

Call for Evidence – Considering future generations, the environment and the interests of non-human species in the analysis of emerging technologies, including solar radiation modification.

Opens	15 January 2026
Closes	15 March 2026
Questions/submissions to	environmentandhealth@nuffieldbioethics.org

Aim

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics (NCOB) is running an open call to gather evidence on how future generations, the environment and the interests of non-human species can be incorporated into policy and decision making about emerging technologies and interventions, including solar radiation modification.

Background

We [recently announced](#) a new project exploring the ethical considerations of solar radiation modification (SRM), alongside the full range of associated human and non-human health impacts. SRM can be understood as a range of potential interventions that could reflect some of the sunlight that reaches Earth back into space, with the aim of reducing global temperatures.

As discussions around SRM accelerate, the ethical considerations often exclusively focus on immediate human interests. Any intervention with the potential to alter the Earth's climate systems not only risks affecting present human populations but also non-human species, the environment and future generations. There is, however, uncertainty about how best to consider these interests and/or impacts in policy development and decision-making.

We would like to understand how such considerations might shape potential research, development and governance. This, in turn will inform both our own ethical analysis of SRM and our research exploring emerging technologies more generally.

Why we are calling for evidence

In addition to our own work, there is increasing recognition that there is a need to consider future generations, the environment and the interests of non-human species in policy and decision making. For example:

- The findings from the RSPCA's recent citizen's assembly clearly illustrates that 'if the UK is to build a future where animals are respected, protected and able to

thrive, we must urgently transform how we treat all animals.’¹ The [Animal Welfare \(Sentience\) Act 2022](#) also requires policymakers to consider animal sentience when creating or changing laws.

- There has been increasing use of legal and regulatory instruments aimed directly at protecting the environment, such as designating legal personhood to parts of the environment.²
- The [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) places an obligation on public bodies in Wales to act in the interests of future generations, with support from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. In 2024, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of Future Generations to protect the needs and interests of future generations through a ‘[Pact for the Future](#).’

We are also aware that a range of other methods are being developed, including through AI,³ assessment frameworks,⁴ and experimental governance approaches.⁵

What we are looking for

We are keen to hear from a range of sectors, settings and contexts where steps have been taken to recognise non-human species, the environment and future generations in policy and decision making. We want to better understand these developments and methods, and how they have been, or could be, adopted in the analysis and oversight of emerging technologies, such as SRM. Policy and decision makers could include governments, policymakers, funders, researchers, commercial actors, among others.

Please note that some questions may require specific subject matter expertise or experience to answer – there is no need to answer questions that fall outside your own professional, personal or academic scope.

Questions that we would like responses to:

1. What benefits or potential complications do you foresee or have you encountered in considering non-human species, the environment and/or future generations in policy and decision making?
2. What methodologies or experiments are currently used to include non-human species, the environment and/or future generations in policy and decision making

¹ RSPCA (2025) [Animal futures: our plan for a better world](#).

² Such as Aotearoa’s (New Zealand’s) Te Urewera Act 2014 and Te Awa Tupua Act 2017.

³ For example: [Earth Species Project](#)

⁴ Such as School of International Futures (2021) [Fair public policies for all generations: an assessment framework](#).

⁵ See: Claudia Chwalisz and Lucy Reid (2024) [More-than-human governance experiments in Europe: trends, opportunities and challenges](#), Democracy Next, Ariella Shalev (2021) [Japan’s movement of Future Design Councils](#).

and/or the design or governance of technologies and interventions such as SRM?

3. What methodologies or frameworks would you propose, if any, for the inclusion of non-human species, the environment or future generations in decisions, including those related to emerging technologies and interventions with the potential to affect organisms and Earth systems?
4. Can you highlight examples of existing legal, regulatory or ethical frameworks that are well designed to be inclusive of non-human species, the environment and/or future generations, and explain why you consider them to be good examples?
5. How should we weigh the different values that arise in the consideration of current human generations, non-human species, the environment and future generations in policy and decision making, including across research, development and/or governance of emerging technologies such as SRM?
6. What existing legal, regulatory or ethical frameworks could be more inclusive of non-human species, the environment and/or future generations, and how?
7. How can we ensure that ethical considerations regarding non-human species, the environment and/or future generations are adequately accommodated in policy and decision making, as part of our ethical analysis of SRM?

What we will do with the evidence

We will carefully consider and analyse all responses to the call for evidence. The themes and issues that are identified will inform our future research activities and outputs. We may publish a summary of insights on our website. We will only publish named or anonymous responses in full where you have given us consent to do so.

Responding to the call for evidence

The call for evidence will be open for 2 months, from 15 January to 15 March 2026.

Responses should be sent as an email attachment to environmentandhealth@nuffieldbioethics.org.

Please state clearly in your email if you are happy for us to publish your response in full, and if so, whether you would like us to publish it under your/your organisations name, or anonymously.