

Strategic Foresight and the Social Challenge

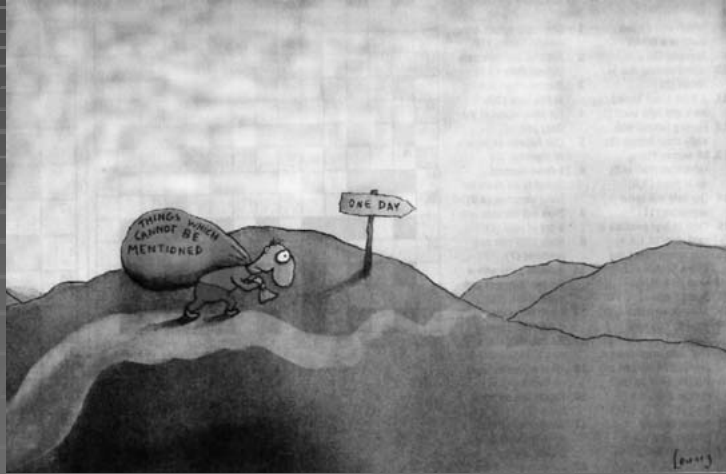
Richard A Slaughter



Foresight international

1: Foresight Perspective

Things Which Cannot be Mentioned?





Tsunamis of Change

- Change processes never erupt without notice
- Ripples occur on the horizon
- The ripples become waves
- The waves become storms or tsunamis
- Hence, *successful organisations are always scanning the horizon for signals of change*
- Being prepared, they ride out the storm or use it



Forewarned is forearmed: Jakarta opts for early warning tsunami sensors

AGE 8/10/05

By JOHN AGLIONBY
JAKARTA

INDONESIA will start installing a tsunami early-warning system off the west coast of Sumatra next week, hoping to have it fully functional by the end of the year.

A German research vessel will sail from Jakarta to the Indian Ocean on Monday to place the first two of 15 earthquake sensors on the seabed 1000 kilometres from the shore of the region that bore the brunt of the Boxing Day tsunami.

The sensors will be attached to six-metre-long buoys on the ocean surface from which a signal will be beamed via satellites to government offices if a tsunami develops. The media and public will then be warned by mobile phone text message, fax and email.

"The aim is to have the buoys far enough out to sea so we will have about an hour's warning of an impending tsunami," said Idwan Suhardi of the Indonesian meteorology and geophysics agency.

More than 220,000 people died in more than a dozen countries around the Indian Ocean in the tragedy on December 26 last year because, unlike in the Pacific Ocean, there was no system to warn of the disaster following an earth-



Huts and tents around a mosque on the outskirts of tsunami-ravaged Banda Aceh.

quake off the north-western tip of Sumatra in Aceh province. About 130,000 of the fatalities were in Aceh, which was hit by a wall of water within half an hour of the earthquake.

The only place with a warning network was the island of Simeulue, off Aceh. Residents had developed their own system since the previous tsunami a century earlier. If animals start behaving erratically and the sea drains off beaches — the precursor to a tsunami — everyone is told to flee to the hills. Although

the earthquake and tsunami destroyed about 70 per cent of the houses, only 23 people from the population of 78,000 died. In some other parts of Aceh, the death toll exceeded 90 per cent.

Mr Idwan said that by the end of this year it would probably take about 10 minutes to get the information from the seabed sensors to the automated centre. "Our aim by the start of 2006 is to reduce the warning time to two minutes."

Authorities are also developing co-ordinated escape routes and dis-

aster preparedness in areas deemed to be at high risk from a tsunami. International experts say the biggest problem is the lack of co-ordination between the dozen government agencies working on the project.

"The problem is still at the institutional level," said Giuseppe Arduino of the United Nations' scientific organisation, UNESCO. "No one knows who is responsible for delivering the signal to whom."

Training Indonesian officials will also be crucial. "Only four people in the BMG are properly educated in seismology," Mr Arduino said.

Many other countries in the region are developing their own systems, with tens of millions of dollars worth of assistance coming from donor nations. But there has been little progress on how to co-ordinate them.

"First the (individual countries) have to solve the national early-warning challenge," Mr Arduino said. "Then they can think about linking them together."

A co-ordination meeting will be held in India in mid-December. The world's two existing tsunami early-warning systems, in Japan and Hawaii, are also helping the Indian Ocean countries develop their systems.

