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WHAT GOVERNANCE FOR A WORLD IN TRANSITION ?

STRATEGIC REPORT 2024-2025

WHAT GOVERNANCE FOR A WORLD IN TRANSITION ?

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Under the direction of Mr. Mohammed Tawfik MOULINE
General Director of the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies

Report finalized in December 2024

Reading Guide

In 2023, IRES (Royal Institute for Strategic Studies) launched a strategic intelligence platform combining its core publications with in-depth analysis of its strategic reports. The biannual IRES Strategic Report is now a hybrid publication, comprising hardcopy and online Synthesis Report alongside digital Wikis.

This serves three primary objectives :

- Provide decision-makers with quick access to key analyses and proposals from the strategic report and supporting documents.
- Enable those seeking more detailed information (students, researchers, professionals, etc.) to access a broad collection of digital datasets and analyses, available on a dedicated platform (IIP).
- Treat issues with a long-term perspective, continuously updating content on the IRES website.

Terms followed by * are defined in the online lexicon.

Quick Reading Guide :

- **Gold**: chapter, section and subsection titles.
- **Bold black**: salient points and keywords.



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Foreword

The world faces sweeping transformations, sketching out a future radically different from the present. At the global level, the world has moved from volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) to vulnerable, uncertain, critical and artificial (VUCA²).

At a geopolitical level, a new order is in the making, to replace the one instituted after World War Two, and admittedly partially offset growing fragmentation on the global stage.

Climate change, together with accelerated degradation of the biosphere, intensify the frequency and scale of ecological crises, potentially rendering the planet unlivable.

On the economic front, ultraliberal capitalism, predator of scarce natural resources, exacerbates social inequalities. The advent of the digital economy, driven by technological advances in robotization and artificial intelligence, amplifies the digital divide while reshaping societal structures.

These complex changes challenge the foundations of our societies, shaking up traditional governance practices and imposing new forms of governance that are more in tune with current and future challenges.

Faced with these challenges, it is essential to build a new kind of governance at international level, which requires in-depth insight into new global dynamics and interconnecting economic, ecological, social and technological systems, to enable robust and adaptable governance mechanisms.

This process should recognize that, unlike traditional societies with risks primarily of natural origin, today's societies face risks arising from human activity that are often invisible, systemic and global. New forms of governance should therefore incorporate the following :

- Anticipation of existential risks*- the rise of which has irreversible consequences with the breaching of planetary boundaries, in the vital areas such as global warming, biodiversity erosion, disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, land-use changes, ocean acidification, etc... with the possibility of civilizational collapse.

To avert a drift towards chaos and extreme disorganization, three key areas urgently require renewed global governance, specifically the climate-resources-energy nexus and the noosphere – i.e. the realm of human thought - and the virtual world, with an ever more tangible impact on the physical world.

- The management of global public goods*, as defined by the United Nations Development Programme, whether natural (the oceans, the ozone layer, climate stability, outer space, biodiversity, etc.), man-made (scientific knowledge, the legal system, etc.) or the result of global policies (peacekeeping, the fight against terrorism, financial stability and public health). This management should reinforce collective awareness of our common belonging to a single planet.
- The need for a robust framework to resolve complex problems, inherently multi-dimensional, interdependent, fluid, uncertain and conflictual, rendering traditional solutions not only inadequate but also short-lived.

Renewed governance, recognizing interconnected global issues and equipped with the means to address them systematically and sustainably, is essential for the preservation of human civilization and planet Earth.

Governance refers to all the mechanisms, processes and institutions that influence the way in which a country, organization or group is directed and controlled. Its origins lie in ancestral collective management practices. In Africa, for instance, “the palaver tree” social structure epitomizes direct democracy, and illustrates the desire of people to organize their lives within society. The transition toward more inclusive and participatory forms of governance is especially relevant in the current climate of growing mistrust of traditional institutions.

Strengthening the confidence of citizens, investors and stakeholders means ensuring political and economic stability, promoting sustainable development and safeguarding social cohesion. To this end, good governance should combat corruption, protect human rights and promote equal opportunities.

Governance is a cross-cutting concept and as such plays a pivotal part in the management of societies and institutions, at all levels: from companies to local authorities, nation-states and international and regional organizations. It involves the conduct of the political, economic and social affairs of states, the management of companies and the regulation of international relations.

At national level, Morocco's governance doctrine aspires to create a framework in which authority and responsibility converge in the service of a balanced, inclusive and prosperous society. The foundations of this doctrine, laid down in the 2011 Constitution, stem from the Nation's constants and the enlightened Vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist him, and center around the following principles :

- **Primacy of citizens** : putting institutions at the service of citizens, promoting participation and proximity, giving priority to practicality and tangible outcomes, etc.
- **Building a new paradigm**: build a unique Moroccan model, reform public-sector management, overhaul territorial management, systematically implement best practices in human rights, create a social project structure, upgrade the justice system, etc.
- **Responding to adversity with economic development**: implement structuring projects (infrastructure, hubs, etc.), encourage investment, increase competitiveness, enhance immaterial capital, etc.
- **Anchoring solidarity in the daily lives of citizens**: enhancing social cohesion, ensuring territorial equity, etc.
- **Future generations in mind**: promote and immunize the social fabric, educate and train, improve the status of women, restructure religious life, combat obscurantism, make Morocco a global citizen, implement a human migration policy, eradicate terrorism, etc.
- **The planet at heart**: manage resources and preserve the environment, combat effects of climate change, etc.

As such, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) has since inception consistently paid close attention to the subject of governance, as a central pillar of its global perspective, and as the subject of its Strategic Report 2024-2025.

Eighth in the “Panorama du Maroc dans le monde” series, launched in 2015, the Strategic Report on governance follows previous editions in keeping with the “Understand, Anticipate, Propose” foresight meta-method. The report comes in a hybrid format, blending a synthesis report with a digital knowledge platform, with 25 wikis, 18 sidebars, graphic illustrations and over 400 bibliographical references.

Designed to further the understanding of governance, the first section of this strategic report outlines concept origins and how it differs from the notion of government, while highlighting specific components and typologies (chapter 1). It also examines the three major drivers of change currently impacting governance on a global scale (chapter 2), before delving into societal, informational and institutional challenges to governance process implementation (chapter 3).

Section two, dedicated to anticipating developments in this area, examines the many contemporary crises and the global transition from VUCA to VUCA² (chapter 1). It identifies major megatrends and emergences underway, as well as the mounting existential risks that governance needs to address (chapter 2), and examines new governance requirements for the planet, the noosphere and cyberspace. These new requirements call for innovative and effective leadership in an ever more complex global landscape (chapter 3).

Section three identifies potential solutions to help governance evolve and respond more effectively to ongoing mutations. It first highlights the importance of setting out a frame of reference for good governance, based on guiding principles (chapter 1). Second, it explores global governance and its Planetization, explaining how these concepts apply at various levels, from local to global, and how they contribute to creating sustainable solutions (chapter 2).

Finally, this section underlines Morocco's unique governance model and doctrine of global governance. It outlines broad outlines for a renewed governance, to drive the Kingdom's emergence in a multi-crisis, multiplex world (chapter 3).

**Under the direction of Mr. Mohammed Tawfik MOULINE
General Director of the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies**

PART I

UNDERSTAND

Chapter 1 - What is governance?

Governance is by no means recent, though it was not always referred to as such. Evidence of governance can be traced back to antiquity, when exchanges between social groups were already regulated by systems of governance¹.

Governance is today one of the most commonly used concepts in the social sciences, and refers to the conduct of the political, economic and social affairs of states, the management of companies and the regulation of international relations. In the absence of a universally accepted definition, however, the concept of governance varies from one field of application to another.

To fully appreciate the concept, it is essential to clearly define it, so as to distinguish it from the related concept of government, and to identify its key components and typologies.

1. Definition

Governance, as a concept, is distinct from the practice of governing. While governing involves a hierarchical structure where power and decisions emanate primarily from upper levels down to lower levels, governance revolves around a collaborative and iterative process. This distinction holds crucial importance in the contemporary context, where global challenges call for a more inclusive and flexible approach².

1.1. Governance as a process

Governance refers to the set of processes, norms and institutions that determine the way in which a country, organization or group is directed, administered, regulated and controlled. It applies to decision-making in the public and private sectors, as well as to the development and implementation of public policies, to the allocation and management of resources, and to evaluation and accountability.

Governance can be applied at various levels, such as national governance (government, public administration, agencies and other entities), corporate governance (boards of directors, executive boards, etc.), local governance (municipal administration, regional councils, local authorities, etc.) or global governance (international organizations, various groupings such as G7, G20, World Economic Forum, transnational firms, international trade union groupings, international sports federations, etc.).

Although there is no internationally recognized definition of good governance, in principle it aims to ensure transparency, accountability, equity, participation and efficiency in decision-making and management processes.

Box 1: Good governance: ethical standards and scope for action

Notwithstanding inherent difficulties in any definition, governance is “a practical concept, both a descriptive idea of reality and a normative ideal associated with transparency, ethics and effective action...”³. The closer one’s reality is to this ethical normative ideal, the better the governance; the further one moves away from it, the more one is in bad governance or non-governance, abnormality, chaos⁴.

“Good governance encompasses the following elements: full respect for human rights; the rule of law; effective participation; multiparty partnerships; political pluralism; transparency and accountability in institutional processes and operations; public sector efficiency and effectiveness; legitimacy; access to knowledge, information and education; political empowerment; equity; sustainability; attitudes and values that foster responsibility, solidarity and tolerance⁵”.

Thus, good governance implements a set of structures, processes and behaviors that govern how an entity is managed, operated and controlled, thereby ensuring that it performs in accordance with established criteria.

It is essential in building the confidence of citizens, investors and stakeholders, safeguarding political and economic stability, promoting sustainable development and ensuring social cohesion. It also entails combating corruption, protecting human rights and promoting equal opportunity.

1.2. Governance and government

Government, as one of a State's three components, alongside territory and population, is defined on the one hand as the set of elected and appointed political institutions and bodies in charge of running a country, and on the other as the exercise of State power over residents within its borders, including, for most aspects of their lives, foreigners⁶ as well as expatriate nationals, notably in terms of civil status.

This exercise, termed "sovereign", by which a government deploys its prerogatives, encompasses making decisions, implementing policies, supervising activities and resolving problems related to a country's or entity's management and governance, etc. Enacting iniquitous laws or applying norms (principles, rules, decisions, directives, etc.) in a discriminatory or biased manner is bad governance. In this sense, good governance is often associated with democracy and the rule of law, while bad governance refers to authoritarianism, totalitarianism...

Governance is broader in concept than government. The latter relies on its regalian legal prerogatives to run a country's affairs. Governance rests instead on the coordination, collaboration, harmonization and rationalization of all stakeholder activities (actions and behaviors) in any given action, program, project or policy.

Governance comprises processes and institutions, both public and private, through which public policies and corporate strategies, as well as any other decisions or measures impacting a community, are designed and implemented.

1.3. The components of governance

The constituent components of governance are as follows:

- **Legal standards:**

National and international legal rules, i.e. mandatory prescriptions with which institutions and citizens are bound to comply or abstain from action. These norms are based, in principle, on “universal” human values, and are enshrined in constitutions (fundamental or supreme laws), whether written or customary (partially, as in the UK, or totally, as in New Zealand or Quebec). Standards also arise from laws, regulations (decrees, orders, circulars) and international legal instruments (charters, covenants, conventions, treaties, agreements, contracts, etc.), issued by national, transnational and international institutions, generally in a pre-established hierarchical order.

- **Soft law ethical and legal standards:**

These are not immediately mandatory (recommendations, guidelines, etc.), but are accepted by stakeholders as binding, within the limits of practical ability. Gradually, these standards can become “hard” law once recognized in practice. This is how custom is formed, by enshrining such practices into the legal system⁷.

- **Institutions :**

These are legal entities in charge of setting and implementing the standards mentioned above, at differing stages and within respective remits. Included in this category are governments and other related public bodies (administrations, agencies, local authorities, etc.), international organizations, transnational corporations or multinational firms, governed by statutes, charters of ethics and codes of conduct. Included in this category are national associations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), encompassing actual associations, cooperatives, political parties, trade unions, etc., as well as “international” NGOs⁸ e.g. the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), human rights NGOs, etc.

