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New Startup 'Cult' Releasing Chemtrails

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Make Sunsets, a startup company with primary offices in Mexico, claims to have released two balloons with sulfur particles in April 2022, which they hope exploded and released the particles in the stratosphere
- Without monitoring devices, the company is unsure of what happened to the balloons, but claims the sulfur they released will offset a substantial amount of warming in 2023
- The idea was inspired by weather changes after major volcanic eruptions spewed ash into the atmosphere and the weather temporarily shifted; experts call the actions of Make Sunsets "wildly premature," noting it isn't possible to estimate the potential consequences that could unilaterally alter the climate
- The CEO, Luke Iseman, didn't appear to believe that transparency or governance is required when manipulating the environment, making a move he called provocative and geoengineering activism, without public engagement, scientific scrutiny or approval from government authorities or scientific agencies
- Not all experts agree on the degree to which warming has changed Earth's climate, but as we have learned in the last three years, without honest disagreement and debate, the science community cannot contribute to policies that govern how medicine or technology is implemented to protect humanity

Since the beginning of human history, man has sought to control his environment. What started with building shelters and fences, has grown to controlling the weather. Make Sunsets, a startup company with primary offices in Mexico, claims to have released two

weather balloons with sulfur particles in April 2022 in the state of Baja California, Mexico[1] located on the Baja California Peninsula, bordering the U.S.

The term is geoengineering, which describes manipulating the weather by either removing carbon dioxide to prevent it from trapping heat in the lower atmosphere or reflecting sunlight back into space, also called solar geoengineering. Advances in technology and an increasing understanding of meteorological processes have led scientists to discover ways to control the weather.

According to Live Science,[2] projects are currently in place to increase rainfall, remove carbon dioxide and prevent extreme weather events. While extreme weather varies from country to country, manipulating the weather may have unknown consequences that can precipitate the end of life as we know it on our planet.

A 2012 paper[3] article published in Nature concludes that from the perspective of environmental ethics, manipulating the environment through geoengineering is a poor choice. While it is a widely held belief that humans should minimize the impact they have on the planet, other options should be pursued with potentially much less risk.

Short-term manipulation of the environment began during the Vietnam War when the U.S. Army used cloud seeding to prolong the monsoon season in Vietnam, destroying roads and flooding rivers.[4] When this was publicized, the European Modification Convention banned weather manipulation as a military tactic.

In 2008, China used a program to control the weather during the Beijing Olympics, ensuring that rain fell before events like the opening ceremony. According to the BBC,[5] the technique is routinely used in China to increase rainfall in drought-stricken areas. The U.K. has a checkered history using cloud seeding when in 1952, 35 people died during flooding that was linked to RAF rain-making experiments, although nothing was proven.

Startup Company's Rogue Plan to Manipulate the Weather

One startup company, Make Sunsets, and its CEO, Luke Iseman, is pushing to privatize an infant industry with little science to back the recent release of sulfur particles into the atmosphere. But, let's back that up just a little since Iseman is not certain that the particles were actually released.

According to what he told MIT Technology Review,[6] the weather balloons contained a few grams of sulfur dioxide but no monitoring equipment. Iseman estimated how much helium it would take to launch the balloons into the stratosphere and then expected they would burst under pressure to release the particles.

However, without monitoring equipment on board, it's not clear what happened to the balloons. Thus far, the company has claimed to raise $750,000 from two investors, and neither firm responded to the MIT Technology Review reporter before the article was published December 24, 2022.

Iseman claims the first two balloons launched months before Make Sunsets was incorporated in October 2022. Yet, general information about the company claims it also offers "carbon removal solutions to avoid excessive use of fossil fuels, enabling governments and companies to use geoengineering schemes for reducing environmental depletion."[7] These are big claims for a fledgling company.

They may be explained by Iseman's acknowledgment that his efforts are partly entrepreneurial and partly an act of geoengineering activism. He believes that making these moves could drive public debate and push scientific experiments and data gathering forward.

Before branching out on his own into the geoengineering space, Iseman was the director of hardware at Y Combinator, a technology startup accelerator company that participated in the launch of Airbnb, Doordash, Dropbox and Stripe.[8]

The company claims to use reusable balloons, yet also claims it does not know what happened to the first two balloons that were launched in April 2022. They go on to claim that "we've already launched our first clouds, and we'll offset a substantial amount of

warming in 2023!"[9] despite not knowing if the first balloons launched released the payload.

In the explanation of how they know this process will work, Make Sunsets uses a simple explanation for a complex subject, writing, "We're copying nature: the clouds you see in the sky use the same process and have been studied for years."[10]

Make Sunsets Is Seeking to Monetize the Venture

The thin level of scientific information on the website that promotes a complex strategy may be better explained by Iseman's comment, "We joke slash not joke that this is partly a company and partly a cult."[11] But a better explanation may be that the company plans to monetize its efforts.

While speaking to MIT Technology Review, Iseman said, "What I want to do is create as much cooling as quickly as I responsibly can, over the rest of my life, frankly." However, later he added that the company plans to send as much sulfur into the atmosphere in 2023 "as we can get customers to pay us" for.

The company claims that for every gram of sulfur particles they send into the stratosphere, it's enough to offset the effect of one ton of carbon over one year. Their plan to monetize this strategy is to sell $10 cooling credits for every gram of particles.

Shuchi Talati is a scholar in residence at American University in Washington, D.C. According to MIT Technology Review, she is forming a nonprofit focused on governance and justice in solar geoengineering. Talati is critical of both the monetization efforts and the company's scientific claims.

