

Bill Gates Wants to Spray the Sky with Chalk Dust to Block the Sun

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Harvard University is planning an experiment, funded by Bill Gates, to dim the sun by sending a large balloon 12 miles above the Swedish town of Kiruna and have it drop 2kg of chalk dust into the stratosphere to block the sun's rays from hitting the surface. The team will gather information predict what would happen if hundreds of tons of chalk were to be dropped around the world. Experts have warned that the this process, if used at large scale, could be disastrous for weather systems in ways no one can predict. -GEG

- The project will see a test balloon launch this summer from the town of Kiruna
- It will send 2kg of chalk into the stratosphere 12 miles above the Earth's surface
- Scientists will then monitor who the dust particles interact with the atmosphere
- This will be fed into computer models to predict how a larger plume would work
- The idea is to 'block out' some of the sun's energy to cool down the Earth

The first test of a project backed to spray millions of tonnes of chalk into the stratosphere, in an attempt to 'dim the sun' and cool the Earth, could happen in June.

Harvard University experts will test the system by sending a large balloon 12 miles

above the Swedish town of Kiruna and have it drop 2kg of chalk dust into the stratosphere.

The aim of the estimated \$3 million mission, backed by billionaire Bill Gates, is to have the chalk deflect a portion of the sun's radiation, stop it from hitting the surface, and cool the planet.

The idea has been heavily criticised since its inception, with project director Frank Keutsch even calling the need for this scale of geo-engineering 'terrifying'.

And experts have warned that the unusual technique could be disastrous for weather systems in ways nobody can predict.

Backed by a range of private donors including Gates, the test mission is launching from Sweden as they could offer a launch by the end of this summer.

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