Institutions act by means of natural persons (individuals), endowed with a range of political, legal, financial, scientific and technological resources, extending in some cases to the use of algorithms in the areas of e-government, e-administration, e-finance, etc.

- **Decision-making processes :**

Mechanisms and processes, both formal and informal, used to reach decisions, e.g. elections, talks, public, private and public-private consultations, deliberations, negotiations, dialogues, mediations, arbitrations, good offices, etc., whereby operating rules are laid down. These processes enable shared standards and practices to govern the relationships and actions of stakeholders⁹.

- **Performance evaluation :**

Performance appraisal is a comprehensive process by which stakeholder, both institutional and individual, actions and decisions are confronted and compared with pre-established targets and the degree to which these targets are met (results), while ensuring standards governing process development and implementation are maintained in the most optimal way.

Evaluation may include sanctions, tying responsibility to accountability, a process by which institutions and individuals, at different levels of responsibility, are held "accountable" for their actions. In this way, they are held legally and sometimes judicially accountable for their actions, both civilly and criminally¹⁰.

Assessment also involves measuring performance in terms of quality and quantity (volume, figures, percentages, etc.) in terms of transparency, monitoring, control and surveillance, using a variety of instruments including audits, inspections, verifications, etc. Assessment may be internal, conducted by the relevant institution, or external, carried out by independent bodies.

Assessment results are usually documented in annual activity reports, which may be public, restricted (intended for institution members) or confidential (reserved for the institution's governing bodies), etc. Assessment results can include specific reports covering a specific action.

Box 2: Assessing regal institutions

The assessment of regal institutions including the army, intelligence services and other “strategic services” is traditionally held to a lower standard of transparency in many countries, out of concern for the supreme interests of the state. Some countries, incidentally, prohibit disclosure of any material on the governance of these institutions, and criminal penalties apply in the event of unauthorized publication. This begs another question: how legitimate is this concern, and does it serve to evade accountability to sound governance standards?

Accountability comes into its own when both corporate bodies and individuals are subject to sanction. The former may be sanctioned materially and morally, by means of fines, compensatory damages, reparations, apologies or measures to rectify prejudice caused, etc. They may also undergo restructuring (change of objectives, procedures, management, etc.). Individuals are liable to criminal sanction, including the deprivation of liberty.

- **Drivers of inclusion and participation:**

In the governance context, these drivers refer to incentives enabling citizens, interest groups, disenfranchised populations and other stakeholders to fully participate and take ownership of decision-making processes. These include all available means of participation (e.g. surveys, consultations, discussions, studies, interviews, etc.) aimed at engaging stakeholders in policy and program design, implementation and appraisal. These also include various ways in which different groups, and civil society organizations in particular, play an active part in governance bodies.

2. A brief history of governance

2.1. Governance: a long-standing concept

Governance is an age-old practice, a primal, "direct" form of democracy. The concept is said to have its roots in Africa, "in the remote desire of humankind to organize life in society [when] humans set up a basic social organization to facilitate [communal] life around the palaver tree¹¹".

Ancient Egypt, as a theocratic system, hardly ever experienced governance in the modern sense of the term, much less what we now refer to as "good governance". As for ancient Greece, while often cited as the cradle of democracy, primarily in Athens, this was in fact restricted to a select group of men. Indeed, out of a population of nearly 3,000 citizens, only one hundred or so - from the richest, most influential and best orators - actually took part in political decision-making¹².

In Muslim societies, the concept of governance extends to systems of government, organization (institutions) and individual management and administration in accordance with fundamental Islamic precepts¹³, which govern both the spiritual and secular aspects of life.

Box 3: Governance in Islam

Governance in Islam is defined as “a body of rules and decisions pertaining to the “ruler”: appointment or election, relationship with the people, status and objectives of power or government. All this is grounded in Sharia sources, that is the Qur’an, the Sunnah, and the consensus (Al Ijma’ الإجماع) of select Ulemas, governors, princes and expert merchants, politicians, manufacturers, with the ability to adjudicate on citizen concerns and interests alongside Ulema research effort (Ijtihad الاجتهاد).”

Should discrepancies arise among the above, matters are resolved in accordance with the rules and principles of the Qur’an and Sunnah, unless this derogates from the peremptory precepts or legitimate aims and purposes of the Sharia¹⁴ (Maqassid المقاصد). This process, complex and exacting, is akin to an exercise in wisdom. And wisdom calls for patience, the weighing of arguments and the pursuit of fairness, if not justice. Are not Muslims called upon to be the Umma of the golden middle ground, the Umma of compromise, the Umma that “commands what is right and forbids what is wrong”¹⁵?

Derived from the verb “to govern”, itself derived from the Greek kubernân meaning “to pilot” or “to direct a ship or a chariot”¹⁶, the term “governance” was first used in a political sense by Plato, who used it to designate the art of governing people, from which the Latin verb gubernare was born, giving rise in French to the terms “gouverner”, “gouvernement” and “gouvernance”¹⁷.

Arabic equivalents are found in the verb “hakama” (حَكَمَ) meaning to govern, as well as in the nouns “hikmah” (حِكْمَة) to denote wisdom, “Houkm” (حُكْم) for government and “hakaamah” (حَكَامَة) for governance.

In French, the term “gouvernance” first appeared in the 13th century, at the time equivalent to the term “gouvernement”. It was adopted in English in the 14th century, with the spelling governance.

The term governance briefly resurfaced in the corporate context in the 1930s, before gaining ground in French academic and political discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in works on modernization and public management.

Subsequently, it found its way into the vocabulary of international organizations e.g. the World Bank, the European Union, etc. and was broadly adopted by scholars examining globalization and worldwide government dynamics¹⁸.

2.2. From corporate governance to local governance

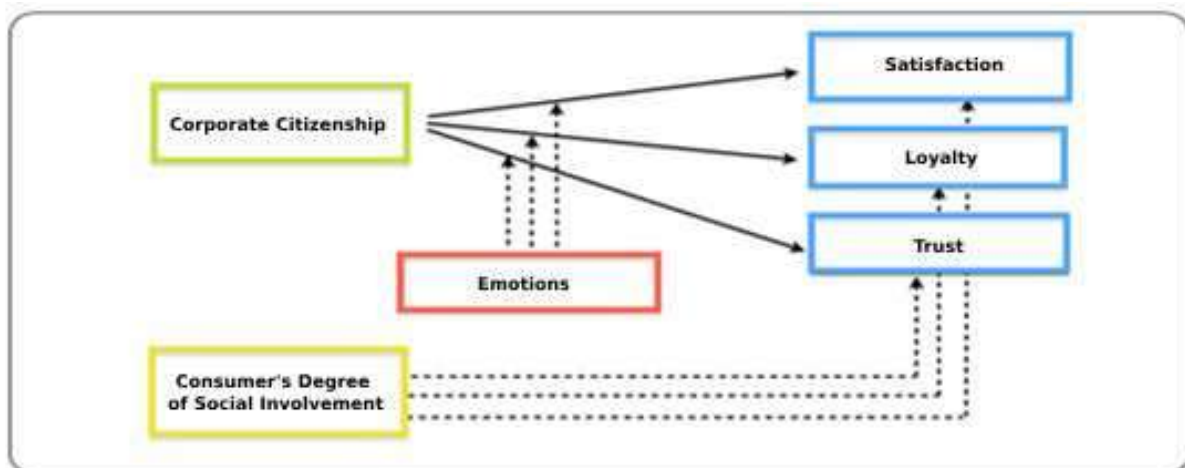
Corporate governance, emerging in the late 1980s, is the earliest modern expression of the concept of governance. Corporate governance refers to the range of measures taken by a firm to effectively coordinate operations on two levels. First, it refers to internal protocols in place when a firm operates on an integrated basis. Second, it encompasses contracts, temporary associations and standards when products or services are outsourced¹⁹.

Governance in this context explicitly designates a **process**, that of a networked system governing relationships among stakeholders assembled with the aim of generating profit or better resource management²⁰.

The concept of corporate social responsibility governance originated in the United States in the 1970s, and later spread to other regions of the world. This concept "incorporates both social and environmental considerations in business activity and relations with partners [...] a corporate entity where economic and social goals coexist, demonstrating that the pursuit of financial profit is not the sole objective"²¹. The underlying conceptual framework is as follows.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The impact of corporate citizenship on consumer satisfaction, loyalty and trust



Alongside socially responsible corporate citizenship, conceptualized from a domestic perspective, “ethical” MNC implement fair rules²² at a variety of levels. This applies upstream, to shareholders and bondholders, and downstream to procurement, production, distribution, marketing, advertising and other activities. These corporations strive to ensure their practices conform to global ethical standards.

Meanwhile, the concept of governance has gradually spread to public affairs with local urban governance. This trend took off with the Thatcher government’s austerity policies of the 1980s, which compelled local authorities to rethink management methods in the face of scarce financial resources. Local authorities developed coordination systems with private sector partners, now essential players in local management following the privatization of large swaths of public services (public-private partnerships). The concept of local governance began to take hold in France in the 1990s, sparking considerable reflection and analysis²³.

2.3. Good governance, a driver of development and inclusion

The concept of governance gained a foothold **in international relations** largely as a result of development-related considerations. Noting the economic success of the Asian dragons, i.e. Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan in the 1980s, scholars²⁴ examined the fundamental role of development institutions. They found that **a properly functioning state was an essential prerequisite for economic growth and development.**

Yet many developing states faced a multitude of dysfunctions²⁵: poor investment absorption capacity, inadequate human, financial and technical resources, corruption, graft, ill-considered transposition of foreign economic “models” with little regard for the essential needs and cultural values of local populations, and so on.

Drawing attention to the institutional prerequisites for development, the “good governance” ethos led a range of actors (e.g. the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Development Program(UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other UN bodies) to advance a range of ostensibly technical reforms across virtually all sectors, in full compliance with the political sovereignty of relevant states.

However, technicality is not neutral, and recommended reforms produced mixed results. Anticipated development and good governance failed to materialize, even in countries with strong economic growth. Inequalities grew, both within and between countries²⁶.

In Europe, the debate over the fundamental nature of the European Community (“association of states” or “supra-state”) gave rise to new governance models, making it possible to step up European integration without turning the Union into a supra-government, which would undermine the sovereignty of member states.

The European Commission’s 2003 report presents a common vision of European governance based on three pillars:

- Enhanced bottom-up stakeholder participation in the design and implementation of European Union policies.
- Broader spectrum of instruments to address new governance challenges by means of a more diversified regulatory approach.
- Refocused European institutions with clearer responsibilities.

This report calls for measures to enhance global governance, based on the following pillars: successfully reforming the Commission’s internal governance, upholding rights and principles set out in the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights, and stepping up exchanges with third-country governmental and non-governmental players.

These steps supplement binding international legislation and support a comprehensive reform of multilateral organizations. Systematic coordination and improved EU representation within the United Nations system are further encouraged, as is the promotion of coherent and representative EU communications. Yet obstacles to implementing a common foreign and security policy, among others, mean the EU is unable to complete these measures effectively.



As European integration gathered pace in the 1990s and early 2000s, concern over a “democratic deficit” sparked a debate on governance, arguing that engaging private stakeholders would help strengthen the legitimacy of common decisions²⁷. As a result, the European Union began setting up governance networks, partnerships and other forms of participatory governance²⁸.

Governance is a powerful development force. And yet, widespread adoption is slow to materialize, as evidenced by Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals mid-term appraisals. This is in part due to dysfunctions within the United Nations system, notably as “the rules of the international financial system have become obsolete.”²⁹ This hinders the effectiveness of global governance in responding to today’s challenges.

Reforms within international organizations, particularly the United Nations, are minimal. Fundamental reforms, of most influential institutions and of the United Nations Security Council, have yet to materialize. In view of such slow progress, China established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank³⁰ to compete with the IMF and the World Bank, with some success in a number of countries, notably in Africa.

On this continent, efforts to promote regional integration and strengthen African institutions are championed by the African Union and initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area. These efforts seek to stimulate economic development, increase resilience in the face of crises, and foster greater inclusion into global economic life.

