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Bill Gates's Hidden Dreams of Geoengineering Revealed

The Microsoft chairman, it turns out, has a small history of dabbling in climate-altering schemes

By [Jeremy Hsu](#) Posted 01.27.2010 at 3:38 pm



Bill Gates for Geoengineering Let's talk about cloud ships *Microsoft*

Bill Gates has already proven his interest in geoengineering schemes with his [earlier co-patent filing](#) for reducing the intensity of killer hurricanes. So perhaps we're not too surprised that [Science Insider](#) has dug up the Microsoft chairman's past projects on altering the Earth's climate, ranging from filtering carbon dioxide to reflecting sunlight via brighter clouds.

The billionaire founder of the PC has apparently quietly funneled \$4.5 million of his own money to geoengineering research since 2007. Two researchers who have served as energy and climate advisers for Gates -- Ken Caldeira of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Palo Alto, California and physicist David Keith of the University of Calgary in Canada -- have had the duty of dispensing the money as they saw fit. Naturally, scientists and students working for Keith and Caldeira have benefited from some of the philanthropic money. But geoengineering conferences held in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Edinburgh, Scotland have also received backing from Gates.

More funding has gone to Armand Neukermans, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who envisions ships that spray a fine salty mist of seawater into the air to create ocean clouds. The idea of using [clouds to reflect sunlight](#) and help reduce global temperatures has drawn support from others in the past, but many scientists still consider such geoengineering schemes as a [desperate last resort](#) for tackling climate change.

Keep in mind that Gates has not funded any [field trials of geoengineering](#), and that \$4.5 million represents a drop in the bucket these days for almost any research. But the billionaire's sentiment regarding climate change was made clear in a recent [Huffington Post](#) column where he argues that innovative technological solutions have become necessary, and that the world can no longer rely on just changing consumer behavior or pushing for energy efficiency.

[via [Science Insider](#)]

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3 COMMENTS

Kim - Talkingde...

01/27/10 at 4:16 pm

He is a dreamer and if anyone can make it work, its Bill Gates. He has a history of success and no-one can predict what technology or idea will evolve from this funded research.

[link to this comment](#)

zombie joe

01/28/10 at 6:19 pm

He sould forget Geo-Engineering, and instead create a Windows System that does not crash. If People are having problems with Vista like I am. How much worse would it be if they start messing with the weather? Maybe a weather System Crash, or Ecologic blue Screen of death, with no restart button.

[link to this comment](#)

tmarti69

01/29/10 at 12:57 am

The melting of Ice caps is a huge loss of fresh water reserves; our future is literally dripping away. We can balance sulfur, and the acid rain it causes, with the preservation of the ice caps until cheep green alternatives are found. Sulfur reflects the suns energy back into space, and was in our car emissions until we took it out to prevent acid rain. We can engineer airplane contrails to emit sulfur at the correct GPS place and moment when needed to preserve specific glaciers and ice caps.

A while your at it strategy, uses the carbon emissions that would have been emitted by an airplane passing any way, making it cheaper, less polluting, and a significantly smaller engineering problem. Just add a network connection, GPS system, and a tank of sulfur to the planes fuel line. Cool glaciers and make cool spots to slightly redirect hurricanes and reduce their impact. The soviet test in a recent issue of Popsci proves that sulfur works in creating cool spots.

A more political transition strategy is to use hydrogen, to increase the water vapor in contrails thereby making them bigger. In large traffic areas this will do the same as cooling as sulfur, but it will also allow environmentalists to acclimate and accept a feasible solution and compromise to the global warming problem.

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