GUARDIAN

What is Foresight?



- An in-built capacity of human brain/mind system
- 'An act or the power of foreseeing, prescience'
- 'An act of looking forward, a view forward'
- 'Action in reference to the future, prudence'

The Foresight Principle

Expanding awareness and understanding through:

- Futures scanning, identification of trends, changes
- Clarification of emerging issues, problems, context
- Acting in a timely and appropriate manner



The Foresight Principle Applied to Global Systems

To steer correctly, a system with inherent physical momentum needs to be looking decades ahead

Meadows, Meadows & Randers: Beyond the Limits, Earthscan, 1992, p137

2: Tools

Creating Forward Views

- What are the main *continuities*?
- What are the major *trends*?
- What are the most important *change processes*?
- What are the most serious *problems*?
- What are the *new factors* 'in the pipeline'?
- What are the main *sources of inspiration and hope*?

Surface and Depth: Visible and Invisible

Visible Exteriors

Actions, events, behaviours, physical infrastructure, technology, world system and other empirical phenomena



Social and Personal Interiors

Worldviews, languages, cultures, deep assumptions, values, ideas, beliefs, thoughts, social legitimations, conflicts, power and exploitation, fundamental questions of meaning, purpose

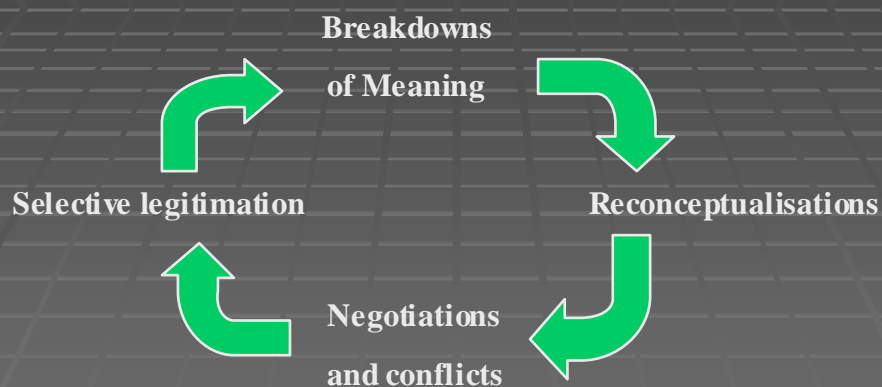
Invisible world



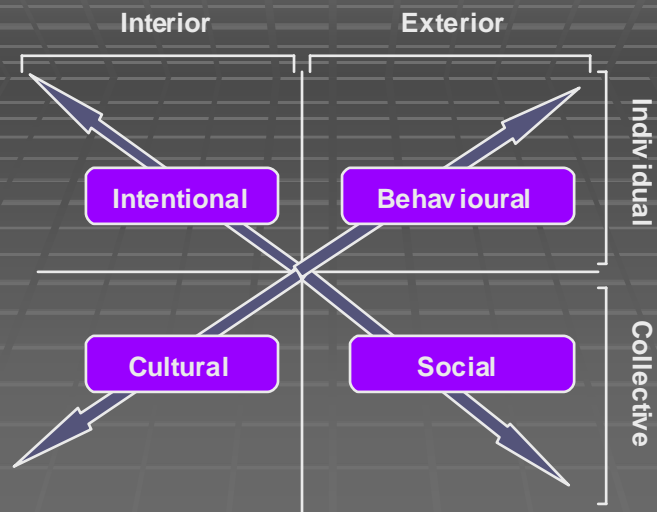
Layered Analysis

Litany	Quantitative trends, problems Often presented by news media
Social Causes	Economic, cultural, political and historical factors Technical explanations and academic analysis
Worldview	Discerning deeper assumptions behind the issue
Myth/metaphor	Deep stories, unconscious, emotive dimensions of the problem

