**27th Session of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee**

***Item 3(d).* Impact of new technologies for climate protection**

**Intervention of Center for International Environmental Law**

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I am Carroll Muffett, President of the Center for International Environmental Law. As the impacts of the climate crisis accelerate around the world, so too do risks from actions undertaken in the name of climate change.

In the context of geoengineering, those risks fall disproportionately on marginalized and vulnerable populations, indigenous peoples, and future generations. In light of the gravity of the issues, it is disappointing to see so few of those vital voices present in this room today. As geoengineering narratives accelerate in the climate discourse, we have repeatedly seen calls to rely on unproven, potentially catastrophic technologies driven by a small handful of actors and institutions with little if any engagement from those most likely to be affected by them.

Those voices are vital to any evaluation of the human rights impacts of geoengineering technologies. In its Special Report on 1.5°C, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) declined to consider solar radiation management (SRM) due to the profound uncertainties and enormous risks of the technology. SRM would do nothing to address the drivers of the climate crisis. Yet its deployment could damage the ozone layer, increase acid precipitation, and interfere with hydrological cycles vital to freshwater supply, food production, and flood management—posing profound risks to the rights to water, food, shelter, and life. These risks will fall disproportionately on the Global South.

Impacts of SRM could occur thousands of miles from injection sites, across ocean basins and hemispheres. Under such circumstances, identifying potentially affected communities and securing their free, prior and informed consent raises profound and potentially insurmountable difficulties. Yet proposed open air experiments of SRM have failed to consult even communities that should have been readily identifiable. These early experiments have focused disproportionately on indigenous territories and resources.

Carbon dioxide removal (CDR) technologies pose similar threats. The IPCC has warned that overreliance on CDR approaches like bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) would place massive demands on water and arable land, while increasing pollution from fossil fuel and fertilizer use, jeopardizing the rights to water and food at multiple scales.

Many CDR technologies, including BECCS and direct air capture, require deployment of massive networks of pipelines and storage wells for carbon capture and storage. Despite their questionable climate benefits, these networks would pose significant hazards to communities from increased pollutant emissions, potentially catastrophic pipeline ruptures, groundwater contamination and earthquake risk from injected CO2, and massive waste streams of hazardous and potentially radioactive brines putting both ground and surface waters at potential risk.

In the United States, these projects have been disproportionately targeted at communities that have suffered decades of systemic racism and environmental injustice. Deployment of CCS and CDR technologies that depend on it threatens to exacerbate and extend that injustice.

Finally, the growing reliance on speculative technologies and future offsets threatens to shift both the risks of climate change and the burdens of climate action to future generations. In so doing, it raises fundamental questions of intergenerational equity and justice.

As the Council considers the human rights impact of these technologies, it must not only accept and consider the voices of those potentially affected but actively seek those voices out. Thank you.