Obstacles nevertheless remain, and include: inadequate coordination between states, internal governance challenges and external pressures continue to impede progress towards robust institutional autonomy. The dependence of several African states on international funding also limits their ability to undertake major reforms to improve regional governance and foster genuine economic sovereignty.



2.4. Governance, a global challenge

The advent of globalization sparked discussions on the role and significance of the Westphalian* state, in a context of shifting prerogatives:

- Upwards in the hierarchical pyramid, as international and transnational organizations expand their jurisdiction, and as interference by a few global corporations grows ever more intrusive and destabilizing;
- Downwards, to the benefit of local bodies, public agencies, civil society and local communities;
- Outwards, with intensifying cross-border trade and relations.

Nonetheless, Covid-19 called the whole process, and indeed the very nature of globalization, into question. Rhetoric and action began to shift towards renewed sovereignty and the end of Western hegemony, in favor of a multipolar global system. This new governance model is perceived as better capable of responding to the aspirations and interests of all states and peoples³¹.

This was, of course, met with resistance from those traditionally in charge of global politics. Struggles ensued against it, as did the aspirations of several middle powers to gain influence through a variety of alliances, some of them “unnatural”. Conflicts currently flaring up are more or less obvious manifestations of this.

Considering all this, the future of globalization faces a set of fundamental questions:

- Where will this protracted incubation lead us? Will the world see a new bipolarity emerge, centered around the United States and China, or will it become non-polar or multipolar? Or is it heading towards a multilateralism of flexible regional groups, like BRICS+, and NATO, straddling different continents (Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, Europe, Oceania)? Or will it merely be a reorganization of current governance structures under the United Nations (UN)? In this regard, the UN Security Council itself remains divided on the very meaning of multilateralism³².

- Should a multilateral system be established, will this fundamentally alter the current nature of decision-making power, or will there simply be regional hegemons, irrespective of “region” size? Divergences in both BRICS and NATO have already emerged, pointing to the ever-greater complexity of global power dynamics.

Discussions on globalization have also brought to light the concept of “**global commons**” (see chapter 3 of Part 1 of this report). This concept rethinks global economic regulation by transposing the notion of collective goods to the international level. This stems from the observation that, in a context of globalization, many environmental, health, educational and cultural goods can only have a public character at international level, just as issues such as air pollution and pandemics cannot be resolved unilaterally. Can global public goods be produced and managed in the absence of a supranational authority with the legitimacy to act on a global scale?

These common goods require concerted action by a multitude of stakeholders, and thus require a form of global governance that transcends the traditional management of international organizations and agencies³³. This process has brought important, long-marginalized players in the international system into the governance process, including NGOs, which are now regarded as a global civil society.

3. Governance models

The concept of governance has gained widespread currency. Defined as a global and collaborative process of decision-making and its implementation, it can take on distinct nuances according to its primary scope:

- **Political governance:** focuses on state political structures and the decision-making processes associated with mechanisms for representation, political participation (different forms of consultation - including elections and referendums - surveys, public opinion polls, etc.), separation of powers, responsibility and accountability (removal or impeachment, civil and criminal sanctions, non-renewal and non-appointment to new posts, etc. of leaders).
- **Economic governance:** sets standards for the ethical and responsible management of companies, activities and the actions of economic players³⁴, notably with a view to ensuring transparency, accountability and the protection of the rights of States (taxation, hygiene, environment, social peace, etc.), consumers (quality standards, prices, procurement, etc.) and workers (collective bargaining, wages and working conditions, etc.).
- **Social governance:** concerns social policies and institutions, including health, education, culture, housing, sport, social security and environmental protection. It focuses particularly on the efficiency and quality of public and private services provided, social inclusion, the reduction of social and spatial inequality, and citizen participation in decision-making.
- **Environmental governance:** concerns itself with the conservation of natural resources, combating the adverse effects of climate change, the sustainable management of ecosystems and the preservation of biodiversity, ensuring responsible and accountable environmental management and incorporating environmental considerations and criteria into policies and decision-making processes, implementation, evaluation and sanction.
- **Local governance:** for sub-national authorities (regional, provincial, departmental, prefectural, municipal, cantonal, etc.), aims to ensure effective, participatory management of local affairs, taking local needs and aspirations into account.

This classification provides a starting point for understanding the different aspects of governance across a range of fields.

Chapter 2 – A Threefold factor of change

As highlighted in previous IRES strategic reports, two major forces shape our world today, across all areas of human activity: **planetization**, in the form of porous borders and increased mobility, and **exponentiality**, in the form of accelerating technologies and social transformations. These two forces confront states with challenges, which they are unable to overcome in isolation, and with unprecedented stakes, often forcing them to resort to fallback tactics such as protectionism or restricting mobility, etc.

In parallel, three other trends combine to create a powerful, multiform driver of change that - to varying degrees, depending on the country³⁵- challenges traditional governmental models based on the centrality of state power, and governance models built around shared powers and the coordination of players, in both North and South:

- The ever-greater complexity of the modern world, which overwhelms traditional processes and exhausts means at our disposal.
- The proliferation of narratives and interferences, which challenge the authority of science and the objectivity of information on which governance is based.
- Increased imbalances between governance players, both in terms of legitimacy and resources.

1. Growing complexity

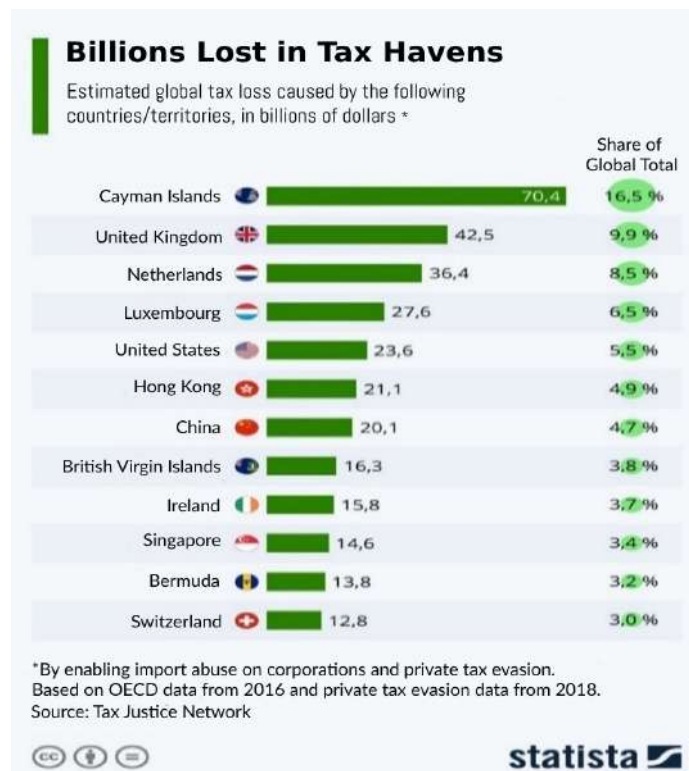
Today's governance system needs to be rethought considering a mounting perception of illegitimacy, or at least loss of credibility, and of ineffective operational practices in an increasingly complex context, not to mention the imperative of reconciling citizen expectations with budgetary constraints. This inefficacy, actual or perceived, calls into question the role and function of the State, and indeed the legitimacy of governments in making the right choices for the future.

The post-1980s “redeployment” of State roles, with the spread or “third phase” of globalization under Thatcher and Reagan, led to reduced State capacity for action, a string of crises and austerity policies in several countries, both ultra-liberal (unable to deliver economic development and prosperity sought by citizens) and those where the “welfare state” provides social protection (inability to provide adequate levels of goods and services to citizens impoverished by this redeployment), giving rise to increased demands and social unrest³⁶.

The movements spawned by these demands often escape the control of trade unions. In Africa, for example, the proliferation of such movements has weakened trade unions and made them less representative. According to a recent International Labour Office publication, this has meant that “trade unions have lost representativeness, and therefore their ability to assert a balance of power conducive to negotiation and to shaping social and economic policies towards greater consideration of workers’ concerns and satisfaction”³⁷.

Reduced government capacity for political action also stems from external constraints and poor governance, as illustrated, among other things, by the colossal legal (Tax Cuts in the USA and other countries) and illegal (fraud, tax evasion and other illicit financial flows) “very substantial”³⁸ financial transfers to the private sector, albeit with some improvement³⁹ and to tax havens⁴⁰.

Figure 2: Estimated global tax loss inflicted on other countries by countries/



As a result, **depressed confidence** in government and, above all, representative institutions, and declining political mobilization within traditional frameworks (political parties, trade unions, etc.) mean such bodies are no longer able to channel demands and make them consistently predictable or intelligible to decision-makers.

2. A crisis of confidence

There are several complex reasons behind this crisis of confidence: inadequate transparency and accountability, social and economic inequalities, disappointment at unfulfilled promises, globalization and loss of sovereignty for many states, along with a string of crises.

Trust is also damaged by specific practices, notably as regards the judiciary's lack of independence from the executive, low political party membership, difficulty for citizens distinguishing independent and credible NGOs from those that are not, polarized media and misinformation, as well as fraudulent conduct by some multinational corporations.

Distrust of institutions and political elites has intensified since the mid-2000s. In 2022, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported that only 41% of member country citizens had confidence in public authorities.

Good governance is essential to remedy this situation. It should inevitably rest on three main pillars: factual and objective knowledge, fair treatment of citizens and transparency of governance processes. These elements are essential in preventing a crisis of confidence in institutions, be they regalian, representative, national or international.

2.1. Factual, objective knowledge made hard to harness

Institutions of governance call on experts, scientists, consultants and practitioners to guide choices and underpin decisions. Expertise is essential in making well-informed and enlightened decisions in all areas of governance⁴¹.



Yet scientists and experts increasingly highlight the alarming drop in **confidence in expertise**⁴², starting in the 1970s and spiralling to unprecedented proportions in the early 21st century.

Among the root causes of this is the fact that some governments have created, financed and subsidized scientific bodies that are neither independent, neutral, impartial nor committed to the general interest, but are instead driven by political and personal interests.

Giant multinational corporations have brought former eminent scientists, including Nobel Prize winners, to the defense of climate skepticism. "The decline of academic community standards of rigor"⁴³, readily leads people to believe in the "scientificity" of something totally unfounded, as best illustrated by physicist Alan Sokal, who deliberately published a purportedly scientific article on "Social Text".

This global crisis of confidence was brought into sharp perspective by the Covid-19 pandemic and is likely to be followed by other crises⁴⁴. It exposed at once:

- the extent of public and policy-maker dependence on expertise.
- the abuse of scientific expertise by a few political players.
- the powerlessness of state-funded research institutions, overtaken by private companies with successive vaccine patents, some untested prior to release.
- the limited authority of expert opinion in the face of political power when regulatory agencies ruled on the quality of vaccines according to political or economic criteria.

In addition to the emergence of “post-truth*”, in which opinion, ideology, emotion or belief take precedence over factual reality⁴⁵ (Cf. chapter 3 of part 1), several factors in fact contribute to the current crisis of confidence in science and expertise:

- **Social networks amplifying and blurring information**

News bubbles, polarized groups and swift proliferation of hard-to-verify information, as well as widespread conspiracy theories both true and false, have become increasingly prevalent on Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Instagram and other social networks.

While **social networks** can inform public opinion by way of genuine whistle-blowers, they also erode confidence in scientific expertise, as fake news distributors (individuals, official bodies and private companies) resort to the psychological profiling of users, sometimes using artificial intelligence and creating thousands of fake user accounts.

- **Growing complexity and unpredictability of political, economic and social processes**

The quantity of information involved in decision-making has soared, while other data remains largely unavailable. The same applies to the extent of interdependence between political, economic and social players, both domestically and internationally. On top of this, the human-nature nexus now plays a vital role, as climate change multiplies meteorological anomalies, exacerbates some conditions (allergies, etc.), fosters pandemics and drives migration. Consequently, expert forecasts grow increasingly imprecise. Science is only able to provide estimates and general recommendations, fuelling a sense of vulnerability in human societies and a belief that science does not have an answer to today’s challenges.

- **The eroding “knowledge society” construct**

UNESCO used the concept of the knowledge society, “which embodies the ideal of science at the service of human development”⁴⁶, in 2005, to “replace the concept of the knowledge economy proposed by the OECD in 1996, which inspired the scientific policies of industrialized countries”⁴⁷.

