

Joint UAR-Manchurian Terraforming Project Hits Snag

(Chyuantii, Syuhlam) The UAR-Manchurian terraforming project of Syun, a desert moon of the gas giant Gaamoughjeung, has not managed to increase the fraction of free water significantly. At the Zeta Tucanae Development Conference Manchurian authorities admitted that the Syun terraforming project had not yet reached expected goals, but vowed to “triple efforts to achieve them in the near future”. The schedule for increasing the outpost size remains unchanged, with settlers from the UAR and western Manchuria regions arriving in New Turfan monthly.

The Syun project has been underway for 14 years. It was started as a mining project, using heavy machinery shipped from nearby Syuhlahm to construct a catapult on the moon. To reduce the extreme climate of Syun the catapult began to launch processed silica aerosols into the upper atmosphere of the planet to increase its albedo. Initial success led to funding for a major terraforming effort. Ice loads from the gas giant Hongaange are dropped into certain “oasis regions” and various desert plants introduced.

According to Dr Ragnhild Gunderrsdottir of the Interstellar Geoengineering Union: “Syun is never going to be very earthlike, but if the efforts are continued there is no reason to doubt that humans will be able to breathe unprotected and a self-sustaining ecosphere will develop. The colonists will just have to be more patient.” In regards to the proposal to construct orbital shades she was less sanguine: “It is the kind of megascale engineering that looks better on paper than in reality. American experiences on Ellis show that water management is the key to terraforming desert environments”.

Syun has significant mineral wealth, possibly tantalum deposits, and profits from delivering metals to the Chyuantii industries. However, the thin atmosphere, hot days and cold nights, temperature variations due to its orbit around Gaamoughjeung (between 0.73-0.86 AU from the star), lack of water and occasional radiation storms make it a very harsh place. Colonists have been selected on the basis of familiarity with extreme desert environments. Experts from Aurore and Ellis are also sought; the Manchurian government has instituted a very generous tax break program for certain specialists.