

Minutes and actions

Solar Radiation Management: Public Dialogue Oversight Group (OG) Meeting 05

Tuesday 16 September 2025, 13:30, by Microsoft Teams videoconference.

Members:

Jack Stilgoe (Chair): University College London
 Alexander Hall: McMaster University
 Duncan McLaren: University of California, Los Angeles
 Joanna Haigh: Imperial College London
 Jim Haywood: University of Exeter
 Kate Scott: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)
 Jim Fleming: Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council UKRI (EPSRC)
 Emma Bessent: Arts and Humanities Research Council UKRI (AHRC)

Other attendees:

Lizzie Garratt, Simon Howe: Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
 Steve Robinson, Katie Week, Trupti Patel: Sciencewise
 Henrietta Hopkins, Kate Furber, Hally Ingram: Hopkins Van Mil (HVM)
 Anna MacGillivray, Hilary Livesey: URSUS Consulting Ltd

Apologies:

Chuks Okereke: University of Bristol
 Doug Parr: Greenpeace
 Hugh Hunt: University of Cambridge
 Nick Pidgeon: Cardiff University
 Tracey Dale: Economic and Social Research Council UKRI (ESRC)

Oversight Group Action log:

| No. | Action | Responsible | Timing | Note |
|-----|--|------------------|----------------|---|
| 3.1 | NERC team to initiate discussion with funded research projects to formalise public dialogue feedback and response process. | NERC | December 2025 | Ongoing: Discussions with project teams held. Coordination plan and documents being developed throughout the remainder of 2025. |
| 4.1 | Further advance the discussion for a process for publishing OG minutes. | NERC/Sciencewise | October 2025 | Ongoing: Process now agreed for publication. Further update will be given at OG #06. |
| 5.1 | OG members to provide final feedback for dialogue materials and resources | Oversight Group | September 2025 | Complete |

Minutes:**1. Welcome – Chair**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted and introductions were given for those who were attending an Oversight Group (OG) meeting for the first time.

2. Meeting overview – Chair

The Chair set out the structure and purpose of this meeting. Specifically, that the meeting focussed on an update on the start of the Public Dialogue process following the first workshop meeting, which took place on 9 September.

2.1 The OG discussed the minutes and actions from the previous meeting. Ongoing actions related to the action related to publishing OG meeting minutes on the Sciencewise website (action 4.1). The process for publication was agreed between NERC and Sciencewise, the team are currently waiting on sign-off from URKI comms, with the intention to publish minutes thereafter, as agreed by the OG during the last meeting.

2.2 Related to action 3.1 regarding feedback process and expected response from the funded research projects to the Public Dialogue, it was confirmed that initial coordination focussed discussions have been held with the research projects. While no formal process has been agreed, the intention for a response is recognised, with the route and format to follow.

3 Public Dialogue process – HVM

3.1 HVM presented on the Public Dialogue process; summarising participant recruitment details, process summary and outline plan for each of the four workshops. Following the update, HVM asked the OG for feedback related to reflections on workshop stimulus materials; reflections of programme design; and expectations of the dialogue. HVM clarified that participants have access to an online space with presentations from all the workshops they have attended, statement of UK Government on SRM, several handouts including a glossary of terms, graphics and a history of SRM documents. Participants will also have access to videos from each of the four research projects as well as ARIA to give some further context into approaches and scope of SRM research on the back of workshop one, which set the scene more broadly. Further materials will also be available during the in-person workshops. Additionally, there is a live document with responses to questions posed by workshop participants. This will be updated throughout the dialogue workshops. It was confirmed that the OG are invited to provide final feedback on dialogue resource documents, as well as factual issues in any of the resources. This should be provided ASAP to HVM.