The post-industrial knowledge society, which enables the dissemination of information and knowledge, has favored the transition from academic to post-academic science⁴⁸, a shift away from the Mertonian norms of universalism, communalism, disinterestedness and organized skepticism⁴⁹.

The result is a new perception of science, now seen as a vehicle for financial interest or political values, rather than a vehicle for solutions benefiting the whole of humanity. The scientific field is no longer a space for free and open discussion, but a tool in the hands of patrons and private shareholders⁵⁰.

Box n°4 : Mertonian standards

The knowledge society was supposed to be based on an ethical science with four norms put forward by Robert K. Merton in 1942, namely:

- **Communism/communalism:** all scientists should have common ownership of scientific assets (intellectual property), to promote collective collaboration; secrecy is contrary to this norm.
- **Universalism:** scientific validity is independent of the socio-political status or personal attributes of participants.
- **Disinterest:** scientific institutions act for the benefit of a common scientific enterprise, rather than for the personal gain of individuals within them.
- **Organized skepticism:** scientific claims require critical scrutiny before they can be accepted in both methodological terms and institutional codes of conduct.

Communalism and disinterestedness have not always prevailed, particularly in relations between industrialized and developing countries. Scientific discourse is not immune to the Western ideological prism, which raises questions as to the objectivity and neutrality of the sciences, and even more so of the humanities and social sciences.

The increasing subordination of science to economic considerations, exemplified in the commodification of resources, both tangible and intangible, is evident, in the so-called “military-intellectual complex”⁵¹ and the policies associated with it, which take less and less account of proclaimed “universal” values and run counter to UNESCO’s ideals. This is a major contributory factor to current poor governance.

Widespread scepticism, meanwhile, increasingly gives way to comforting certainty in the face of growing challenges and threats, some of them existential. This trend comes alongside a rising tide of ignorance, a resurgence of myth and identitarian withdrawal, etc.

2.2. Iniquitable treatment of legal subjects⁵²

Alongside freedom, justice is one of human beings’ most compelling demands. It presupposes fair treatment of every individual or organization within the rule of law. Yet this fairness is often flouted by:

- **corruption, nepotism and graft**, which erode public trust, distort decisions and undermine a body’s ability to function effectively⁵³;
- **conflicts of interest**, which blur priorities and lead to unfair decisions in favor of a particular person, group of people or entity, as witnessed in the pharmaceutical sector during the health crisis⁵⁴;
- **excessive centralization of power**, which exacerbates the risk of abuse, by weakening or even annihilating counter-powers⁵⁵ (political parties, trade unions, professional orders, NGOs, etc.);
- **external pressures**, economic, political or social, which can push managers into taking hasty decisions or decisions driven by short-term priorities, to the benefit of a minority at the expense of the general interest, as seen during the 2008 financial crisis⁵⁶;
- **decisions deemed immoral** by public opinion, leading to a breach of the contract of trust with public authorities, as illustrated by the cases of failure to provide assistance to irregular migrants (boat-people) or the conviction of citizens who came to their aid.

Accumulating of scandals, the feeling of iniquity, even abandonment, felt by some sections of the population (the poor, the sick, migrants, etc.), the growing distrust of police forces and the judiciary, as well as perceptions of political immorality, etc., all contribute to feeding this crisis of confidence in a system of governance perceived as iniquitous.

2.3. Lack of transparent governance processes

While there is no denying the increased transparency of governance processes in several countries, many grey areas remain. These gaps stem from a wide variety of reasons, both accidental and deliberate:

- **A shortage of qualified personnel** to conduct rigorous assessments and communicate their findings⁵⁷.
- **A culture of urgency**, where transparency is not a top priority, due to lack of time rather than malicious intent.
- **Inadequate distribution channels**, often focused on sensationalism to the detriment of technical information, which is essential but rarely highlighted.
- **Unwillingness to grant access to information and opacity in the management of specific processes**, as tragically evidenced by the Chernobyl and Bhopal disasters⁵⁸.
- **A lack of political will and effective accountability mechanisms** holding managers to account for their actions, which leads to incompetence or a lack of ethics, as in the Enron case in the United States⁵⁹.

Thus, in the absence of transparency in governance processes, trust is weakened even more as complexity increases, making it impossible to identify where the problem lies.

3. Changes in governance players

The players involved in governance are changing. While they may differ according to specific fields and contexts, broad categories of governance players are generally as follows:

- **Citizens:** are the beneficiaries of governance, and can also become players in their own right, notably through involvement in the decision-making process. Active, well-informed citizen participation is essential to successful governance.
- **State bodies:** at national, regional and local level, they oversee creating, implementing and evaluating public policies and the laws that flow from them.
- **International organizations:** play a vital role in the development and dissemination of good governance standards, in supranational coordination and in the establishment of global governance.
- **Economic operators:** major players of economic governance, they play a role in the creation of wealth, in assisting in its distribution alongside the State, and in the supply of goods and services. Major operators, notably multinational firms, also exert a sometimes-decisive influence on national and international political scenes.
- **Intermediary bodies (civil society):** political parties, trade unions, professional associations, NGOs, etc. are likely to represent the voice of citizens and socio-economic circles, and to be involved in defining governance objectives, communication and transparency, evaluating public policies, etc.
- **Media and other sources of information dissemination:** can help provide transparency to governance, by communicating stakes and challenges, policies implemented, players involved, and resources allocated. Their contribution to poor governance, however, cannot be overlooked. This depends on the intentions of those who control them. Indeed, the media are not only information carriers, but they can also become instruments of advertising, propaganda, disinformation and dissemination of fake news, shaping public opinion in the process.

Transformations in governance over the last few decades stem from the redefinition of State roles and interactions with other internal and external players, notably multinational corporations, international governmental organizations and civil society, etc., all part of the “third phase” of globalization:

- On one hand, diminishing central state capacity across Western countries is a consequence, at times deliberate, at others unforeseen, of the decentralization and deconcentration movement that swept the world in the late 20th century. This led to a resurgence of local identities and regional imbalances, and a proliferation of local civil society organizations, acting as favored, unofficial channels for citizen demands, with degrees of legitimacy that often compete with that of governments. This is a manifestation of the ambiguity and complexity of the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) world.
- On the other hand, paradoxically, such proliferation, proximity and legitimacy have raised citizen expectations from these organizations, expectations which are often unmet because of cartelization, “blacklisting” or inadequate human and financial resources.

The increasing complexity of situations and issues, the erosion of confidence in institutions vested with legitimate authority and the attrition of key governance players, both public and private, combine to drive transformations that provide a backdrop for the key governance challenges of the 21st century.

Chapter 3. Challenges to governance

Governance, a vital issue in present-day society, faces complex challenges, which call for solutions attuned to societal, informational and institutional difficulties.

1. Societal challenges

Governance encounters, among other things, societal obstacles likely to undermine it, at every phase along the way.

1.1. Phases of governance

Governance consists of a codified decision-making process designed to govern operations within an organization, a country or the international community. Effective governance implementation rests on the following steps:

- **Identifying objectives and issues**

The governance process starts with identifying objectives to be achieved and issues to be resolved. This involves information gathering on stakeholder expectations and concerns, as well as a thorough assessment of the current situation.

This preliminary phase, often “technical” in nature, calls for input exclusively from “specialists”, as it generally involves research and fact-finding tailored to the issues and populations involved, etc. Engaging stakeholders from the outset can be counter-productive, with the potential risk of, for example, overestimating problems or claims.

- **Gathering evidence-based information**

Data gathered should draw on both external expertise and exchanges with stakeholders, to gain a better grasp of complex issues and identify available courses of action.

- **Participation and consultation**

Good governance is built on active stakeholder participation throughout the decision-making process. This may involve public consultations, participatory meetings, working groups, online forums or other such mechanisms. Stakeholders are invited to share their information, views, ideas and concerns. This approach fosters collective intelligence and enhances the legitimacy of decision-making.

- **Concertation and collaboration**

Concertation is essential to good governance. It entails bringing together all stakeholders to explore, negotiate and find consensual solutions. Concertation fosters a spirit of collaboration, compromise and recognition of diverse interests. It also helps identify compromises needed to reach decisions that take account of different perspectives.

- **Policy and strategy elaboration**

Policy or strategy is drawn up based on all the information gathered, discussions and consultations.

Coordination is especially crucial at this stage. It involves incorporating the different ideas and perspectives of the parties involved, together with political, economic, social and environmental considerations; the aim being the implementation of measures capable of delivering set objectives in an equitable and sustainable way.

Box 5: Policy versus strategy

Policy and strategy are often confused, hence the need to clarify these two concepts relative to the broader governance process, both at home and abroad. This distinction, though open to criticism, should be fully embraced.

"Strategy is not identical with politics; it is closely subordinate to it. Politics generally finds its expression in diplomacy, economics, etc. Such activities are appropriate to the pursuit of objectives [...], as long as [no] insurmountable obstacles arise for any of them [...].

Yet, if such is the case, it is imperative that a single purpose closely align [...] all means [...] likely to help overcome the obstacle [...]

[Then] at the highest level of the State [or entity in charge] general strategic action gives rise to specific granular strategies at subordinate levels [...] according to a hierarchy of actual powers exercised.'⁶⁰

Policy in this respect is broader than strategy. The latter would call for selecting a plan from among several, the most optimal, if not the one with the greatest chance of success. The relevant authority is responsible for drawing up and implementing the plan, and is accountable and liable for the consequences, up to and including sanctions.

- **Decision-making**

This phase concludes the consultation process and sets out policies and strategies to be implemented. It can occur in a variety of ways, including multiple forms of voting or consensus.

Decisions are reached with due consideration for stakeholder contributions, based on available information, analysis and recommendations. This ensures that decisions are informed, fair and acceptable.

- **Implementing decisions**

Once decisions are taken, implementation is the responsibility of appointed or elected decision-makers. This process includes conventional, administrative, legislative or regulatory measures, along with allocation of commensurate resources. Transparency and communication are key during this phase, keeping stakeholders informed and involved, and ensuring that decisions are implemented consistently and effectively.

- **Monitoring and evaluation**

Progress should be monitored and reviewed throughout the implementation of decisions. This means that performance is measured against targets, gaps can be identified and corrective action taken where needed. Stakeholder participation in the monitoring and evaluation process in turn helps strengthen accountability and deliver practical, relevant results.

- **Accountability**

Governance encompasses the accountability of decision-makers to stakeholders. Decision-makers are accountable for their actions, results and resource utilization. Accountability fosters transparency, builds trust and enables stakeholders to ensure that decisions are made and implemented responsibly and in the interests of all, in line with the general interest, be it local, regional, national or international.

By incorporating participation, consultation, dialogue and collective intelligence, governance processes are more inclusive, democratic and legitimate. Decisions are based on objective information, equitably accepted and aligned with the needs and realities of all stakeholders.

1.2. Increasingly fragile governance processes

Stumbling blocks to governance at any of the phases mentioned above, include:

- inaccurate problem diagnosis or incomplete situational analysis;
- biased or inadequate data collection;
- inadequate representation of genuine stakeholders in the process: States, NGOs, population groups (citizens with impaired mobility, marginalized groups, the ill, resident aliens, etc.);
- focus on bodies that do not represent target categories;
- consensus favoring the lowest common denominator;
- stakeholder opinions prevailing over consultations;
- decision-making prior to concertation, overlooking grassroots input;
- insufficient coordination between stakeholders;
- absence of monitoring and appraisal, or deliberately biased evaluation;
- low transparency;
- insufficient or non-existent accountability.

Beyond these difficulties inherent to the structural conflict between cooperative approach and the desire for absolute power, three other major forces undermine good governance:

- **Eroding trust** (Cf. chapter 2 of part 1): process success depends on trust between stakeholders, whether those designing and implementing policies or strategies, or those who stand to benefit from them.

- **Emerging disorganized consultation practices** that undermine both the organizers' credibility and the transparency of the process: this occurs, for example, when those in charge of running a consultation process have no control over how it is organized, or when players who have no connection with the subject of the consultation or who consider themselves legitimate participants interfere.
- **Prominence of social networks**, notably conspiracy networks, challenging obtained information and decision-makers legitimacy.

