

Terraforming Mars: The Legal Implications

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Abstract

Is it time to start thinking about Mars as the next Human colony? With increasing demand of Earth's already scarce resources and growing environmental damage, terraforming Mars may be a necessary consideration. If Mars could be utilized as a 'Human Friendly' habitat, how might we go about it? The scientific and economic necessities of terraforming Mars renders the proposition highly unlikely as a plan of action. However, if we were able to terraform the planet, could we? Should we? Apart from the scientific difficulties, what about the legal implications of such an action and can we lawfully terraform another planet? If we could terraform another planet, how might we establish a Human settlement there? How would we refer to the inhabitants of Mars? Would this group of people have their own passport, economy, university or defense force? Would we trade with Mars from Earth and would the United Nations recognise Mars as a member? If Mars were to be a colony, then under whose auspices would it be governed?

This talk aims to provide some insight into the possibility of terraforming Mars as well as the legal implications of doing so.