

Solar Radiation Reduction and International Space Law

Principles:

1. Use of outer space is to be carried out for the benefit of all countries
2. National activity bears international responsibility

Liability

Damage- includes loss of life, personal injury, property loss and damage.

Launching state responsible for damages caused by space object.

Jointly launched objects also carry joint responsibility.

Includes state whose territory it was launched from, not just parties involved with space object

Making a claim

- state which suffers damages may present a claim to the launching state within one year of when damages are discovered (even if full extent unknown).
- If settlement is not arrived to a claim commission is formed
 - 1 member from each party or group on each side (groups only get 1) and a third agreed upon member
 - majority vote

Problem: claim commissions decision is only final and binding if both parties agree.

Again this brings out the challenge of semi-self-regulation while dealing with international law. However, when dealing with geo-engineering, the risks for damage may be so great that countries involved would be deterred by the potential massive humanitarian crisis.

Legal to launch?

It seems that it would be legal to launch devices to reduce solar radiation into orbit or space.

Countries or groups would have to simply go through proper registration channels that do not function as regulatory on the international level.

Conclusion: Launching solar reflectors into space or orbit could be done entirely legally. Countries involved would face the risk of claims coming against them from countries that may be harmed by subsequent climate or weather changes. However, the exact effects of the change would be hard to determine, thus making any legal battles difficult at best. Additionally, there is another loop-hole in which countries could simply not agree to a binding claim commission decision, thus making all legislation in place basically worthless.