

# MAPPING STRATEGIC FORESIGHT REPORTING AROUND THE WORLD



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# Mapping Strategic Foresight Reporting Around the World

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## What is Strategic Foresight?

As global politics, economics, and society become increasingly interconnected, uncertainties about the future grow. Traditional methods of planning, which often rely on linear projections based on past and present trends, struggle to keep pace with these rapid changes. This is where strategic foresight comes into play. As outlined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), [strategic foresight](#) is a structured and systematic approach that explores plausible futures to help anticipate and better prepare for change. It does not aim to predict a single future but instead considers multiple potential outcomes, allowing policymakers and organizations to make more informed decisions.

Unlike [forecasting](#), which is used to predict events with a high degree of accuracy based on established data trends, strategic foresight explores a broader range of scenarios that may arise in situations with high uncertainty. By examining these varied possibilities, strategic foresight helps organizations and governments identify opportunities, challenges, risks, and potential disruptions that could shape the future.

## History of Strategic Foresight<sup>1</sup>

The origins of strategic foresight can be traced back to the 1950s, at the [RAND](#) Corporation, a global policy think tank established by the US Air Force after World War II. One of the pioneers of this approach was [Herman Kahn](#), who developed a strategic foresight tool known as scenario planning. In an era marked by the uncertainties of nuclear warfare, Kahn emphasized the importance of considering multiple imagined futures to guide military strategy. His work during the Cold War laid the groundwork for the use of strategic foresight in complex, high-stakes environments.

In 1961, Kahn left RAND to establish the [Hudson Institute](#), where he continued to refine his ideas. It was during this time that he introduced strategic foresight to Pierre Wack, an executive at Royal Dutch Shell. In the early 1970s, Wack applied strategic foresight in the private sector, anticipating potential disruptions in the global oil market. By considering a scenario in which the Middle East became a dominant oil producer, [Shell prepared for an oil supply crisis](#) long before it occurred. When the oil crisis of 1972 hit, Shell was the only major oil company that had not overextended itself, thanks to its strategic foresight.

Despite these early successes, it was not until the 1990s that strategic foresight began to gain traction in academic circles. Richard Slaughter, a scholar in future studies, provided a formal definition of strategic foresight in his 1997 work, [Developing and Applying Strategic Foresight](#). Slaughter's contributions were significant, as he transformed the concept from a loosely defined practice into a practical tool that could be systematically applied in decision-making processes within organizations and the public sector.

Strategic foresight has evolved from a niche military strategy into a crucial component of modern organizational and [governmental planning](#). Encouraging a systematic exploration of multiple plausible futures, these strategic foresight reports help decision-makers navigate uncertainty and better prepare for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As our world continues to become more complex and interconnected, the importance of strategic foresight will only continue to increase, offering a valuable framework for shaping resilient and adaptable strategies for the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Information provided in this section has been retrieved from the following sources: Hines, Andy "When Did It Start? Origin of the Foresight Field." *World Futures Review* 12, no. 1 (March 1, 2020) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1946756719889053> and The Decision Lab. "Strategic Foresight." Accessed December 15, 2024. <https://thedecisionlab.com/reference-guide/economics/strategic-foresight>.

## Strategic Foresight Reports

Despite its increasing significance, many regions around the world lack comprehensive public sector strategic foresight reports that governments and citizens can depend on. Our research highlights that, particularly in the Global South, the strategic foresight field largely leans on contributions from NGOs and private sector entities rather than governmental or public sector organizations. Wherever available, such reports often give rise to important conversations, enabling professionals in various fields and ordinary citizens to use them for a range of purposes. While private sector reports do offer valuable insights, public sector reports are uniquely significant in that they signify a government or state actor's commitment to engaging with the reports' findings. The United States, through the National Intelligence Council (NIC) and its quadrennial reports, provides one of the most robust publicly available strategic foresight reports issued by a government. However, even the findings/warnings of this report can be largely overlooked by government actors and go unnoticed by the public, as was the case with the dangers of a global pandemic, which [the report foresaw and warned about](#) already in its 2004 edition.

Through our mapping exercise we identified several forecasting reports produced in varied contexts. Some reports include extensive analyses and foresight concerning major global trends. Other reports focus on specific trends relevant to a certain country or industry. The forecasting reports also vary according to who publishes them, be it governments themselves, non-profit organizations somewhat connected to governments or fully independent, regional or international organizations or for-profit organizations, either local or international.

### Foreshadowing the Future: Strategic Foresight for the World?

As the world navigates through rapid technological advancements, geopolitical shifts, unprecedented global challenges, and an era of unknowns, the need for robust global foresight reporting has never been more critical. While the foresight industry varies from country to country and NGO to NGO, a standardized and functional systematic examination of potential future scenarios would enable policymakers, civil society, industries, and people all around the world to anticipate and prepare for potential occurrences. The United Nations has the potential to utilize its global reach and expertise to help standardize strategic foresight reporting and foster global collaboration among all the existing foresight mechanisms.