2. Challenges to information

The trend on certain social networks to **question established truths** is one of the greatest threats to good governance. The impact of such interference is global and affects all countries except those with strict information control regulations.

2.1. Governance and the impact of social networks

Social networks present an unprecedented challenge to governance processes, notably as regards the items hereafter:

- **Dissemination of fake news, disinformation and manipulation of public opinion:** social networks enable the rapid and easy dissemination of fake news, which in turn negatively impacts the political debate, democratic processes, policy decisions and public trust in governments and the political landscape as a whole.

Fake news also harms cultural and religious life, sometimes severely, etc. In some countries, this has led to violent clashes between communities of different faiths⁶¹.

It is increasingly difficult for governments to combat such practices and verify the veracity of information.

- **Disregard for privacy and data protection,** despite prohibitive laws, via social networks and other means, together with exploitation of personal data for advertising, influence, blackmail and commercial purposes⁶²: all these practices have similar negative effects and raise growing concerns over governance quality.
- **Polarization and social divisions:** social networks also contribute to social polarization, by creating information bubbles where individuals are only exposed to opinions like their own⁶³. This is likely, on one hand, to shrink dialogue and deepen social divisions and, on the other, create a biased view of reality (whereby "everyone thinks like me"), making consensus-building and collective decision-making more challenging.

- **Regulation and accountability of social networks:** platforms transcending national borders present huge challenges in terms of regulation and accountability. Governments must strike a delicate balance between protecting freedom of speech and dealing with immoral or illegal content (such as hate speech, violence or harmful content) on these networks.

2.2. The “post-truth” concept and its implications

“Post-truth” has emerged as a major theme in contemporary discourse, particularly in light of technological developments and socio-political transformations. Closely tied to news and information quality, transparency and trust, this has profound implications for governance.

The Oxford Dictionary, having picked “post-truth” as its word of the year in 2016, defines post-truth as circumstances in which emotions and personal beliefs take precedence over objective facts in shaping public opinion⁶⁴. In terms of governance, this potentially leads to:

- **emotion-based decisions** rather than fact-based ones, notably political campaigns that prey on fear, despite all contradictory evidence and data;
- **citizen reactions** driven by conspiracy theories, e.g. backlash against anti-Covid vaccination, perceived as an introduction of control nanotechnology through the vaccine⁶⁵;
- **heightened polarization** as people become locked into affinity communities, physical or virtual, with shared beliefs and a rejection of contradictory evidence⁶⁶.

Regulating misinformation in a global digital environment presents legal and ethical challenges that current governance struggles to overcome. Debates over regulating social media regarding fake news versus the freedom of speech essential to social media are a case in point.



The resurgence of post-truth is inherent, notably, to extreme political polarization rendering dialogue and consensus around a shared vision of reality difficult, to planetary scale instant dissemination of information by social networks with no prior verification, to distrust of traditional media, experts and political institutions, and to relentless advocacy by promoters of excessive, illegitimate private interests and authoritarian, indeed totalitarian, ideologies.

The concept of “post-truth” nevertheless deserves to be tempered. According to French sociologist Sylvain Parasie, post-truth implies that political debate was once based exclusively on facts, and that a new era has now dawned. And yet, political discourse has always embedded, alongside facts, a set of values and emotions tailored to the target audience.

3. Institutional difficulties

Global governance arose from a threefold imperative in a globalizing world: collective action to meet shared challenges facing humanity, a common vision to set a shared course, and global coordination mechanisms to deliver objectives like poverty reduction, disease eradication, peace and security...

A thorough understanding of the current reality of global governance helps foresee what needs to be done to reform it, in terms of means, methods and tools, as well as ethical, legal and political instruments.

With a UN system “under trusteeship”, the reform of which has been delayed indefinitely, and a proliferation of international organizations, both universal and regional, that struggle to develop effective and equitable solutions, the global governance of common goods⁶⁷ faces the threefold difficulty of legitimacy, representativeness and consensus-building within it.

3.1. Shortcomings of the UN global system

The United Nations system was established as an instrument of global governance in the aftermath of the Second World War.

The foundations of contemporary global governance were laid in 1944-1945 in the San Francisco Charter, which gave birth to the UN, and in the Bretton Woods Agreement, creating the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the IMF, paving the way for other institutions such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as revamping older ones. This “World Order”, often seen as neo-colonial and imperial, continues to prevail today.



In 1948, following intense negotiations between representatives of both the Western and the Soviet blocs, it was agreed to include civil and political rights, close to the hearts of the former, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, a priority for the latter. This led to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, rights and freedoms being essential elements of good governance.

Further clarifications and developments were made in 1966, when the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights were submitted to States for accession. Other international instruments relating to specific rights (children, women, people with special needs, etc.) soon followed.

Directorates emerge in this world order, such as the United Nations Security Council permanent members, though often divided, hold the right of veto granted by the UN Charter. Their influence also stems from their economic and financial power, allowing contributions to the budget of the international organization and its specialized agencies at a much higher level than those of other members.

This confers on these powerful states the ability to exert collective pressure, in the form, notably, of economic sanctions against States or individuals, through US policies of incitement and deterrence, and extraterritoriality of US law, as well as European policies, notably the French one, of conditioning "aid" on respect for human rights by recipient countries.

However, just like national governance, global governance also faces obstacles, notably unrestrained lust for power, domination, hegemony, conflicts of interest and conflicting ideologies - religious and ethical- exacerbated by globalization.

The Charter enshrines a "peace of the victors". Statutes of other leading organizations, in turn, put forward Western principles of global ideological, political and socio-economic governance⁶⁸. This is precisely why the Communist bloc refused to join at the time. These foundational texts themselves illustrate the limits and complexities inherent to contemporary global governance.

Box 6: The belated “rehabilitation” of China

China, with a population of over one billion, was excluded from the UN and other institutions of global governance, because of the veto imposed by permanent members of the Security Council. The state of Formosa/Taiwan, which played a minor role in World War II, sat in its place until 1971, when the USA and other allies officially recognized the People’s Republic of China.

By the time it acceded to the different UN institutions, notably the WTO in 2001, while retaining the Communist Party-led system of government, China’s economy had already embraced the fundamental principles of a “capitalist” or “liberal” economy. This was the result of the policy of reform and opening up initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s⁶⁹.

Morocco played an important role in the “rehabilitation” of China, contributing to the gradual transformation of global governance. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement since its creation in Bandung in 1955, the Kingdom officially recognized the People’s Republic of China in 1958, by virtue of the policy of liberating peoples from the yoke of colonialism and hegemony.

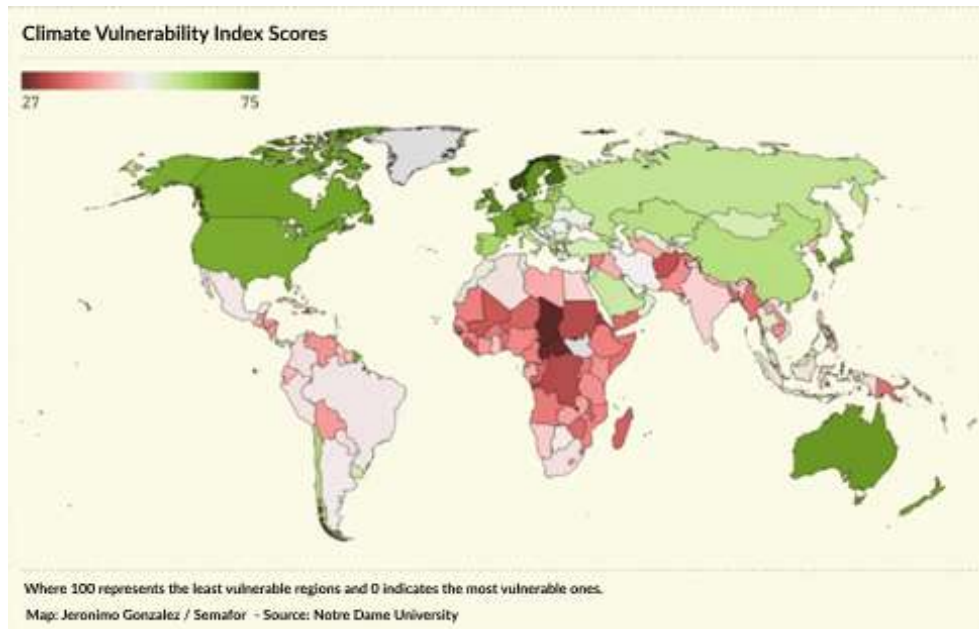
The UN system gradually grew to a point of hypertrophy⁷⁰, from 51 member states to 193 today⁷¹. International organizations with a global scope have grown considerably in number, from 250 in 1993⁷² to 350 in 2009⁷³. Mirroring prevailing ideological, political and socio-economic realities, this system played an active role in handling questions of international peace and security.

It also contributed significantly to liberalizing world trade and regulating the international financial system, thereby supporting the spread of globalization, sustaining economic growth and, from the turn of the 21st century, driving efforts to promote sustainable development.

Conflicts, however, never really ceased, notably proxy wars between the superpowers. Meanwhile, different forms of protectionism proliferated the world over. Considerable challenges remain in such crucial areas as economic, social and spatial inequalities, both within and between states, climate change and environmental protection, particularly in Africa (see map below).

New issues also arise in little-explored areas such as cyberspace, the polar regions, the oceans and outer space, where international rivalries and ambitions escalate, calling for a new form of governance.

Figure 3 : Vulnerability index



Source: Semafor Africa africa@semafor.com

Box 7: Good governance challenges to the international society

Good governance of the international society hinges on attaining peace, sustainable development, justice, solidarity and so on. Yet it is often overlooked that war, beyond ideological and socio-economic implications in terms of natural, financial, scientific and technological resources, is also a highly lucrative economic enterprise that generates research, jobs, profits, etc. and power.

This relentless quest for global dominance is mirrored by fierce competition between states, multinationals and other entities for weapons, militarized space, resources and strategic skills. Indeed, the limited regulation of artificial intelligence, still confined to civilian applications despite initiatives such as the Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain⁷⁴ (REAIM) project, shows that the drive for ever more sophisticated means of domination and supremacy continues unabated. It therefore looks as though challenges to the good governance of global affairs have yet to be met.

Yet a hypothesis emerges that Generative Artificial Intelligence, in its unchecked development, may be “self-destructing”⁷⁵, at the risk of “collapse” by “technological overdose”⁷⁶.

The international financial crisis of 2008 and poor global public health cooperation in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 exposed the weaknesses of the UN system and other global governance mechanisms. These mechanisms failed to adapt to new planetization realities (mobility, climate change and environment, economic and human development, etc.) to chart a common course towards resolving such challenges, and even to make up for lost time on long-standing issues. This is particularly evident in the following :

- **No consensus between players**, primarily States, for binding regulations on crucial issues such as the digital economy, outer space, climate change, migration⁷⁷, terrorism and ocean beds.

- **Persistent disputes between key players in global governance:** political, economic⁷⁸ and cultural⁷⁹ disputes and even conflicts between countries, particularly between the USA and China, deeply disrupt economic globalization. At a time when the global organization of labor and standardization of manufacturing are at an all-time high, asymmetrical interdependence between great powers raises the risk of governance being manipulated through standards aimed primarily at weakening competitors, thus exacerbating disputes and conflicts.
- **Major divergences in the goals and demands of state actors,** making it difficult to conclude agreements in several areas, notably disarmament, conflict resolution and the reform of global governance institutions and mechanisms.

Despite the apparent support of most states for global governance reform, many differences and even conflicts of interest remain on major issues. Resistance from individual countries or blocs of countries persists, as evidenced in the way the United Nations Security Council operates. Permanent members of the Council, and others, are unable to agree on which states should eventually fill permanent seats, or on the rules governing such status: should they represent their region (e.g. Africa)? Have a right of veto? Should they have the same veto power as the current permanent five, or a veto limited to specific issues?

The war in Ukraine and the Russia-China rapprochement, for instance, displease India, distancing it from Russia⁸⁰ and bringing it closer to the United States, which is not to China's taste. This could presage vetoes from China and Russia opposing its accession to permanent membership, despite US support, if any.

Even when reforms are agreed, actual implementation often proves complex, as shown by the ups and downs around IMF quotas and voting reform.

