

January 2022

The days are getting longer, the festivities have passed, and we hope your New Year will be successful and joyous. In the midst of geopolitical uncertainty and a continuing pandemic, we've been reminding ourselves of one of the lessons that scenario planners seem to forget – that there are opportunities as well as risks in any future. Start with the most successful global health initiative ever – from a standing start, by the end of last year, 9 billion doses of vaccine had been administered. We've had biotech as one of our megatrends for ages, and the response to the pandemic has proved we were right. From a rampant disease, to billions of effective, safe, vaccines in arms. Not enough, and not to enough people, yet, but we're on our way.

To pick only one other shining star: Sustainability is now firmly embedded. A record amount of money went into [climate technology](#). Sustainable investments have reached [\\$4 trillion](#). Business, as we said in our blogs last year, gets it. Even [COP26](#) wasn't a failure.

In spite of the uncertainties, there is much to be optimistic about – just look at [Futurecrunch](#)'s list of 99 “Good news stories you probably didn't hear about”. Join us this year as we look at both risks – and opportunities. We wish you a Happy New Year.

In our recent session of the current **SAMI Cohort** we shared our experience of the innovative Strategic Foresight Scenario Game we developed for the EC Research and Innovation Directorate, with the team able to interact with the game

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. Further members are welcome. Contact Jane.Dowsett@samiconsulting.co.uk for further information.

Patricia Lustig and Gill Ringland's new book “*New Shoots: people making fresh choices in a changing world*” is now out in paperback.

Executive Education

Our online course “Understanding the Future” will be run again on March 15th to 19th, 2022. 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. We also organise bespoke courses to suit specific clients' needs.

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

Futures Issues

A [hybrid hydrogen/battery mining truck](#) is being piloted in Limpopo, South Africa, at a platinum mine. Mining trucks are huge 220 tonne machines that can get through 134 litres

of diesel every hour. It has the potential to reduce on-site diesel emissions by up to 80% and if rolled out across its global truck fleet, the company says it will be "taking the equivalent of half a million diesel cars off the road".

China has reportedly created an [AI that can identify crimes](#) and file charges against criminals. The machine can identify and charge criminals with the Shanghai's eight most common crimes: credit card fraud, gambling, reckless driving, intentional assault, obstructing an officer, theft, fraud, and even *political dissent*. It claims to have 97% accuracy.

In another story about possible [satellite collisions](#), China has complained that its space station was in near-collisions with satellites launched by Elon Musk's SpaceX. China's space station had two "close encounters" with US satellites this year, on July 1 and October 21, according to a document submitted by China earlier this month to the UN's space agency.

[Antimicrobial resistance](#) is now a leading cause of death worldwide, killing about 3,500 people every day. That is more people than HIV/Aids or malaria. Many hundreds of thousands of deaths are occurring due to common, previously treatable infections. Will advances in RNA (eg the Covid vaccine) allied to AI as a research aid be enough to defeat it?

[Chemical pollution](#) has crossed a "planetary boundary", the point at which human-made changes to the Earth push it outside the stable environment of the last 10,000 years.

Our Blogs

In our last blogs before Christmas we [looked back at COP26](#) and discussed how the agreement might begin to shape the future. We then [looked forward to 2022](#) and explored some of the trends, the opportunities and risks that may be associated with them and how these might play out in the coming months. At the start of 2022 we have continued [our series based on the EU SAFIRE report with a look at China](#), examining the scenarios in the report and comparing them to the emerging trends from the region. Latterly we also [reviewed at the EC Strategic Foresight Report](#) and the trends identified there.

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](#).