The UN has long been at the forefront of addressing global issues. With the recent addition of the [UN Futures Lab](#), it stands a chance to get ahead of global developments and anticipate crises before they arise. Born out of Secretary-General António Guterres' *Our Common Agenda* ([OCA](#)) report of September 2021, the UN Futures Lab is a network that empowers a more resilient and anticipatory UN. In December 2023, the Lab published the "[UN Strategic Foresight Guide](#)" to explain key concepts of strategic foresight, provide an overview of foresight tools, and show how to frame and design foresight initiatives. With this groundwork and its mission to support the development of foresight capabilities, the UN can (and should) facilitate the creation of standardized methodologies, frameworks, and standards to ensure reliable and timely reporting across sectors and regions that are missing strategic foresight reports. With the UN's help, member states and non-state actors alike can benefit from the UN's extensive network and engage in knowledge sharing and capacity building; bridging the gap between developed and developing countries in their ability to anticipate and respond to future scenarios. The UN's role in foresight reporting will be critical to fostering a world that is better equipped to navigate the uncertainties of the future and our common agenda.

The rest of this paper is dedicated to an initial mapping of strategic foresight reporting around the world.

## AN OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC FORESIGHT REPORTING AROUND THE WORLD

(list not exhaustive)

### THE AMERICAS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World</a> (Click for Link)				
Author / Agency:	National Intelligence Council				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Yes				
Presented to:	Incoming US Presidential Administration				
Periodicity:	Every four years, aligned with one presidential term				
Most recent issue date:	March, 2021				
Key issue areas covered:	US global strategic interests	Environment	Economy	Technology	Regional forecasts
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:	<p>The National Intelligence Council (NIC), part of the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), provides strategic analysis and forecasts for senior policymakers. It produces the Global Trends reports every four years in collaboration with government agencies, academia, and the private sector. Published since 1997, the Global Trends Report is a key foresight tool for the US government, analyzing trends that impact US global interests. Aligned with each US Presidential term, it offers strategic insights into the environment, economy, technology, and global regions. The 2017 edition, "Global Trends 2035: Paradox of Progress," warned of pandemic risks and economic threats. The most recent report, "Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World," was published in 2021.</p>				

CANADA					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Disruptions on the Horizon - 2024 Report</a>				
Author / Agency:	Policy Horizons Canada				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Yes				
Presented to:	Government of Canada				
Periodicity:	NA				
Most recent issue date:	Spring, 2024				
Key issue areas covered:	Canadian Society	Environment	Economy	Healthcare	Geopolitics
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:	<p>Policy Horizons Canada is the Government of Canada's center for foresight. Their role is to assist the government in developing future-oriented policies and programs that are prepared for disruptive changes. They conduct strategic foresight on various issues to inform public servants about the possible public policy implications over the next 10-15 years.</p>				

COLOMBIA					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Colombia Risk Analysis</a>				
Author / Agency:	Colombia Risk Analysis				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	No				
Presented to:	N/A				
Periodicity:	Monthly				

Most recent issue date:	June 2024				
Key issue areas covered:	Economy	Crime and Safety	Technology	Elections	China
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

<b>LATIN AMERICA (REGIONAL REPORT)</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Riesgo Político América Latina</a>				
Author / Agency:	Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	No				
Presented to:	N/A				
Periodicity:	Annual				
Most recent issue date:	2024				
Key issue areas covered:	Crime and Safety	Rule of Law	Economy	Environment	Migration
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

## EUROPE

<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Global Strategic Trends: The Future Starts Today</a>				
Author / Agency:	Ministry of Defence				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Yes				
Presented to:	Government of the United Kingdom				
Periodicity:	N/A				
Most recent issue date:	2 October 2018				
Key issue areas covered:	Environment and Resources	Human Development	Economy, Industry, and Information	Governance and Law	Conflict and Security
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

<b>RUSSIA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">RIAC Forecast 2019–2024</a>				
Author / Agency:	Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC)				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	N/A				
Presented to:					
Periodicity:	Every 5 years				
Most recent issue date:	2019				
Key issue areas covered:	Global Governance	Integration Processes and Policies			
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:	In this project, RIAC gathered the opinions of Russian experts on Russia's foreign policy regarding individual countries, the situation in individual regions, and the specifics of the development of the key functional areas in international relations.				