Basic Model of the T-Cycle



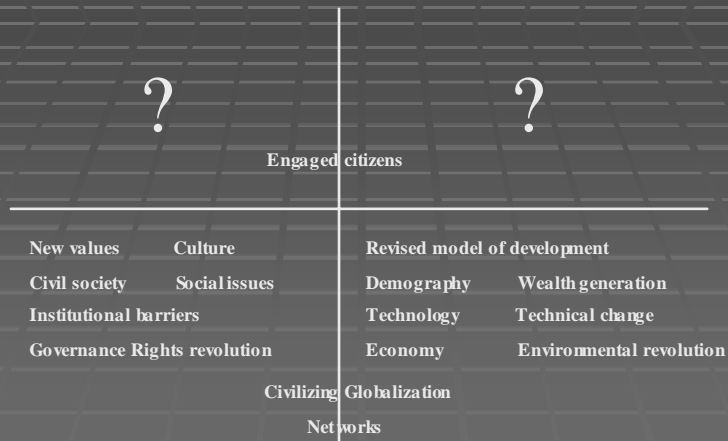
The Four Quadrants



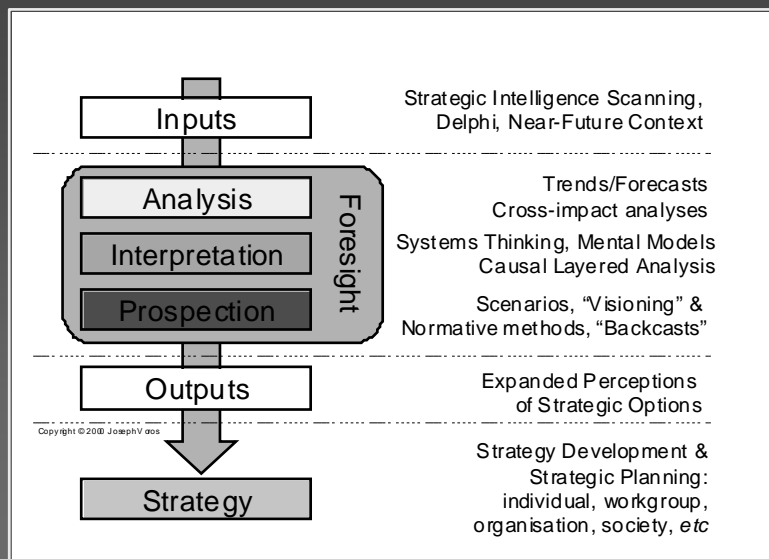
Methods of Enquiry

Introspection	Empiricism
Psychology	Behaviourism
Phenomenology	Positivism
Hermeneutics	Ecological sciences
Collaborative enquiry	Geography
Action research	Systems theory
Anthropology	Structural functionalism

Four Quadrant Analysis of the Great Transition (Raskin)



Foresight framework



Source: Joe Voros

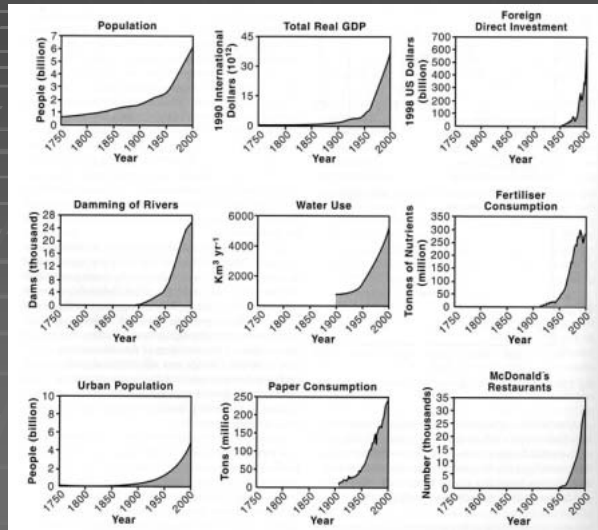
3: The Story That Connects

Global Change/Earth System



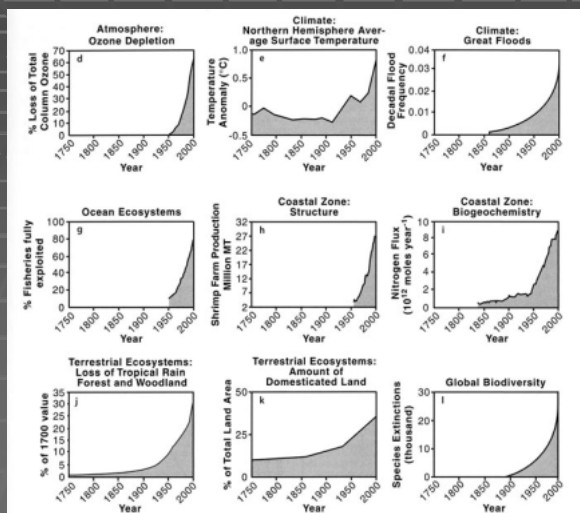
- The impact of human activities on the global atmosphere is unmistakable and profound
- The last 50 years have without doubt seen the most rapid transformation of the human relationship with the natural world in the history of humankind

