

## November 2021

We have written extensively on **COP26** from a futures perspective (our Working Paper can be downloaded [here](#)). As the conference itself comes to a close, we can now start to see beyond the headlines. A highlight was [the US/China agreement](#) to work together; a low point [the last minute intervention](#) by India and China to weaken the commitment on coal.. There were some important agreements reached on methane and on halting and reversing deforestation, while India made some challenging commitments for 2030. However, proposals on coal and fossil fuel subsidies are weak, and the \$100bn pa commitment to developing countries has been pushed back. [Climate Action Tracker](#) think that even if plans are delivered, there will still be a temperature rise of 2.4°C by the end of the century, though other analysts suggest they it could be limited to 1.8°C. We will return to review COP26 in our blog series soon.

An important UN document for implementing global futures research, “[Our Common Agenda](#)”, addresses **existential threats**:

*“An effort is warranted to better define and identify the extreme, catastrophic and existential risks that we face. .... The cost of being prepared for serious risks pales in comparison with the human and financial costs if we fail.”*

We held the first session of the second round of the **SAMI Cohort**. The Cohort is a small group of professionals working with foresight and scenario planning, who gather every couple of months to learn from each other and SAMI staffers in a mutually supportive online environment. Cohort members choose the topics for discussion. Further members are welcome. Contact [Jane.Dowsett@samiconsulting.co.uk](mailto:Jane.Dowsett@samiconsulting.co.uk) for further information.

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, SAMI ran a **free webinar** on Patricia Lustig and Gill Ringland's recently published book '[New Shoots: people making fresh choices in a changing world](#)'. The book provides evidence of the forces at work to help people make sense of these changes. It explores levers for change and includes snapshots of projects and people innovating and adapting. The book reflects the authors' positive view of people's goodwill and the opportunities that change brings. One of the participants commented: *"I try to follow SAMI's activities. I find it one of the most professional companies in the field in Europe."*

SAMI has published two new **Working Papers** based on series of blogs:

- "To Resilience and Beyond": a discussion of the characteristics of resilient organisation and how to move beyond that
- COP26: a review of the four COP goals

Find them on the [Publications and Reports](#) page of our website.

### **Executive Education**

Our online course "Understanding the Future" will be run again on 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> November. The course fee is £490 + VAT, and discounts may be available for self-funded individuals. For more information, please email us at [training@samiconsulting.co.uk](mailto:training@samiconsulting.co.uk).

A range of information on various [futures techniques](#) – the basis of the GOS Futures Toolkit - is available on our website.

### **Futures Issues**

Researchers have developed flexible [nanotech power generators](#) that mimic the way seaweed sways to efficiently convert surface and underwater waves into electricity to power marine-based internet of things devices.

Unilever's leading dishwashing liquid brand, Sunlight is piloting a version using [captured carbon emissions](#), rather than fossil fuel based inputs. The captured carbon has been drawn from industrial emissions, purified and recycled for use in products that currently depend on fossil fuel-based inputs. Unilever is planning to eliminate fossil fuel carbons from its cleaning and laundry products altogether.

New research illustrates how a drop in demand for oil and gas before 2036 will reshape the geopolitical landscape. As renewable energy becomes more efficient, cheaper and stable, fossil fuels will be hit by more price volatility. Many carbon assets, such as oil or coal reserves, will be left unburned, while machinery will also be stranded and no longer produce value for its owners. The extent of asset stranding will partly depend on low-cost OPEC producers. If they ramp up production and begin a fire-sale-style selloff, other exporters could be priced out, leading to a sudden collapse. Under this scenario [\\$11tn of global fossil fuel assets would be stranded](#).

Having a furry friend is an obvious mood booster for many; but for some, notably those with dementia, having a pet isn't a viable option. However a recent study with [robotic cats](#) placed in an adult day centre over the course of 12 visits, could help improve moods, behaviour, and cognition. The participants involved were all informed that the cat was not a live animal.

An [electromagnetic bomb](#) that generates a high-power electromagnetic pulse and/or high-power microwave pulse, is capable of severely damaging, or rendering completely useless, electronic devices within its pulse radius. Such a bomb would disable a target nation's [digital infrastructure and economy](#), causing social collapse.

[Gen Z require different management approaches](#): "They have less patience and tolerance for a demanding work environment. Many of them also have side

hustles, part-time jobs, or other hobbies on social media that keep them busy. It's rare to hire a Gen Z that's all in."

"You often don't know how to motivate them, or do the right things that press their buttons. Often traditional things like career or money aren't incentives."

## **Our Blogs**

Since our last newsletter we have published the remaining blogs in our series on the COP26 goals. With the [second goal we explored whether this was an ambition rather than a goal](#). In the third part we looked at the goal relating to financing the climate change goals and found that [achieving net-zero would indeed be 'eye-wateringly expensive'](#). Finally in part 4 of our series we examined goal 4, which is about delivering the goals, where we proposed [a set of scenarios to examine how this might work](#) in different situations. Along with these blogs we also continued our series based on Patricia Lustig and Gill Ringland's latest book '[New Shoots' with a positive view of current work to ameliorate climate change](#). We have now begun a series based on the recently published report from the European Commission on the work we, and our partners, carried out to [develop a system for using foresight to develop EU R&I policy](#).

If you'd like to receive reminders when our blogs are published, then [check the link on our website](#) or if you would like to write a blog for us, then please [contact us here](#).