see BASF patent WO2008059054A2: Method for Increasing the Dry Biomass of Plants

² David G. Victor *et al*, "The Geoengineering Option: A Last Resort Against Global Warming?" *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2009, available at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20090301faessay88206/david-g-victor-m-granger-morgan-jay-apt-john-steinbruner-katharine-ricke/the-geoengineering-option.html>

³ Alvia Gaskill, "Summary of Meeting with U.S. DOE to Discuss Geoengineering Options to Prevent Abrupt and Long-Term Climate Change, June 29, 2004," pp. 6-7; available at: www.see.ed.ac.uk/~shs/Climate%20change/Geo-politics/Gaskill%20DOE.pdf