Human Change/Earth System



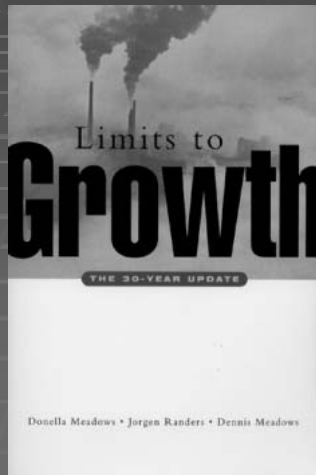
Steffan, W. et al
*Earth Change and
 the Global System*,
 Berlin, 2004

Earth System Change



Steffan, W. et al
*Earth Change and
 the Global System*,
 Berlin, 2004

Long Term Solutions



- Slow and stop growth in capital and population
- Reduce use of energy and raw materials
- Conserve sources and sinks
- Prevent and reverse erosion
- *Improve signals, look further ahead*

Understanding the Transition: Physicians of Planet Earth

- Rachael Carson: *Silent Spring* 1962
- Paul Ehrlich: *The Population Bomb* 1968
- Meadows: *Limits to Growth* 1972, 1992, 2004
- H Henderson: *Politics of Solar Age* 1981
- T Flannery: *The Future Eaters* 1994
- J R Saul: *The Unconscious Civilisation* 1997
- E O Wilson: *The Future of Life* 2002
- J Diamond: *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Succeed or Fail* 2005

4: The Social Challenge

Why are the 'Physicians' Ignored?

- Implicit expectation of continuity
- Denial, avoidance, repression
- Sensate dominance (75%) over intuitives (25%)
- Lack of systems awareness
- Market ideology (invisible hand)
- Politically difficult to admit systemic problems - risk of 'undermining 'confidence'
- Unquestioned cultural assumptions
- Lack of social investment in applied foresight



EO Wilson: The Future as a 'Bottleneck'

We have entered the Century of the Environment, in which the immediate future is usefully conceived as a bottleneck. Science and technology, combined with a lack of self understanding and a Paleolithic obstinacy, brought us to where we are today. Now **science and technology**, combined with **foresight and moral courage**, must see us through the bottleneck and out.

EO Wilson, The Future of Life, 2002, P 23

Three Ways to Respond

- deny, disguise or confuse the signals;
- respond by alleviating the pressures through technological fixes; or
- work on underlying causes and change the structure of the system

Meadows, Limits to Growth: 30 Year Update, 2004

Informing the Nation?

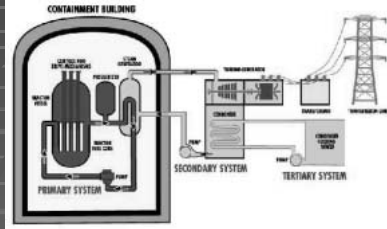


Fallacies of *Wish Magazine*

- Published monthly
- Very high-end ads, marketing
- Closed shop: 'unsolicited ms not considered'
- Budget: >\$2 million pa?
- Overt purpose: stimulate growth and affluent consumption, desire for 'more'
- Worldview: market oriented, cornucopian, materialist
- Role: business as usual
- Dysfunction: works *against* shared human interests



Technical Fads & Fixes



5: Strategic Foresight / Social Foresight

Strategic Foresight

The ability to create and maintain high-quality, coherent and functional forward views and to use the insights arising in organisationally useful ways, eg, to shape strategy, guide policy...

