



STRATEGIC FORESIGHT FOR BETTER POLICIES

Anticipatory Governance for Iceland

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Strategic Foresight at the OECD

Mission: strengthen capacity to anticipate and prepare for emerging policy issues

- across the OECD
- in national governments, and
- in global policy dialogue

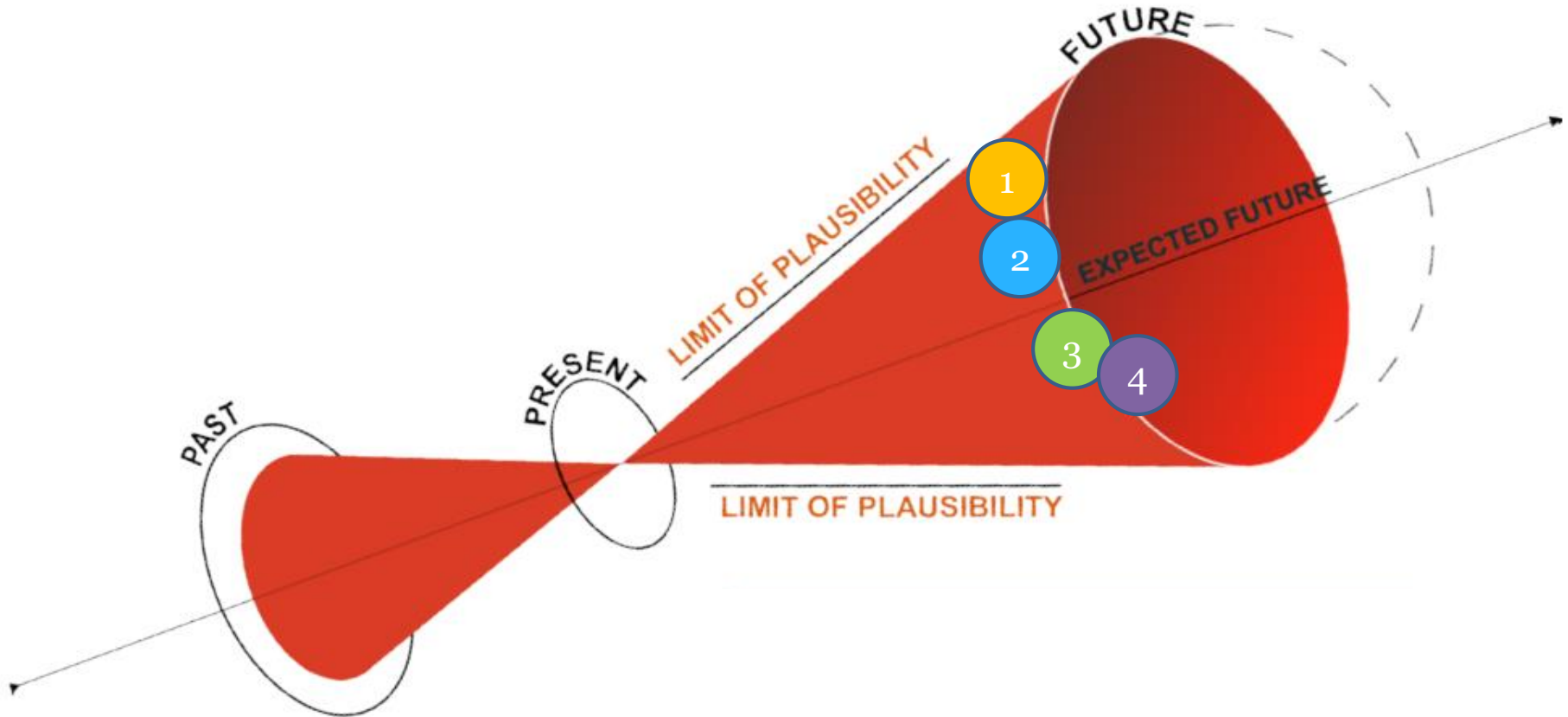


What is Strategic Foresight?

- ✓ An approach to think systematically about the future to inform decision making
- ✗ Not predictions or forecasts
- ✓ Exploring and preparing for alternative plausible futures



Looking beyond the “expected future”



Source:

<http://www.horizons.gc.ca/eng/content/module-1-introduction-foresight-presentation>



Why foresight?

- Identifying new opportunities and challenges
- ‘Future-proofing’



Why foresight now?

In a time of rapid change and rising uncertainty, responsible policy-making requires considering and preparing for the unexpected



DRAFT SCENARIOS FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



Going Digital Scenarios

- “What if” digital transformation happened faster than expected?
 - Critical uncertainties
 - Alternative plausible scenarios
- Later, cross-impact with other megatrends (demography, environment) and policy areas



