CVF V20 CLIMATE VULNERABLE FORUM VULNERABLE TWENTY GROUP

Degrees Initiative

CONCEPT NOTE

CVF-V20 AND DEGREES CLOSED-DOOR BRIEFING

FOR CVF-V20 MEMBER COUNTRIES ON SOLAR RADIATION MODIFICATION AND AGRICULTURE

22 SEPTEMBER 2026 (TUESDAY), 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM ET (ET)

19th Floor, Graybar 19 Conference Center, The Graybar Building
420 Lexington Avenue, New York City



BACKGROUND

The CVF-V20 Secretariat, with The Degrees Initiative, will host a closed-door briefing for CVF-V20 member countries on solar radiation modification (SRM) and its implications for agriculture and food security, on the margins of the UN General Assembly. The session sits within one week of coordinated activity: the Degrees 15th-anniversary reception on 21 September, this briefing on 22 September, the launch of a global agriculture SRM study at the Cornell Roosevelt Island campus on 23 September, and the CVF-V20 leadership meeting on the UN sidelines on 24 September.

The first part of the briefing shares updates on the CVF-V20, its key priorities, and its programs. The second part advances the CVF-V20 Science and Health Agenda, focusing this year on 1.5°C, SRM, and what a major new study of SRM and staple-crop agriculture means for the world's most climate-vulnerable countries.

Background on SRM and Agriculture

Global temperatures are pushing past 1.5°C with immediate and long-term implications for vulnerable countries. In this context, there is growing attention to SRM, also known as solar geoengineering, as a highly uncertain and risky potential means to limit some of the most extreme climate impacts. One proposed method involves injecting aerosols into the upper atmosphere to reflect a portion of sunlight and temporarily cool the planet. In theory, this could reduce temperatures quickly and at relatively low cost, faster than any other intervention currently available. Yet the risks and uncertainties are serious and insufficiently understood, and they raise profound geopolitical, ethical, and justice concerns, especially for countries that are already climate-vulnerable.

Agriculture is where these questions land most directly for CVF-V20 members. A new global study, coordinated by the Degrees Initiative in collaboration with the Agricultural Model Intercomparison and Improvement Project (AgMIP), examines the impacts of warming versus SRM on staple crops under multiple warming pathways and SRM intensities, using shared downscaled datasets, common modeling protocols, and regional crop models that allow cross-country comparison. The decisive framing point is easy to get wrong: the relevant comparison is not SRM against today's climate, but SRM against future warming scenarios. Whether SRM helps or harms staple-crop yields depends on which future it is measured against, a distinction that is scientific and political at once.

This is not to endorse or reject SRM in principle, but to ensure that climate-vulnerable countries engage critically and effectively in how research is governed, what assessments are conducted, and what safeguards are needed. Absence from the research is, in practice, a loss of influence over the rules. As the CVF-V20 advances its Science and Health Agenda, 2026 presents an opportunity to ensure that members are not passive observers in the global debate on powerful climate technologies, but instead assert equity, transparency, and multilateral governance, and the right of vulnerable countries to help generate the evidence rather than only receive it.

OBJECTIVES

This closed-door briefing is convened to support CVF-V20 member countries in navigating the complex and fast-evolving international discussion around SRM, with a particular focus this year on agriculture and food security. Specifically, the objectives are to:

- Provide a clear, policy-relevant overview of SRM, including the current state of science, the warming-versus-SRM framing, and the emerging global governance landscape.
- Introduce the new global agriculture SRM study, its scenario design, and what full Global South participation in it looks like in practice.
- Situate SRM within the urgent climate context, highlighting the implications of breaching 1.5°C and the intersections with food security, health, adaptation, finance, and climate justice for vulnerable nations.
- Connect policy and scientific communities in CVF-V20 countries to facilitate exchange and mutual learning, including direct, country-led engagement between national scientists and their ministers.
- Strengthen informed participation, equipping members with the knowledge needed to engage meaningfully in upcoming assessments and negotiations on SRM.
- Discuss governance priorities, research participation, and scientific sovereignty, exploring how vulnerable countries can shape research governance and safeguards without committing to a position on deployment.
- Support the implementation of the CVF-V20 Science and Health Agenda.

PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY
2:30 PM - 2:40 PM *(10 minutes)*	**Welcome and Opening Remarks** **H.E. The Most Honorable Elizabeth Thompson** Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Climate Change, Small Island States and Law of the Sea; and Sherpa to Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley, S.C., M.P., Chair of the CVF-V20
2:40 PM - 3:10 PM *(30 minutes)*	**1.5°C, tipping points and the Earth's reflectivity crisis** **Mark Lynas** Science Advisor, CVF-V20 Secretary General's Office **SRM governance and why climate-vulnerable countries must have a voice** **Cynthia Scharf** Senior Fellow, Centre for Future Generations
3:10 PM - 3:20 PM *(10 minutes)*	**Presentation on the Social Dimensions of SRM** Moderated by: **Mark Lynas** **The sociopolitical dimensions of SRM** **Andy Parker** Founder and CEO, The Degrees Initiative
3:20 PM - 3:50 PM *(30 minutes)*	**Panel Discussion: SRM and agriculture** A global study exploring how SRM could affect agriculture across the Global South is being launched at New York Climate Week. Three scientists involved in this study will introduce it and discuss why crop impacts are so important to low- and middle-income countries. Moderated by: **Dr. Kwesi Quagraine** Chief Scientist, CVF-V20 Secretariat **Prof. Lili Xia** (Rutgers University and Degrees Initiative) **Dr. Chris Lennard** (University of Cape Town and African Climate Intervention Research Hub) **Dr. Temitope Egbebiyi** (Cornell University)

3:50 PM - 4:20 PM *(30 minutes)*	**How could SRM affect agriculture? Research in CVF countries** Researchers from four CVF countries will introduce their projects and explain their motivation to understand how SRM could affect their regions. Moderated by: **Dr. Kwesi Quagraine** **Dr. Hong Do** (Nong Lam University, Vietnam) **Dr. Morgan Wairiu** (Solomon Islands National University) **Dr. Andres Ariza** (International Center for Tropical Agriculture, Colombia) **Dr. Victor Ongoma** (Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco)
4:20 PM - 4:25 PM *(5 minutes)*	**Reflections** **Isatou Camara** Director of Climate Finance, Ministry of Finance, The Gambia **Rep. Anna Veloso-Tuazon** Chairperson of the Climate Change Committee, House of Representatives, Philippines
4:25 PM - 4:30 PM *(5 minutes)*	**Closing Remarks** **Dr. Kwesi Quagraine** Chief Scientist CVF-V20 Secretariat

ABOUT CVF-V20

The Climate Vulnerable Forum and V20 Finance Ministers (CVF-V20) is a coalition of 74 countries highly vulnerable to a warming planet. Individually, its members are often seen as weak. This is why the CVF-V20 was established: to serve as a South-South cooperation platform for participating governments to act in concert and deal with the climate emergency together through shared strategies, innovation, and advocacy.

SCIENCE & HEALTH AGENDA

1. 1.5 degrees, reassessing the economic and ecological implications of breaching the Paris temperature threshold of 1.5°C, tracking real-time global warming, and identifying the urgent adjustments in adaptation and financing required in climate-vulnerable countries;
2. Definitions of climate vulnerability, moving towards a scientifically defined, non-arbitrary approach for CVF membership encompassing both geographical and socio-economic considerations;

3. Solar geoengineering capacity-building, including the implications of SRM for agriculture and food security, to ensure full participation of climate-vulnerable countries in this debate with no prejudice towards any position;

4. Climate and health, with a special focus on vector-borne diseases and extreme heat-related morbidity and mortality, and adaptation to thermal impacts on labor and resilience, including shock-proofing health infrastructure; and

5. Corals in CVF countries, facilitating information exchange on coral protection and restoration and innovative financial flows to support coral reefs as the first global biome tipping point and a major source of protein for many CVF members.

ABOUT OUR PARTNERS

The Degrees Initiative is a nongovernmental organisation which, for fifteen years, has built the capacity of developing countries and emerging economies to evaluate SRM, supporting research in over 26 countries across the Global South. Degrees empowers researchers in climate-vulnerable regions to conduct their own research and ensure their voices are heard in international negotiations and discussions on SRM research and governance. Degrees is neutral on whether SRM should ever be used and will neither promote nor oppose it. It emphasises that SRM cannot be an alternative to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

The Centre for Future Generations is an independent think-and-do tank based in Brussels, Belgium. It was created to help decision-makers anticipate and govern rapid technological change, working with EU institutions and decision-makers around the world to ensure that emerging technologies such as climate interventions, neurotechnology, biotechnology, and advanced artificial intelligence are governed in the best interests of humanity.

KEY CONTACTS

For queries about this event, please contact:

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