- **Western “double standards”** are attributable to the indisputable power of the United States, frequently backed by the United Kingdom and France, and to the relative reserve of China and Russia in abstaining, either so as not to exacerbate differences with the former, or because the issues raised do not impact their vital interests, or else out of conviction on specific issues. The “double standard” policy involves a differentiated application of international law according to whether or not a country is a part of the West. This runs counter to the preservation of international peace and security. Even when unfounded, sanctions imposed on specific countries - such as Iraq, where the “Oil-for-Food” program⁸¹ caused the death of nearly half a million Iraqi children - were fully enforced. This is not the case with UN resolutions targeting some Western countries and Israel.

3.2. Obstacles to global governance

In general, global governance comes up against three major obstacles:

- **National sovereignty and most importantly, hegemonic sovereignty**

Sovereignty is a major issue in global public policymaking. Despite rising non-state actor influence in recent decades, states continue to play the leading role in global governance, delegating specific prerogatives only when it serves their interests. Yet the persistence of sovereignty thus conceived is likely a hindrance in a world grappling with a growing number of “passportless problems”⁸².

Multilateral trade negotiations, for example, have stagnated for decades, largely due to the WTO’s consensus rule, designed to protect state sovereignty. Although originally designed to promote balance between nations, this mechanism is now an obstacle to international cooperation, hampering the quest for collective solutions to contemporary economic challenges.



As far as global environmental governance is concerned, governments are still the main players in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process. This framework, while effective in theory, shows limitations as annual Conferences of the Parties and other intergovernmental processes struggle to generate practical, effective actions in the face of global environmental challenges.

Sovereignty⁸³, understood as the supreme and perpetual power of the State, over which there is no other authority, equally available to all States, is no longer a reality today in a world of interdependencies, if it ever was. The crux of the issue lies in the interplay of might, power, threat and the use of force that governs international relations, in public and private spheres, and across political, economic, social, cultural and other contexts. There is also the unrivalled "soft power" of some States to the detriment of others, made possible by legal "interpretations", notably of the United Nations Charter and the founding statutes of many international, universal and regional organizations, etc., which good governance urges to reform, with a view to greater sovereign equality between States.

It is therefore not sovereignty per se that stands in the way of good global governance, but rather hegemonic sovereignties, with "States deemed more sovereign than others" or "more equal than others", as international jurists put it. This means that the right of veto gives the former more power. Under UN Charter terms, they have greater responsibility for preserving international peace and security, and no majority of UN members can withdraw it from them. Even when this responsibility is compromised by their own actions.

- **Persistent North-South divide**

The North-South divide is still a major source of political tension in global governance. It pits developed nations of the North against developing and emerging countries of the South, on fundamental issues such as poverty, sources of inequality, economic growth priority and the need to reform global institutions.

While the North benefits from a long tradition of leadership in global affairs, the South shares a common history of political subordination, fuelling widespread distrust of developed-country values and practices. Institutionally, the North-South divide was perpetuated within the UN system of coordination and bloc voting⁸⁴.



When the UN Human Rights Council was set up, North-South tensions focused mainly on the scope of rights to be covered, an issue of ideological divergence. Developed countries argued in favor of a universalist approach, emphasizing civil and political rights, while developing countries, with a more relativistic vision, focused on social and economic rights. These tensions also came to the fore in negotiations on Sustainable Development Goals, where disagreements between the two blocs became especially apparent.

This divide still permeates a wide range of global policies. The most significant examples of this are to be found in international economic and environmental policy. Almost all WTO and international financial institutions decisions, whether on tariffs, intellectual property rights, investment rules or financial aid, are based on trade-off models between developed and developing countries.

It is manifest within the UN and most of its specialized agencies, particularly in debates and votes on major global issues such as climate change, the reform of international institutions, world peace and security, artificial intelligence, etc.

Alongside political, economic, social and environmental issues, the North-South divide also has an impact on several international negotiations on disarmament, Internet regulation and the fight against corruption.

The ascent of emerging countries and the many changes brought about by globalization were supposed to signal the obsolescence of this divide. This has not been the case so far, as multiple shifting rifts persist in both blocs, along with overlaps, depending on global issues and State and other governance stakeholder interests, as well as on their influence and ability to shape the course of events.

Overall, as states and multinational corporations are the leading players on the global stage, the North-South divide persists to this day. The perception that the North-South divide has narrowed only partially reflects the reality of international relations. Some countries have managed to join the ranks of the industrialized West economically, including the "Four Asian Dragons", the newly industrializing countries and other emerging countries.

The North, albeit diminished, continues to wield its dominance, reinforcing its hegemony over the "South". Uncertainties persist, however, as to the future of this divide, which further complicates the reality of current and future global governance, bolstered by occasional instances of "surprising coalitions"⁸⁵ (notably in negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals). For the time being, the North-South divide remains an essential political axis in global policymaking.



- **Institutionalized Western hegemony**

While still a determining factor in the global balance of power, Western hegemony finds its authority threatened by the rise of new powers like China and Russia.

This shift is particularly noticeable in peacekeeping. Western mobilization helped redefine conventional peacekeeping principles and broaden acceptable intervention criteria in the South. The influence of Western states stems from the political power they wield within UN agencies in charge of peace operations. Their role as drafters of Security Council resolutions (pen holders) and heads of expert groups is particularly decisive.

The global North-South nexus is inextricably linked to the concept of Western hegemony, which is a balance of power where coercion, the threat of coercion (hard power), deception and consent - both genuine and misplaced, durable and ephemeral - intermingle⁸⁶. The North-South divide manifests itself in Western domination over developing countries, whenever their interests are threatened or likely to be.

This domination also rests on the adoption, unknowingly or consciously consented to, of an economic and cultural model (soft power), appeasing the governments and elites of the South and planted in the minds of broad swathes of society who, mentally internalize the said supremacism (underdeveloped complex) through neo-colonialist "soft power" channels, first and foremost of which is the mainstream media.

Alongside its weight in major universal international organizations, Western hegemony has also been institutionalized in the creation and transformation of organizations intended to increase the power of a “core” of Western states, led by the United States in particular, vis-à-vis the states of the South, in the most vital areas. In the realm of economics, these include the Group of Seven (G7)⁸⁷, the World Economic Forum in Davos, etc. In the areas of politics and military affairs, institutions like NATO⁸⁸, AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States), to underline the strength of Anglo-Saxon ties, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), bringing together the United States, Japan and Australia, and including India, a southern country, to counter China, etc. another manifestation of the surprising alliances that transcend all divides.

3.3. Global public goods and common goods in constant decline and at risk

Global public goods are understood as “all goods that are accessible to all States that do not necessarily have an individual interest in producing them⁸⁹”. This concept seeks to restructure global action regulation by transposing the idea of collective good to an international context.

The UNDP classifies global public goods according to three main categories⁹⁰:

- Natural global public goods (the oceans, the ozone layer, climate stability, outer space, biodiversity, etc.).
- Man-made global public goods (scientific knowledge, the legal system, etc.).
- Global public goods resulting from global policies (peacekeeping, the fight against terrorism, financial stability, public health, etc.).

Human Development Report 2023-2024 focuses on three classes of these global public goods⁹¹, identified according to how country contributions need to be consolidated for these goods to be adequately provided:



- Additive public goods (summation): the provision of these goods derives from the sum of all stakeholder efforts.
- Best-shot public goods: the provision of these goods depends on the more advanced countries.
- Weakest-link public goods: contribution levels set by the least capable country.

Global public goods have a triple public dimension⁹². They are public in terms of consumption (everyone should be able to benefit), political inclusion (all stakeholders should be able to take part in the political debate) and distribution of benefits (everyone should be able to benefit equally).

It is only through sound global governance that global public goods (called differently according to economic, legal and even ideological approaches, etc.), the benefits of which are “non-exclusive” and “non-competitive”, e.g. climate, biodiversity, international security or economic stabilization, can be administered and supplied to all⁹³.

The concept of global public goods permeates the design and analysis of global governance, global policy-making, international treaties and multilateral agreements, and the role of international organizations in the early 21st century.

Box 8: The concepts of global public goods and common goods

Global public goods benefit a broad spectrum of countries, and indeed large portions of the world’s population. Their impact also stretches to future generations.

Common goods refer to resources or areas of shared interest among all human beings. The expression “common heritage of mankind” is occasionally used to refer to natural elements (water, air, etc.) or human achievements (scientific discoveries, culture, architectural achievements, etc.) that are deemed to constitute a common asset to be preserved for the benefit of all.

The concepts of global public goods, common goods and the common heritage thus refer to critical global challenges to sustaining and improving human life: the environment, water, health, biodiversity and security⁹⁴.

But the governance of global public goods, in turn, is a major challenge⁹⁵. It demands international cooperation and sustained coordination to ensure that these goods remain accessible and benefit all humankind. Two specific problems arise in this context:

- Although global issues impact all countries, all do not have the same power or influence in international decision-making processes. **Institutional legitimacy** (recognition of a sovereign state) and **representativeness** (equality between all voices) are essential if global governance is to be fair and equitable, and if all voices are to be counted.
- Divisions are increasingly clear-cut on major global issues: traditional economic development versus sustainable development; climate scepticism versus the fight against climate change; Western hegemony versus non-aligned states; in favour of versus against seabed mining, etc. Reaching a consensus, or at least a majority, is increasingly complex. The multiplicity of influence mechanisms also means endless negotiations.

How valuable are these global public goods when it is argued that, "their benefits at the individual level are minimal [...], benefits [of many of these goods] materialize in the distant future, while costs are immediate [and their] supply will tend to be insufficient if the private sector is left in charge⁹⁶."

3.4. Failure to fully appreciate major current trends

Current global governance takes insufficient account of five major developments:

- **The slow refocusing on the individual**

The focus on individuals in international public policy-making is relatively new, since states and international organizations are still the main players in world politics. As an emergent standard, it is fragile in the face of the inviolable principle of sovereignty. Broadly speaking, the individualization of international affairs may be seen as a consequence of liberal values shaping the world order⁹⁷.



It is also the result of the human rights ethos permeating the activities of most international institutions, notably the United Nations, whose core mission, along with peace and development, is supporting both human development and human security agendas. These combined effects have brought the UN and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) closer together, in support of a people turn in global policies⁹⁸.

Beyond human rights and security, a few recent treaties and declarations have sought to meet the needs of vulnerable groups such as women, indigenous peoples and people with disabilities. The IMF and World Bank, for their part, have focused increasingly on poverty reduction. Multilateral negotiations on climate change also address environmental displacement, while the Global Compact on Migration focuses on migrant rights. Calls for a humanization of global public policy are therefore likely to have major implications for global governance.

Alongside considerations of inclusion in the different stages of decision-making, public policy also incorporates the rights of the people it serves. Human rights and individual freedoms are either a condition for implementing international agreements, or a recommendation emanating from international organizations. This conditionality is translated into domestic legal provisions including constitutions, laws, regulations, action plans, etc., all explicitly stipulating the guarantees associated with these rights and freedoms.

- **Challenging universalism**

Universalism is often put forward as an aspiration and a set of religious, political, ethical and legal principles that embody shared human values (freedom, justice, equality, solidarity, fraternity, etc.). Yet, in reality, it is often truncated, as an instrument of "soft power" in the service of supremacy, hegemony and domination. Presenting Western values as universal, for instance, while failing to respect them oneself, exemplifies what is known as the "double standard".



Interactions and divergences surrounding the very concepts of universalism and regionalism in international law, as well as universality and specificity of human rights, philosophies of power and political regimes, have been subject to serious debate for some time now.

All of which has brought about a fundamental rethinking of universalism, as social and identity-based attitudes rise to the surface in the face of political, economic, environmental and migratory crises etc. but not all components of the global South are involved, just as hegemony is not the prerogative of all players in the global North. Hence the trend towards transversal alliances.

Despite being increasingly challenged by calls for greater recognition of cultural diversity, universality permeates much of global governance in recent decades. Universal aspirations have therefore informed a wide range of global policies.

On the economic front, the WTO and IMF defend market-friendly policies as the best way to ensure prosperity for all nations. On the social front, UNESCO and the International Labour Organization advocate principles such as “education for all” and “decent work for all”.