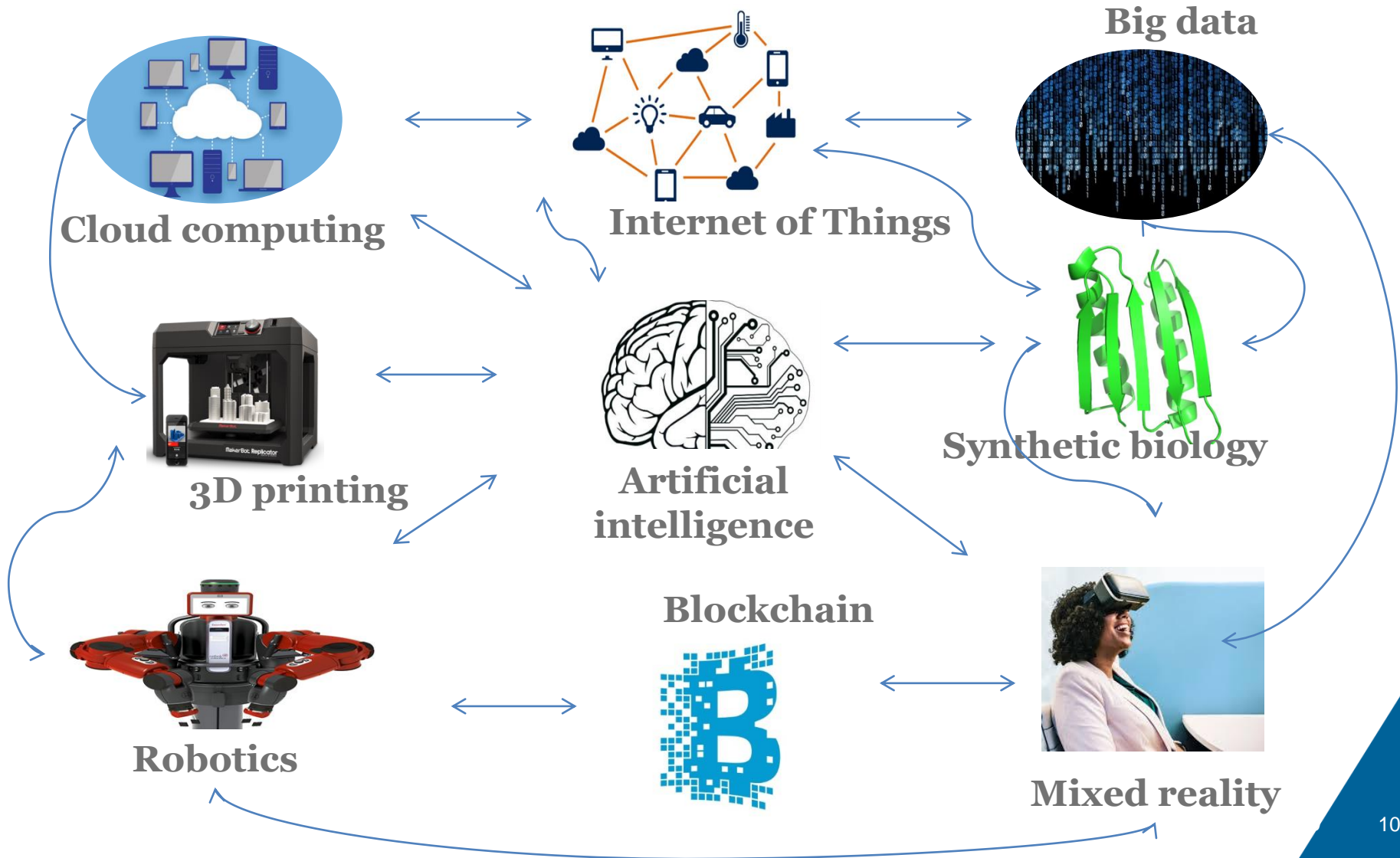
Scenarios



- A way of presenting a range of distinct, plausible, provocative alternative futures to challenge assumptions and expectations



Foundations of “hyper-digital” futures in 2030





What if digital transformation happened faster than expected?

Plausible common elements of ‘hyper-digital’ futures in 2030-35:

- Universal connectivity
- Digital business models disrupting most industries
- Physical production mostly automated
- Work increasingly virtual
- Global trade mostly in digital files



Some key critical uncertainties about the future in 2030

- **Who controls the data**
 - Individuals
 - Governments
 - Corporations
 - Nobody?
- **Market structure**
 - a few global tech platforms
 - continuous decentralised disruption?
- **International trade**
 - digital free trade
 - new frontiers in cyberspace?
- **Internet**
 - globally integrated
 - national/regional blocks?
- **Technological unemployment**
 - low
 - high?
- **Nature of work**
 - More self-employment and gig-work?
- **Demand for skills**
 - High cognitive skills needed less or more?



Some key critical uncertainties about the future in 2030 (cont.)

- **Well-Being:**
 - Less or more inequality?
 - Better or worse mental health and long-term happiness?
- **Security and Privacy:**
 - Low or high cyber risk?
 - The end of privacy?
- **Trust and cohesion:**
 - End of truth?
 - Polarisation?
- **Governance**
 - What role for governments in the global digital economy?
 - What new forms of global governance could emerge?
- **Other**
 - ?



Draft Scenarios

Scenario 1 **iChoose**



Empowered individuals in a multilateral world.

Scenario 2 **Platform Governments**



States as platforms. Splinternet.

Scenario 3 **Corporate Connectors**



Global tech platforms are the new world order.

Scenario 4 **Artificial Invisible Hands**



AI-enabled abundance and panopticon.



Building Anticipatory Governance

- If we take seriously the possibility that the world is entering a period of increasingly rapid change and high uncertainty, what changes might be needed to public policy-making in Iceland?



Anticipatory Governance – Some Key Potential System Components

- High level demand
- Regular foresight studies
- Central foresight unit (or committee)
 - Cross-cutting studies
 - Builds capacity
- Foresight units/champions in ministries
- Societal engagement
- Integration in policy-making process



THANK YOU

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