Based on current science, she believes that no one can represent such a specific outcome at this stage of the research. "What they're claiming to actually accomplish with such a credit is the entirety of what's uncertain right now about geoengineering," she says. David Keith is one of the leading experts on solar geoengineering and is troubled by any effort to privatize the technology, including selling credits. In 2018 he expressed his fears of privatization, saying:[12]

> *"... commercial development cannot produce the level of transparency and trust the world needs to make sensible decisions about deployment. A company would have an interest in overselling, an interest in concealing risks.*
>
> *Solar geoengineering is not cleantech. It's not a better battery or wind turbine. It's a set of technologies that might allow humanity to alter the entire climate. As much as possible, it needs to be owned and controlled by transparent democratic institutions. It requires global governance."*

And, as Big Pharma has demonstrated in the past decades, commercial development without transparency leads to corruption.

Mocking Regulatory Approval or International Permission

It appears that Iseman doesn't believe that transparency or governance is required. That assumption can be made based on his actions. According to MIT Technology Review,[13] the launches from Mexico occurred without public engagement, scientific scrutiny or approval from government authorities or scientific agencies in Mexico, the U.S. or any other country.

Researchers who have spent decades studying the technology are deeply troubled that the company has moved forward with implementation and is attempting to commercialize the industry at this early stage. Yet, some investors who have reviewed the proposals believe it's not a serious scientific effort or a credible business.

Instead, it may be an effort to grab attention and stir up controversy, which Iseman confirmed. While he thinks this move may make him look like a James Bond villain, he believes "It's morally wrong, in my opinion, for us not to be doing this."

Experts Call This Move 'Wildly Premature'

However, while Iseman appears to want to drive science forward at a faster rate, some experts believe that it could have the opposite effect. Janos Pasztor is the executive

director of the Carnegie Climate Governance Initiative. He sent an email to MIT Technology Review, writing:[14]

> *"The current state of science is not good enough … to either reject, or to accept, let alone implement. To go ahead with implementation at this stage is a very bad idea."*

The concept of geoengineering is simple and based on an idea that was inspired by the side effects of major volcanic eruptions. As volcanoes spew ash into the atmosphere, it can lead to temporary shifts in the climate. One notorious shift occurred in 1816, which is called "the year without a summer."

It was more than a century later that scientists understood a volcanic eruption in the Indian Ocean one year earlier had sent large amounts of ash into the upper atmosphere that shrouded the globe and blocked the sun. It resulted in severe crop failure, food shortages and famine.[15]

Pasztor stresses that the actions taken by Make Sunsets underscore the urgency to establish oversight and clear rules for responsible geoengineering and determine under what conditions individuals and groups can move forward.

In fact, the company's actions have played into some long-held fears that an individual or company with no knowledge or the implications for the consequences could unilaterally alter the climate since the technology is relatively cheap and simple.

This seems to describe Iseman's own characterization of the motives behind Make Sunsets since he believes a radical approach is necessary to spur what he perceives as a slow movement to address climate change. However, the narrative appears inconsistent.

On the one hand, Iseman states that moving ahead with these controversial actions could help drive public debate and move science forward, implying he understands that his actions are premature.

Yet, in the FAQs on the Make Sunsets website, he claims that others from academia have tried to accomplish what he is doing but were "canceled due to well-intentioned but misguided activism and patent disputes."[16] He also claims to be able to offset substantial warming in 2023.[17]

Not All Experts Agree on the Degree of Climate Change

It should come as no surprise that Bill Gates is heavily involved in **funding geoengineering**. His first foray occurred in 2010[18] when he funded research that developed machines to spray seawater into the clouds with the goal of increasing the ability to reflect sunlight into space. This triggered a call for a global ban on experiments.

Since at least 2012,[19] Gates has funded climate scientist lobbying efforts to advance geoengineering and in 2018[20] he agreed to fund experiments for Harvard scientists who proposed spraying the stratosphere with calcium chloride to slow the Earth's warming by blocking out the sun. He remains heavily invested in climate modification that not only could destabilize the climate system, but be weaponized against people by controlling rainfall and drought.

Although many environmental scientists agree global warming is occurring, it's worth noting that not all agree on the degree to which climate change has occurred. The late Robert M Carter, a research professor at James Cook University Queensland and the University of Adelaide in South Australia, was one of those scientists.

Carter died in 2016 but penned an incisive article in 2009 in which he outlined 10 facts he believed about climate change and argued against 10 global warming myths. The data pertain to the period prior to 2009 when he wrote the article, which was republished in November 2022. Some of his assertions include:[21]

- Accurate temperature measurements made from weather balloons and satellites since the late 1950s show no atmospheric warming since 1958. In contrast, averaged ground-based thermometers record a warming of about 0.4°C over the

same period. Many scientists believe that the thermometer record is biased by the Urban Heat Island effect and other artifacts.

- On both annual (one year) and geological (up to 100,000 years) time scales, changes in atmospheric temperature PRECEDE changes in CO2. Carbon dioxide therefore cannot be the primary forcing agent for temperature increase (though increasing CO2 does cause a diminishingly mild positive temperature feedback).
- Climate change is a nonlinear (chaotic) process, some parts of which are only dimly or not at all understood. No deterministic computer model will ever be able to make an accurate prediction of climate 100 years into the future.

As we have learned in the past three years, without honest disagreement and debate, the science community is unable to contribute to policies that govern how medicine or technology is implemented to protect humanity. What is not needed are individuals who garner financial backing for simple solutions to complex problems without regard for the potential consequences.