

## F&S January 2024

The **Government Office for Science “Futures Toolkit”** will be published by GO-Science in the coming weeks. This comprehensive review and re-design of the Toolkit demonstrates SAMI’s core competence in the whole range of Futures tools and techniques. It is the first major rewrite of the Toolkit since its introduction six years ago, and we are very proud to have been able to bring new thinking and a new approach to this key work in Futures practice.

We are publishing a series of excerpts from SAMI Principal Garry Honey’s book **“Navigating Uncertainty”** aimed at Board members treating risk as a set of strategic options, as distinct from managing risk as a control function. Gary also offers a short training course on the topic.

At this time of year, we are deluged with “Views on 2024” from various bodies:

- Eurasia Groups top global risks - [Eurasia Group’s Top Global Risks 2024 - GZERO Media](#); it interestingly lists “red herrings” – things much talked about they don’t think will happen
- The Wharton School on [AI in 2024](#)
- NESTA [futures signals for 2024](#)
- 6 [Medical trends for 2024](#)

You will doubtless have seen more. The omissions are as interesting as the overlaps, as are those written by – or for? – optimists and pessimists. Whilst futurists do not tend to work on 1 year horizons, preferring to go out 5, 10 or even fifty years, these lists reflect not only current concerns, but also the “pockets of the future in the present” that are so useful in thinking about the medium term. We wouldn’t endorse one over the other – you may find all, or none, of them useful in your own work. What we do, though, is recommend you review them. They may be useful in your own horizon scanning.

### Executive Education

We will be running our online course **“Understanding the Future”** again on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February. The course fee is £490 + VAT - discounts may be available for self-funded individuals. Take a look at our [training brochure](#) for more details. We also organise bespoke courses to suit specific clients’ needs.

We are developing new training modules in the areas of turning scenarios into action, Adaptive Plans (contingency planning) and risk and uncertainty. If you interested in any of these, please do get in touch.

SAMI Principal Garry Honey also offers a course on **“Navigating Uncertainty”** aimed at governing boards & senior leadership teams. Check his [current blog](#) series to get an idea of his thinking and approaches.

For more information, please email [training@samiconsulting.co.uk](mailto:training@samiconsulting.co.uk).

## Futures Issues

[China's population](#) has shrunk for the second year in a row, falling by 2 million in 2023. Some forecast a decline from the present 1.4 billion to just 525 million by 2100. By 2100 every 100 Chinese of traditional working-age will have to support 137 elderly Chinese, up from just 21 at present.

In the US the number of [Americans aged over 100](#) is forecast to rise from 100,000 to about 420,000 by 2054. This pattern is repeated around the developed world, with Japan having as many as 40 centenarians per 10,000 people in 2054.

2023 was [the planet's warmest year](#) on record, by a record-setting margin of 0.15 of a degree C. There is a one-in-three chance that 2024 will be warmer than 2023, and a 99% chance that 2024 will rank among the top five warmest years.

Under a high emissions scenario [sea level rises](#) could cause 872 billion euros (1.26%) of combined economic losses across the UK and EU by 2100, compared to a scenario of no sea level rises. The majority of economic losses—up to 21% regional gross domestic product (GDP) by 2100—is concentrated in coastal regions such as Veneto and Emilia-Romagna in Italy

A [battery-free, self-powered sensor](#) that can harvest energy from its environment could be used in hard-to-reach places, like inside the inner workings of a ship's engine. The sensor harvests energy from magnetic fields in the open air and could simply be clipped around any wire that carries electricity.

[Artificial plants](#) can collect kinetic energy from both the wind and raindrops.

The WHO has identified 5 areas [where Large Language Models could have benefits in healthcare](#). These include diagnosis and research, and self-guided investigation of symptoms. But it also has produced guidance on the avoidance of risks of using LLMs, calling for transparent policies and liability rules.

A survey of patients showed that ChatGPT responses to queries were preferred over physician responses and [rated significantly higher for both quality and empathy](#).

## Our Blogs

Recently our blogs have included a look at [possible trends for 2024](#) and introduced a book for leaders outlining [ways of managing risk and uncertainty](#).