Rewards of Strategic Foresight

- Intrinsic benefits of foresight culture
- Reduction in 'crisis management'
- 'Early warning' provides time to strategise
- Proactive strategies become the norm
- Creation of new competitive *and* co-op space
- Foresight reduces wasted effort, time, resources
- Positive engagement with the 'social challenge'

Foresight in Australia

- Business Council of Australia
- Land & Water Australia
- Brisbane City Council
- Telstra
- Fosters
- Pratt Foundation
- SUT Foresight Program



National Foresight Strategy

Education - teacher preparation, curriculum development, in-service training, development of school-based expertise, leadership

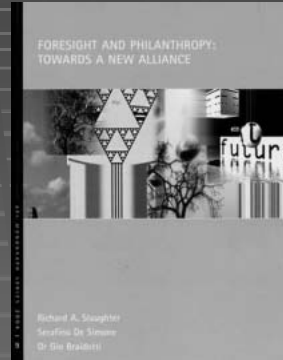
Business - shift from short to long term, revise core values, re-think economics, new strategies for new context

Government - establish national institute of foresight, support long term global view, national 21st century study

Third sector - NGOs, civil society, philanthropy

Third Sector Foresight

- Is there a demonstrable need? If so, options:
- Upgrade existing strategic capacities
- Draw on external expertise
- New capacities:
- Cross sector teams
- Network + hub model
- New alliances (eg with Philanthropy)



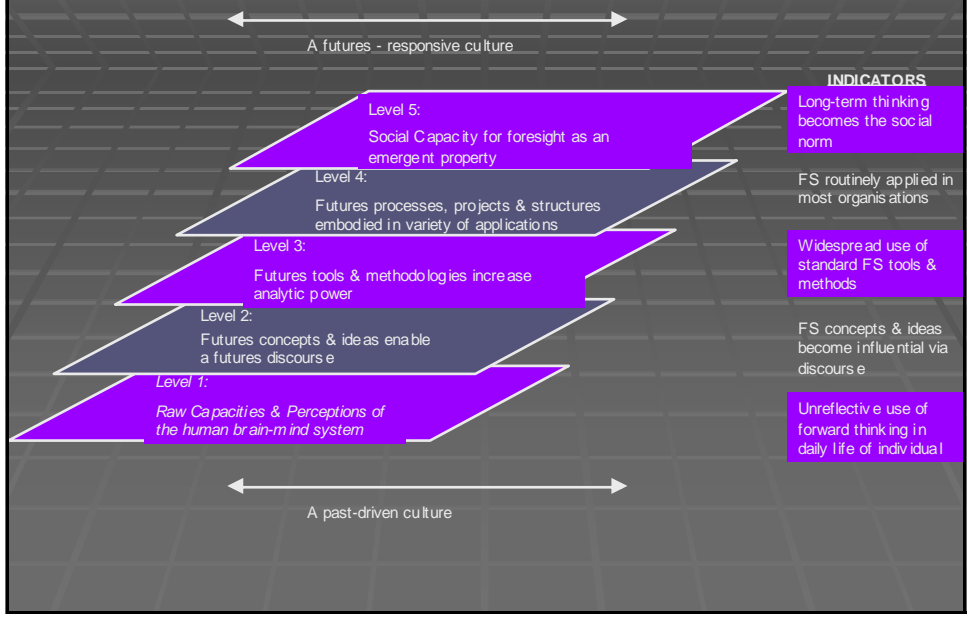
<http://www.swin.edu.au/agse/courses/foresight/index.htm>

Successful Foresight Programs

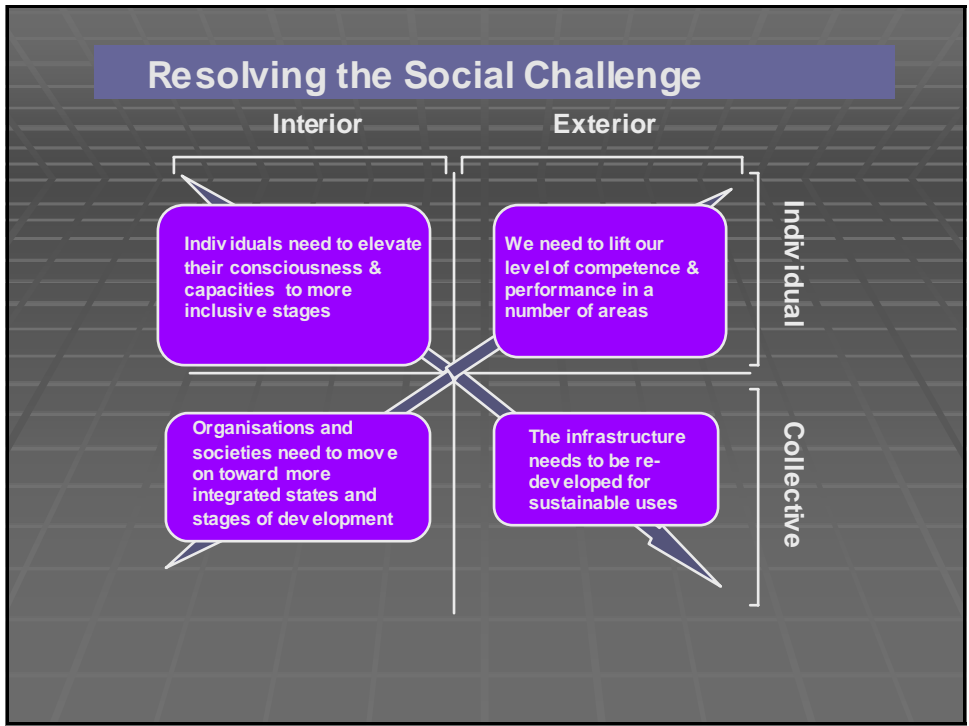
- Begin with perceived need to prepare for future challenges
- Have 'program champions' during start up
- Prove responsive to client needs
- Involve relevant participants in the process
- Experience a legitimising process