## AFRICA

AFRICA/ISLAMIC WORLD					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Study on the possible futures of the African continent</a>				
Author / Agency:	Islamic World Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	n/a				
Most recent issue date:	2023				
Key issue areas covered:	Education	science technology and Innovation			
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

CAMEROON					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Cameroun Vision 2035</a>				
Author / Agency:	Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	n/a				
Most recent issue date:	2009				
Key issue areas covered:	wealth distribution	National unity and democratization	economic growth	urban development	env. protection
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

MALI					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Paths of the Future: Scenarios for Mali 2030</a>				
Author / Agency:	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Mali				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	n/a				
Most recent issue date:	2017				
Key issue areas covered:	permanent crisis	chaos			
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

CHAD					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Vision 2030 - The Chad We Want</a>				
Author / Agency:	Prime Minister Ministry of the Economy and Development Planning				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	President of the Republic of Chad				
Periodicity:	n/a				

Most recent issue date:	2017				
Key issue areas covered:	the rule of law	unity	competitive economy		
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

<b>RWANDA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Vision 2050</a>				
Author / Agency:	Republic of Rwanda				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	n/a				
Most recent issue date:	2020				
Key issue areas covered:	Human Development	Competitiveness and Integration	Agriculture for Wealth Creation	Urbanization and Agglomeration	Accountable and Capable State Institutions
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

<b>AFRICA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Foresight Africa 2024</a>				
Author / Agency:	Brookings				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	yearly				
Most recent issue date:	2024				
Key issue areas covered:	climate change	trade and regional integration	digital economy	Governance	Entrepreneurship and structural transformation
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

<b>NORTH AFRICA AND SAHEL REGION</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Strategic Foresight Analysis - Regional Perspectives Report on North Africa and the Sahel</a>				
Author / Agency:	NATO / Framework for Future Alliance Operations (FFAO)				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a				
Presented to:	n/a				
Periodicity:	n/a				
Most recent issue date:	2023				
Key issue areas covered:	economic	political	social	technological	
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	n/a				
Background:	n/a				

## ASIA

SINGAPORE					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Foresight</a>				
Author / Agency:	Centre for Strategic Futures, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Set up by Prime Minister's Office				
Presented to:	Prime Minister				
Periodicity:	Every two years, the last was in 2024				
Most recent issue date:	22 August 2024				
Key issue areas covered:	Singapore's Changing Society	Changing Governance	Changing Global Order	Economic Uncertainty	Innovation in Adversity
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:	In 2009, the Centre for Strategic Futures (CSF) was established as a futures think tank within the Strategic Policy Office to focus on issues that may be blind-spot areas, pursue open-ended long-term futures research, and experiment with new foresight methodologies. On 1 July 2015, CSF became part of the new Strategy Group in the Prime Minister's Office, which was set up to focus on whole-of-government strategic planning and prioritization, whole-of-government coordination and development and to incubate and catalyze new capabilities in the Singapore Public Service. <i>Foresight</i> is the Centre for Strategic Futures' biennial publication covering research into international megatrends and emerging issues.				

UAE							
Main Foresight Report							
Full title:	<a href="#">Future Foresights</a>						
Author / Agency:	Dubai Future Foundation						
Legislative / Executive mandate:	N/A - it is by Dubai, not UAE						
Presented to:	-						
Periodicity:	-						
Most recent issue date:	2020						
Key issue areas covered:	Space	Water	Tech	Transport	Health	Education	Energy
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:							
Background:	From brain-computer interfaces to the latest in battery technology, the <i>Future Foresights</i> report covers tech trends that could affect people and the cities they inhabit worldwide over the next 20 to 30 years. It lends special focus to how these trends might impact the seven sectors laid out in the UAE's National Innovation Strategy. The "Future Foresights" report, published by the Dubai Future Foundation, is a complement to the "State of the Future" Report, released at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2017.						

QATAR					
Main Foresight Report					
Full title:	<a href="#">Future of International Cooperation Report 2023</a>				
Author / Agency:	Doha Forum, The Stimson Center, and the Global Institute for Strategic Research				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	N/A				
Presented to:	Public				
Periodicity:	Annual				
Most recent issue date:	2023				
Key issue areas covered:	AI and Cybergovernance	Peacebuilding Innovations	Advancing SDG Summit		
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	The Doha Forum 2023				

