

## Understanding the slippery slope argument against further climate engineering research

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The "slippery slope" argument against small-scale outdoor climate engineering experiments is, roughly, that such experiments are a bad idea because they will inevitably lead to undesirable outcomes, such as unwise deployment of climate engineering technologies. Despite its importance for pressing questions about the conduct and governance of small-scale outdoor experiments, the slippery slope argument has received far less attention than other arguments against further research. As a result, most discussions of the slippery slope argument are too vague to provide helpful guidance for researchers, funders, or policymakers. By collecting what we think we know about the slippery slope and providing a framework for thinking further about it, this talk provides a launching pad for in-depth discussion of the slippery slope argument within and beyond the climate engineering research community. To that end, this talk will explain the logic needed for a cogent slippery slope argument against small-scale outdoor experiments; collect and expand on existing suggestions for why small-scale outdoor experiments of one kind or the other might put us on a slippery slope to somewhere undesirable; identify special complexities in climate engineering, mainly related to uncertainty and dynamic preferences, that make it difficult to evaluate the slippery slope argument; and highlight some norms and institutions that might make the slope less slippery.