Similarly, in environmental negotiations, global policies are routinely championed in the name of intergenerational equity. In each of these fields, universal aspirations enable players to maintain the illusion they are apolitical.

- **The emergence of a quest for coherence**

The fact that a growing number of stakeholders, particularly in civil society, favour a holistic approach to global policy-making is a consequence of globalization and the complex interdependence of national and international issues. Hence the determination to prove that disparate elements of global governance are nonetheless part of a coherent whole.

In fact, there is a great deal of interaction between the fields of security, development, trade, the environment, migration and human rights. As is common practice, international agreements often begin with a preamble, which explains the relationship between a given policy and other international agreements or political objectives. More specifically, multilateral peace initiatives, such as disarmament agreements, are usually justified on the grounds that peace is a prerequisite for development.

Similarly, the WTO and IMF claim that, as their policies promote economic growth, they also contribute to world peace.

In environmental negotiations, a nexus was drawn between climate change mitigation and objectives such as sustainable development, poverty eradication and intergenerational equity. This framework of global thinking also applies to technical areas such as civil aviation. The 1944 Chicago Convention, for example, stipulates that the development of civil aviation "can contribute substantially to creating and preserving friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world", according to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

In short, most global policies seek to strengthen their legitimacy, by emphasizing their contribution to global governance.

- **The rise of international organizations**

International bodies have become platforms for global policymaking, both through their practice and the debates that take place within them. This stems in part from the growing autonomy of international organizations and greater collaboration between agencies.

The coordination role of international organizations is evident in most of the world's public policies. A growing number of global initiatives now take the form of partnerships where the UN coordinates the work of governments, NGOs and private companies with similar objectives. In international development, the World Bank gradually asserts itself as an architect, organizing collaborative networks consisting of other international agencies, donor and recipient states, private companies and civil society organizations. This logic also prevails in health governance, where the World Health Organization (WHO) sits at the apex of a complex network of partnerships.

Yet the activities of international organizations are inherently political. On one hand, these organizations are often in competition with one another, and this impacts on global governance. On the other hand, their actions increasingly take the form of direct, peer-to-peer coordination, designed to bypass intergovernmental practices and bolster their authority vis-a-vis national sovereignty.



A growing number of country groups, for instance the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, are setting up alliances and communities of interest to assert positions (lobbying) or act independently of global governance. The same applies to regional bodies, universities, associations, etc., conducting joint projects on unifying themes.

- **The growing power of multinationals and other players**

Multinational companies, acting autonomously or in association, also play a growing role in global governance and gaining in power and influence. Global corporations are crucial to world governance - as they implement policies on jobs, wages, prices, working conditions, hygiene and health, the environment, social protection, taxation⁹⁹, profit repatriation and major financial transfers, etc., all of which impact living conditions and citizen rights, as well as economic, trade and monetary balances (debt, balance of trade, balance of payments, etc.) and hence the politics of countries in which they operate. "It is naive to think that markets have only efficiency in mind and never contemplate power¹⁰⁰."

While not formal subjects of international law, multinationals have nonetheless become major players in international relations. They exert considerable pressure, and influence State bodies when their interests diverge from those of countries in which they operate.

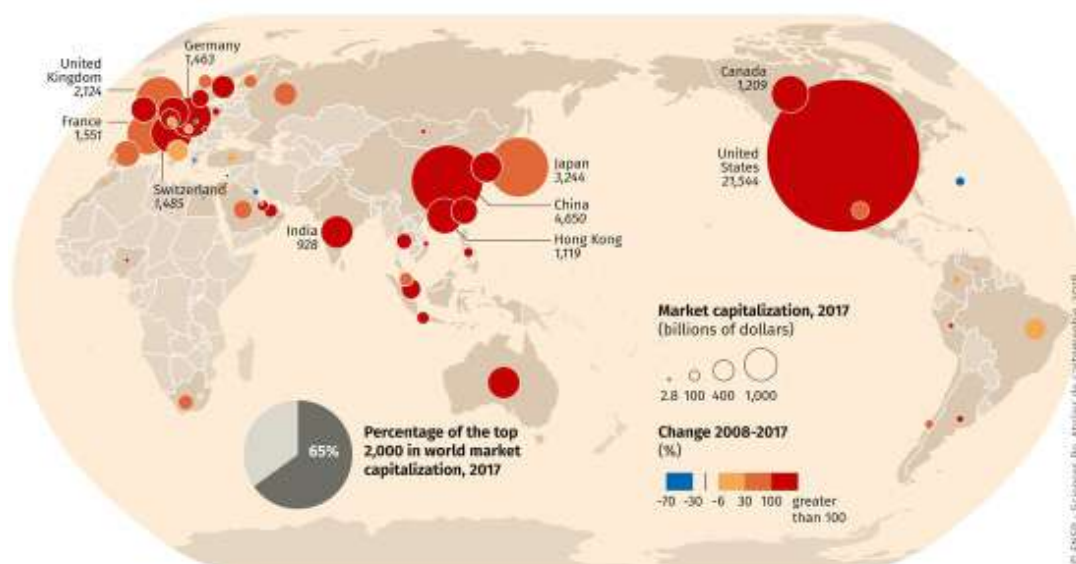
Transnational corporations often face trial for serious illegal acts, economic crimes¹⁰¹, etc. They are routinely denounced and boycotted by international civil society movements (Boycott-Divest-Sanction (BDS), Avaaz, Oxfam, etc.), with some degree of success, improving governance.

Other multinationals adhere to ethical principles: ethical share and bond issues, organic production and fair trade, thereby protecting the environment and human rights, notably those of workers, as recognized by relevant international legal instruments: United Nations and International Labour Organization conventions, etc.

The UN and other international bodies have stepped up efforts to reform “multinational governance”. UN initiatives (e.g. the Global Compact in 2000, the multilateral treaty against impunity for multinationals in 2018, etc.) and OECD initiatives (2023 publication of the Guiding Principles for Responsible Business Conduct by Multinational Enterprises, etc.) however, fail to produce practical results. Furthermore, several resolutions put forward by countries in the South have gone unheeded, because of the attitude of industrialized countries. This underscores persistent divisions both between and within political and economic groupings, beyond simple “Global North” and “Global South” denominations.

In 2019, the Observatory of Multinationals noted: “In a world where multinationals weigh more than most States, and where the latter’s room for manoeuvre seems to shrink inexorably, the UN should reconsider its stance vis-à-vis economic powers”¹⁰². The message today is: “Rights for the people, rules for the multinationals”¹⁰³.

Figure n°4 : Multinational companies, 2008-2017



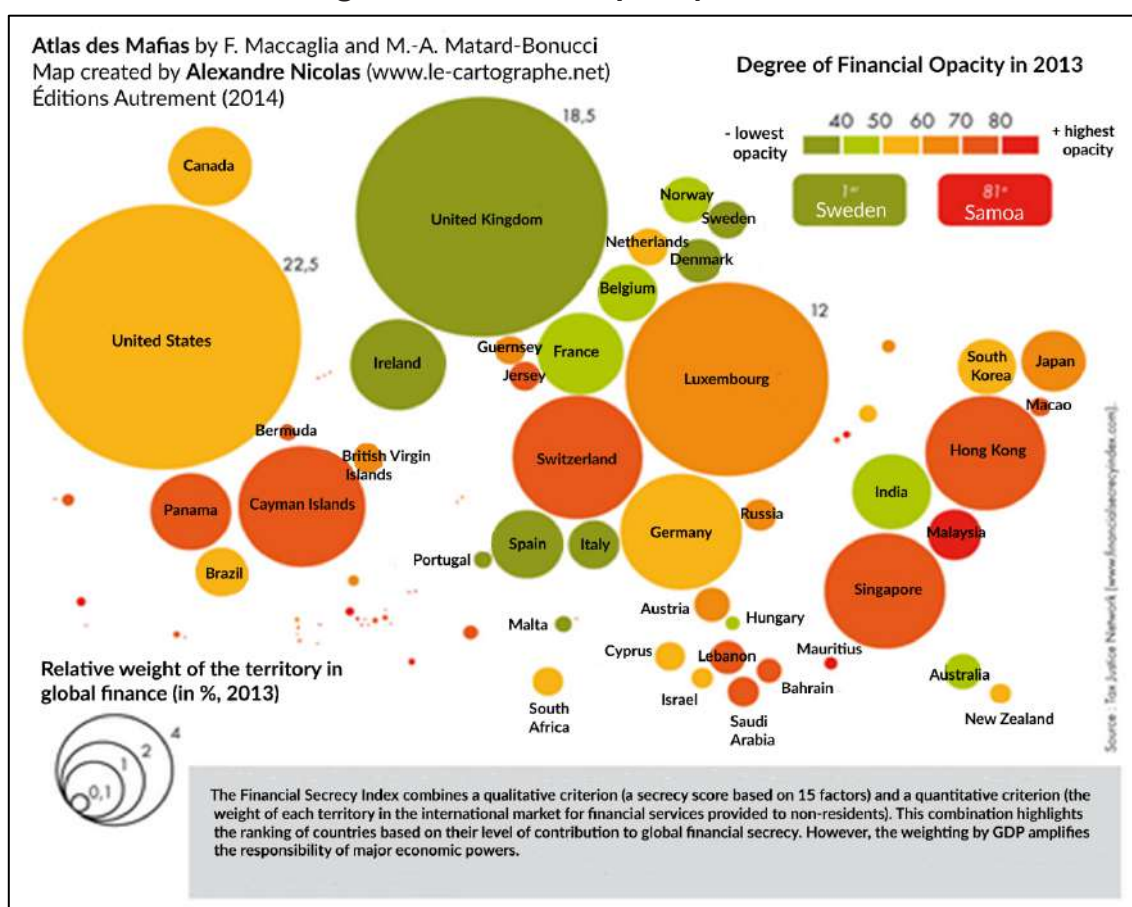
Sources : Forbes Global 2000, www.forbes.com/global2000/list ; World Federation of Exchanges, 2017 Market Highlights, www.world-exchanges.org

Alongside multinational corporations, especially those acting in a way that is neither civic-minded nor exemplary, it is important to consider the impact of mafias and lobbies.

- **Global mafias:** “[...] more than criminal organizations, [...] geopolitical players [...] in their own right [...] in search of power” ¹⁰⁴, they also play a part in globalization and poor world governance. “Economic globalization accelerated in the 1980s, not least for the illegal economy, which largely internationalized and industrialized”¹⁰⁵. These mafias are sometimes at the helm of multinational firms, or are associated with them to launder money.
- **Lobbies** are entities or individuals specialized in influencing governance processes at national and international levels, acting on behalf of specific interests. These entities include law firms, consulting and research firms, think tanks, bar associations, etc., set up as companies, associations, departments, study and research centers with no distinct legal personality, forming part of universities or religious congregations, etc.

They operate, legally or illegally, with governments, national parliaments (such as the US Congress), regional parliaments (such as the European Parliament) and international organizations. Their objective is to instigate or influence decisions, legislation, regulations, international agreements and actions in favor of the interests they represent, which do not always align with the interests of states, citizens, peoples or the planet.

Figure 5: Financial opacity in 2013



3.5. The contribution of regional organizations in governance

Regional organizations expanded considerably in the latter half of the 20th century¹⁰⁶. They now hold a central place in international relations, particularly in regional integration. Their expertise and scope of intervention vary, some with political - even politico-military - powers, while others focus primarily on economic cooperation and integration¹⁰⁷.

The United Nations Charter (Chapter VIII) promoted the establishment of these regional organizations, in a bid to harmonize global governance, particularly regarding international peace and security. Specialized institutions like the World Bank and the IMF supported the formation of regional replicas: the African Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as the African Monetary Fund, the Arab Monetary Fund, etc. These replicas generally operate according to standards established by universal organizations.

Traditionally, these organizations sought to build customs unions and harmonize regulations in specific technical sectors (telecommunications, education, science and culture, inspired by UNESCO, etc.). They then set out to establish common markets, before moving on to economic integration (like the African Regional Economic Communities or the Latin American markets, etc.) and, ultimately, political integration (for example, the European Economic Community, now the European Union, or the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union, to some extent).

