

# Strategic Foresight

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# The Forum is a not-for-profit organisation, committed to improving the state of the world

## Our Mission and Background



COMMITTED TO  
IMPROVING THE STATE  
OF THE WORLD

- Committed to improving the state of the world by **engaging business, political, academic and other leaders** of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.
- **Impartial:** tied to no political, partisan or national interests
- **Global:** based in Geneva, with offices in New York, Beijing and Tokyo

## Delivering unique value to the participants



### Multi-stakeholder

Brings together leaders in business with government, NGOs, international organisations, academics and civil society on a neutral platform



### Long-term issues

Creates dialogues, insights and actions on critical global issues posing a risk to business and society



### Global Reach

High-level events in all the key regions throughout the year, based on the long-standing, strong networks with the governments



### Cross-industry

Convenes CEOs and senior executives from over 1,000 global companies from 20 industries



# Foresight methods are successful when addressing long-term challenges that require a collaborative response

## Five characteristics of today's global challenges

### 1 Hard to define

- Before thinking about solutions, we need to reach consensus about what the problem is

### 2 Require new ways of thinking

- Current ways of thinking and acting are often not delivering the desired outcomes, but there is no clarity on how to stimulate fresh approaches

### 3 No-one is in charge

- Governance of complex issues is increasingly diffused, with no current entity obviously responsible for taking the lead

### 4 Transcend traditional boundaries

- As the world becomes more interconnected, issues tend to cross national borders and affect multiple industries

### 5 Need a long-term approach

- Incentive structures in both the private and public sector typically favour short-term thinking, meaning insufficient attention is paid to the potential long-term implications of actions or inaction.

# The Foresight team uses different methodologies, including scenarios, for three main purposes

Our approach is multi-method and multi-stakeholder, and has three main uses



# The team has been involved in a number of high-impact projects that have progressed strategic dialogue

Three examples of international foresight projects

## 1. Future of Mongolia



### Objective

To chart a course for Mongolia's long-term sustainable and diversified growth to 2040.

## 2. Future of Ukraine



To foster a forward looking dialogue that leads to more effective cooperation among stakeholders within Ukraine and in the EU, Russia and beyond.

## 3. Future availability of Natural Resources



To develop a more integrated, future-oriented view to shift the debate beyond a simplistic and polarized scarcity-abundance debate.

# The Forum is taking a future orientated approach to emerging technology

## The Emerging Technology project

Emerging Technologies hold the potential to significantly disrupt existing geopolitical, societal, and economic systems.

In this context, the Forum aims to:

- **Uncover emerging technology spaces**
- Identify and explore the most critical debates around the interplay between emerging technologies and **society, geopolitics and economics**
- Define and **shape desired futures** based on the outcomes of those debates

We will highlight **three areas of focus** that we are currently exploring.

Our blogs on emerging technology have been published on the Scientific American website. <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/2014/11/12/>

# Four geopolitical questions we can't avoid when we think about emerging technologies

## 1. Technology and Geopolitics

### Not so far in the future...

- Resources might no longer be linked to territories
- Thoughts might be visualized
- Leaders might be so closely monitored that their actions and decisions become near predictable

What would this really mean for our geopolitical landscape?

### Key Questions

- Will technology be the future gold?
- Will we transcend cultures?
- 1984, representation, what else?
- Will we stop talking?



# Five societal questions we can't avoid when we think about emerging technologies

## 2. Technology and Society

### Not so far in the future...

- We might live healthily well beyond 100 years
- Technology might enhance our intellectual and physical abilities, and completely control our emotions
- People might become producers of their own products

What would these changes really mean for the real 'us'?

### Key Questions

- Will perfection “on demand” turn us off?
- Will we all be the same?
- Will we give up our bodies as our last private space?
- Will computers replace our brains, hearts and souls?
- Who will write the code?

# Five economic questions we can't avoid when we think about emerging technologies

## 3. Technology and Economics

### Not so far into the future...

- manufacturing and resource exploitation might be highly localized with automated services
- employee productivity and consumer sentiment highly transparent and predictable

What would this really mean for 'us' as individuals and for our economy?

### Key Questions

- Will robots be our peers?
- Will schools become implanted?
- Will technology determine social class?
- Will prosumers oust companies?
- Will there be anything left to transport?

# WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

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