<b>Background:</b>	Under the banner of “Diplomacy, Dialogue, and Diversity,” Doha Forum has promoted for more than two decades a spirited and open interchange of ideas to innovate and improve international policy-making that drives action-oriented networks. Through <i>this Future of International Cooperation Report 2023 (FIC’23)</i> , Doha Forum, Stimson Center, and Global Institute for Strategic Research seek to better inform Forum participants and concerned citizens worldwide, by addressing vital dimensions of global and regional cooperation alongside concrete recommendations for strengthening collective action in meeting major challenges, threats, and opportunities of the present era.
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<b>MALAYSIA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
<b>Full title:</b>	<a href="#">Envisioning Malaysia 2050: A Foresight Narrative</a>				
<b>Author / Agency:</b>	Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM)				
<b>Legislative / Executive mandate:</b>	N/A				
<b>Presented to:</b>					
<b>Periodicity:</b>					
<b>Most recent issue date:</b>	2017				
<b>Key issue areas covered:</b>	Demographic and Social Change	Disruptive Technology	A Greater Digital Divide	Shift in Global Power	Sustainability
<b>Significant follow-up actions/reactions:</b>					
<b>Background:</b>	<i>Envisioning Malaysia 2050: A Foresight Narrative</i> is the culmination of two years of study carried out by ASM as the pioneer of the Malaysian Foresight Alliance to guide Malaysia towards becoming a Progressive Malaysia in the year 2050. The aim of this flagship study is to look at the big picture of the future we desire and share insights and expert knowledge towards building a strategic vision for Malaysia towards 2050.				

<b>INDIA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
<b>Full title:</b>	<a href="#">Big Questions of Our Time</a>				
<b>Author / Agency:</b>	Strategic Foresight Group				
<b>Legislative / Executive mandate:</b>	n/a non-government think tank				
<b>Presented to:</b>	public				
<b>Periodicity:</b>	only once				
<b>Most recent issue date:</b>	2016				
<b>Key issue areas covered:</b>	Power and Principles	War and Peace	Limits to Democracy	Human Dignity	Future Shock
<b>Significant follow-up actions/reactions:</b>					
<b>Background:</b>	The contributions to this publication have come from 89 thought leaders in 44 countries. Thinking from the East and West, South and North has been blended to let the world speak in a participatory and inclusive manner about our emerging future.				

<b>JAPAN</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
<b>Full title:</b>	<a href="#">11th Science and Technology Foresight Survey S&amp;T Foresight 2019</a>				
<b>Author / Agency:</b>	National Institute of Science and Technology Policy, Science and Technology Foresight Center				
<b>Legislative / Executive mandate:</b>	N/A				
<b>Presented to:</b>					
<b>Periodicity:</b>	Every five years				
<b>Most recent issue date:</b>	2019				
<b>Key issue areas covered:</b>	Technology	Science			

Significant follow-up actions/reactions:	
Background:	The purpose of this study is to provide basic information that contributes to the consideration in science and technology innovation policies and strategies, including the 6th Science and Technology Basic Plan. The prospective period is about 30 years until 2050, and the target year is 2040. First, the trends and signs of change in science and technology and society were obtained, and then the future image of society (the desired future image) and the future image of science and technology (the medium- and long-term perspective of science and technology development) were separately examined. Finally, these trends and images were integrated in order to examine the future images of society through the development of science and technology.

## OCEANIA

<b>AUSTRALIA</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Our Future World: Global Megatrends Impacting the Way We Live Over Coming Decades</a>				
Author / Agency:	Australia's National Science Agency				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Yes				
Presented to:	Government of Australia, Australian Industry and Non-Profit				
Periodicity:					
Most recent issue date:	2022				
Key issue areas covered:	Environment	Public Health	Technology and AI	Peace and Conflict	Security and Defense
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">Navigating a Shifting World</a>				
Author / Agency:	New Zealand Foreign Affairs & Trade				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	Yes				
Presented to:	Government of New Zealand				
Periodicity:					
Most recent issue date:	June 2023				
Key issue areas covered:	Environment	Indo-Pacific geopolitics	Demographics	NZ Foreign Relations	Peace and Conflict
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

<b>PACIFIC ISLANDS (REGIONAL REPORT)</b>					
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>					
Full title:	<a href="#">2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent</a>				
Author / Agency:	Pacific Islands Forum				
Legislative / Executive mandate:	The Forum's General Assembly				
Presented to:	Pacific Island Governments				
Periodicity:	NA				
Most recent issue date:	2022				
Key issue areas covered:	Environment	Technology	Peace and Security	Regionalism	Human Development
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:					
Background:					

**OTHERS**

<b>WORLD</b>				
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>				
Full title:	<a href="#">2024 Global Forecast A World Dividing</a>			
Author / Agency:	CSIS			
Legislative / Executive mandate:				
Periodicity:	yearly			
Most recent issue date:	2024			
Key issue areas covered:	China	tech race	conflicts	
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:				
Background:				

<b>WORLD</b>				
<b>Main Foresight Report</b>				
Full title:	<a href="#">State of the Future 20.0</a>			
Author / Agency:	Millennium Project			
Legislative / Executive mandate:	n/a			
Periodicity:	annual			
Most recent issue date:				
Key issue areas covered:				
Significant follow-up actions/reactions:				
Background:				



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