Action 5.1: OG members to provide final feedback for dialogue materials and resources

3.2 Further OG discussion on the dialogue centred on the distinction of discussion between SRM itself and SRM research, i.e. the continuum from research through to trials and potential

deployment and all steps between. This is scheduled to be discussed in detail during the in-person workshops. HVM confirmed that there is a clear distinction being drawn during discussions, noting the importance to recognise as well as understanding bet

4 *Initial feedback from 1st Public Dialogue workshop – HVM / URSUS*

- 4.1 HVM presented initial reflections from participants following the first dialogue workshop. There is recognition that many find the topic overwhelming, with acknowledgement of the requirement for political will to address climate change, as well as subtleties and nuances perhaps unusual in an early workshop to be picked up in an opinion delineating between prioritisation of SRM over other approaches to tackle climate change. There was also discussion about what participants would like to know more about. These include; impacts and risk, global aspects, scale/location, governance, timescale to potential deployment, specific method details, past research, feasibility of effectiveness, equity & justice, costs & funding, Governmental involvement/policy decisions and information awareness. HVM are confident that all of these issues and either due to be discussed over the course of the dialogue and/or are included in the stimulus materials for participants.
- 4.2 URSUS presented a summary of the evaluation of the dialogue thus far, from observing the first workshop and from a survey at end of the first workshop. Key points were; there is a good mix of participants - location, gender, age, ethnicity and subject prior knowledge; the onboarding effort has been successful and welcoming environment has been created by HVM; participants are quick to grasp and agreed with the objectives; speakers have been clear and engaging with answering questions; the shared site is proving useful for participants and HVM alike; an all participants have agreed that they can openly express their ideas and ask questions.

Further to this, it was recognised that it has required strong facilitation to manage the contribution of those with strong opinions on conspiracy theories to ensure that as well as the vocal participants, all feel that they can be heard too. It was reiterated that a key Sciencewise principle to respect other participants even if you disagree with them, recognising that with beliefs they should receive acknowledgement without necessarily agreement. There was also recognition by the OG that by having varied beliefs and opinions within the participants reflects the wider societal understanding and opinions, so is vital to be included and to capture. It was also noted that several of the participants were engaging with constructive conversations challenging climate change sceptic and conspiracy theory views. The spectrum of opinion will be captured and highlighted within the final report.

- 4.3 In discussion about feedback from the first workshop, the OG commented that the number of areas covered and discovered from the participant group was impressive after just a few hours in the first workshop. A wide range of important technical, political, ethical and social important questions have surfaced.

The OG also cautioned about the nuance of risk framing, particularly risk/risk vs risk/benefit. HVM acknowledged the potential difficulty of the distinction for participants.

A further question from the OG centred on whether HVM felt that there were appropriate speakers lined up for the future workshops to tackle the breadth of topics and questions being raised by participants. There was a view that there is a good balance of contributors between active researchers and these with insight into the ethics and geopolitics of the subject. This includes at the in-person workshops, with distinction throughout between informants and those with strong beliefs to allow for the range of perspectives. The OG were reminded that they can offer advice on appropriate speakers and experts, noting that not all will accept or be available.

HVM confirmed that they had active google alerts in place to be alerted to up-to-date news and stories which the participants may also have been aware of.

Additionally, the OG were reminded that they are invited to observe any of the subsequent workshops.

5 *AOB – all*

- 5.1 The OG discussed the Royal Society-led Solar Radiation Modification scientific review, which is anticipated for launch in autumn.
- 5.2 Regarding the timing for the Public Dialogue report to be published, it was confirmed that a final version will be delivered by mid-January 202. The OG considered opportunities for dissemination. It was agreed that the OG will have an active role in the structure of the Public Dialogue report. The draft overview and emerging findings will be presented to the OG during the next meeting, with input invited to confirm the structure. It is expected to cover aspects of governance, science and social aspects. It was confirmed that audiences for the report will include policy and decision makers, with distilled executive summary and a slide deck of key findings in addition to the fuller report. As an additional output, there will also be a film which covers ‘what is SRM?’, ‘Why are we discussing it?’ and gives reflections from the workshop participants and specialists.

6 *Date of next meeting– Chair*

- 6.1 The OG were reminded that the date of the next meeting will be Monday 3 November. The meeting will focus on an update on how the dialogue workshops progressed, as well as inviting views on the report structure.

7 *Meeting close*