Skumanich & Silbernagel, Foresighting Around the World, 1997

Stages in Developing Social Foresight



Resolving the Social Challenge



6. Case Studies and Resources

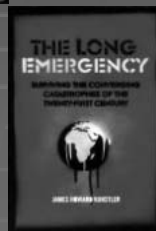
Nokia

- Finnish company - limited opportunities
- Originally based on wood products
- Established 'skunk works' to explore options
- Applied foresight methodology
- Opened out new competitive space
- Developed into a world class electronics giant
- Continuing leading edge-work to maintain position

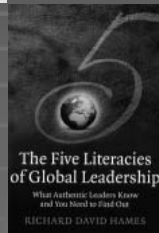
Interface, Inc

- Conventional company supplying carpets
- Decided to reconceptualise its business model
- Moved into floor covering services
- Took over entire manufacturing/re-use cycle
- Created new type of business opportunity
- Satisfied triple bottom line requirements
- Model for responsible & successful business
- CEO *Ray Anderson* on *'The Corporation'* dvd

Big Picture Sources

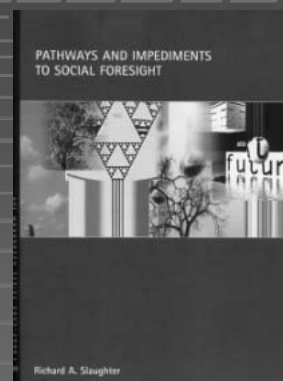


'How to' and Australian



Pathways and Impediments

- Ten monographs 2003-6
- Emergence of social foresight research
- Why is the future a 'missing dimension'?
- What's missing from futures debates?
- Shared resources for thinking ahead
- Truthfulness v loyalty
- Re-defining the problem
- Global reality check
- Ultimate source of social foresight ... us!



<http://www.swin.edu.au/agse/courses/foresight/index.htm>

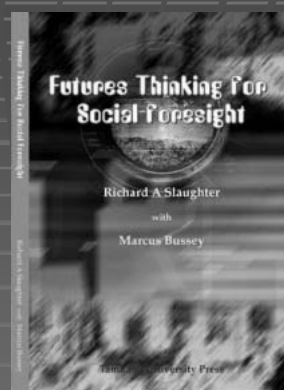
KBFS 2005 Professional Edition

- Integral and applied
- Practitioner oriented
- New voices
- Global reach
- Five volumes:
 - Foundations
 - Orgs and Practices
 - Directions, Outlooks
 - Views of Futurists
 - Synergies, Case Studies, Implementation



Education System

- Revise current admin paradigm
- Futures concepts, tools permeate curriculum
- Infuse teaching training and prof devt
- Use proven methods to establish forward views
- Integrate FS methods into admin structures
- Define new 'niches', job descriptions, roles
- Embrace 'futures' as domain of significance



Conclusion

Summing Up

Will we, as a species, pay attention and understand our time, the nature of the history we are making?

The current global outlook is certainly challenging. It can be read not as 'gloom and doom', but as providing new challenges and new sources of motivation

Can our species mature, gain in shared wisdom sufficient to mediate the God-like powers of advanced technologies, heal the environment and transcend global conflict?

Will we take responsibility for the world we are creating, acting not only for ourselves but also for future generations?

Protecting the Future



More info at:
foresightinternational.com.au



Foresight international