None of these organizations fully lived up to expectations. The reasons behind these shortcomings are manifold and diverse, be they political, economic or financial. Because of its heavy financial dependence on the European Union, the African Union struggles to preserve decision-making independence. Furthermore, many AU members are still under the influence of Western powers and other international players.

Box 9: The African Union: a key player in regional governance

The African Union was formed in 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to replace the Organization of African Unity established in 1963. Its principal objective is to promote unity and solidarity between African states, while fostering the continent's political, economic and social development.

The African Union seeks to strengthen democratic governance, promote human rights and ensure peace and security in Africa. It also strives to integrate African economies with initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, a flagship project to stimulate intra-African trade and reduce the dependence of African economies on foreign markets.

This regional organization is endowed with several organs, including the African Union Commission, which acts as the executive body; the Peace and Security Council, which oversees regional stability; and the Pan-African Parliament, charged with promoting participatory democracy and giving a voice to African citizens. These bodies support African Union action in the areas of peace, security, human rights and economic development.

Despite its ambitions, the African Union faces major challenges, notably different member levels of development, geopolitical and security tensions, and questions of national sovereignty. Financial dependence on external partners also limits the Union's decision-making independence.

This is the backdrop to Rwandan President Paul Kagamé's July 2016 presentation, at the close of the 27th African Union Summit, of a plan to slash bureaucracy, achieve financial autonomy, strengthen peace and security, follow-up on commitments and results, increase international representation and influence, upgrade administration and foster regional economic integration.

Acting as intermediaries between States and universal international organizations, regional entities seek to promote good governance, not only among member States, but also among non-member countries¹⁰⁸. They provide support through technical and financial assistance for reform implementation. Like universal international institutions, or in collaboration with them, regional bodies develop means to promote standards, norms, etc., drawing on four distinct influence mechanisms¹⁰⁹, to which they themselves are subject:

- **Sanctions and coercion:** this involves imposing sanctions in a variety of forms, including restrictions, temporary bans on voting, obligations, constraints, suspension of membership or definitive exclusion from the organization.,etc. The aim is to force a state or entity to comply with established standards, for example, EU economic sanctions against a country that fails to respect human rights.
- **Incentives:** this involves granting political, financial, commercial or technical advantages, etc. to encourage voluntary adherence to established standards, such as preferential trade benefits granted to member countries that adopt democratic governance practices.
- **Capacity building:** this is a technical approach, which in itself constitutes a form of incentive. It aims to equip an entity with the resources, knowledge and skills it needs to comply with required standards, norms, etc. Rather than simply demanding compliance, this approach seeks to empower the entity concerned, by offering training and technical resources to its members to improve transparency and accountability in management.
- **Persuasion and socialization:** this method relies on dialogue and interaction with an entity to drive it to internalize and value specific standards. The objective is to get the entity to regard these standards not just as an obligation, but as intrinsically valid, well-founded and better than prevailing principles.

Each of these mechanisms has advantages and disadvantages and can vary in effectiveness depending on the context. Often, a comprehensive strategy, using these mechanisms to complement each other, is the most effective way of promoting and safeguarding governance standards.

Regional organizations have a certain latitude in determining the scope of these instruments, to optimize them in accordance with different national, regional and subregional contexts.

And yet, they face the following governance challenges:

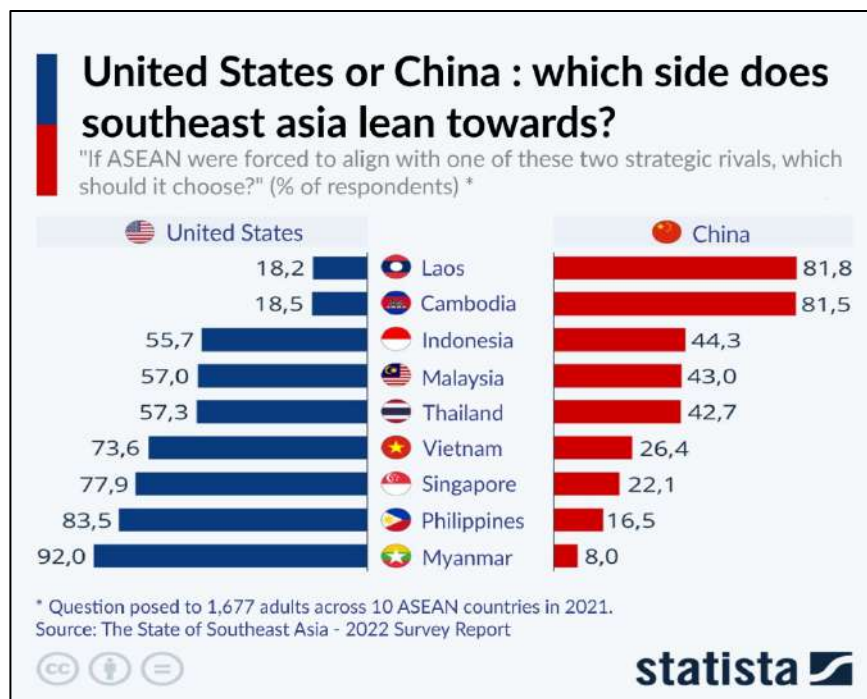
- **Member diversity**, as regards levels of development, political systems and cultures, which makes harmonizing standards and practices particularly complex, if not ineffective¹¹⁰.
- **Conflicts of interest** between national and regional levels, complicating decision-making (e.g. disagreements within the European Union on migration policy).
- **Sovereignty and intervention**: striking a balance between respect for national sovereignty and the need to intervene to maintain or establish good governance is a constant challenge (cf. the tensions between the African Union and some of its member states over intervening in internal affairs¹¹¹).
- **Institutionalization and bureaucracy**: as with any political, administrative, economic or cultural entity, regional organizations, when allowed to perpetuate without undertaking real reforms to keep pace with society and help it evolve, suffer, as Parkinson's Law¹¹² would have it, from bureaucratic red tape, which hinders operational efficiency ¹¹³.
- **Political commitment**: the implementation of drawn-up standards and regulations depends on the political commitment of governments, the absence or inadequacy of which at a number of levels means weak implementation capacity (cf. the difficulties encountered by Mercosur, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), etc. in this area).
- **Geopolitical developments**: regional groupings are not immune to the influence of major powers and their organizations: The African Union faces competition between traditional powers (United States, France, United Kingdom, European Union) and "emerging" powers such as China, Brazil, Iran, Turkey and Russia. This generates collaborations that are often dictated by partner priorities rather than those of Africa¹¹⁵.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is “at the heart of US-China rivalries”¹¹⁶ even though it has managed to support member development by avoiding the pitfalls of the Cold War, harnessing the potential of globalization, and rising to the challenge of China’s growing power.

What distinguishes the African Union from ASEAN is their different histories and the development gap between member states. Another factor is the existence of long-standing disputes and recent concerns between certain ASEAN members, notably Vietnam, the Philippines and China. These concerns are linked to the power dynamics in the China Sea.

The difference in the number of member states of each organization (ten for ASEAN and over fifty for the African Union) is also a significant factor. The greater the number of states, the more difficult it is to maintain cohesion. This was clearly demonstrated by the Greek debt crisis, with its repercussions on understanding within the European Union.

Figure 6: US or China: how does Southeast Asia stack up?



PART II

ANTICIPATE - Outlook 2030-2050

Chapter 1 - A world of crises

Crises have been part of everyday life ever since the 1970s, a feature of modernity¹¹⁷, ranging from recurring political, economic and social crises to structural national and global ones. Global crises, just like the climate crisis, are distinctive in their comprehensive scope.

Yet the discourse on the concept of crisis often blurs its very meaning. Uncritically used across a wide range of fields, it has gradually shifted from its original meaning to denote any period of turmoil or tension. It is therefore advisable, in a foresight perspective on governance, as crises have become a "total social fact"¹¹⁸, to clarify what a crisis really is and rethink the notion, to better apprehend implications for potential future good governance.

"The Limits to growth" report¹¹⁹, widely regarded as a "seminal text"¹²⁰, and the Brundtland Report on sustainable development (Our Common Future)¹²¹, published in 1972 and 1987 respectively, foreshadowed a possible collapse. However, it is generally admitted that political memory is short. Warnings and recommendations have for a long-time foretold human-induced climate change, but to little or no avail.

1.What is a crisis?

Raising the question implies adopting methods and resources to anticipate both the crisis itself and possible responses to it.

A crisis is a major disruption or break in the normal order of things, often associated with instability and uncertainty¹²². A crisis can occur in any context (political, economic, societal, environmental, etc.). From a systemic perspective, a crisis occurs when a system is faced with challenges that disrupt normal operation and require action or change to restore the previous equilibrium, or to establish a new one without necessarily undoing the previous one¹²³.

1.1. Western, Asian and Arab perspectives

Crisis is viewed negatively in Western culture. The word crisis originated in the medical field in Europe, where it was used to designate "all pathological phenomena manifesting themselves abruptly and intensely, but for a limited duration, presaging a generally decisive change, favorable or unfavorable [but most often unfavorable, given the lack of efficiency of medicine at the time], in the course of a disease"¹²⁴.

Crisis is therefore rarely seen as a positive factor for change, bringing about a better situation than the previous one. This view has the effect of reducing governance to a mere crisis management and resolution process, when it should also include a **learning process** conducive to improvement (Cf. part 3).

Box 10: References to crisis from antiquity to today

At a philosophical level, Western perspectives consistently refer to ancient Greece or Rome, but rarely to other civilizations. The Greek word krisis took on multiple meanings. Of these, the four principal ones were: "action of distinguishing", "action of choosing", "action of separating" and "action of deciding". From the fourth meaning derives a medical one: "decisive phase of an illness"¹²⁵. "It is the decisive moment in the evolution of an uncertain process that enables the diagnosis."¹²⁶

"Today, the word crisis means indecision: it is the moment when, at the same time as a disturbance, uncertainties arise."¹²⁷

These definitions are complementary. Crisis is thus perceived as a decisive phase, a critical moment in the course of a process, subject to disruptions, at which time it becomes critical to separate and distinguish elements to make choices and decisions.

The Chinese perspective on "crisis" (wēi jī) does not diverge fundamentally from Western interpretations. In fact, the term crisis is not reduced to a simple juxtaposition of "danger" and "opportunity", but rather evokes a crucial moment (jī) when it becomes opportune to face up to and redress a situation. This notion finds a similar echo in Japan and Korea, and presumably elsewhere in Asia, shaped by centuries of Chinese cultural influence¹²⁸.

The Arabic term “Azmah أزمة” carries a similar meaning. It denotes a disruption of difficult, even critical conditions or circumstances. Taking cultural and religious significance into consideration, the disruptive moment portends a solution (faraj¹²⁹ فرج).

As such, we should not resign ourselves to crises, but rather seek to emerge from them in the best possible way. The outcome of crisis is indeed uncertain, or may lead to the suppression, weakening, stabilization or even consolidation of the concerned entity.

1.2. Characteristics of crisis

While each crisis is unique in terms of context, most share some common traits¹³⁰ that can help identify and anticipate them.

First and foremost is the degree of severity (**serious threat**): crises present significant risks to core values¹³¹, vital functions or basic norms of an organization or society. They also pose a risk to the security, prosperity or well-being of a substantial number of individuals.

The second is twofold: crises are often unexpected, and their timing uncertain. They catch stakeholders unprepared (**surprise**). Moreover, they often cause **disorganization or panic** among individuals or organizations impacted.

The third characteristic consists of a set of interrelated features: a crisis often requires a quick response (**urgency**), giving decision-makers **limited time** to appraise the situation and determine a course of action, due to the imminence of a threat. Decision-making under pressure is further complicated by the fact that crises often present unclear information (**uncertainty**), conflicting information (**ambiguity**) and disruption of normal operating parameters (**instability**).

Lastly, a crisis and its magnitude should not be mistaken for its triggering event: the 2008 financial crisis for example should not be confused with its triggering event, the collapse of Lehman Brothers. Nor should there be any confusion with the system vulnerabilities it exposed (e.g. global supply chains during the Covid-19 crisis).

1.3. Phases of a crisis

There are three distinct phases to a crisis for a system (organization, state, territory) undergoing it¹³²:

- **An incubation brooding phase**¹³³. This is the period when the potential for a crisis to occur arises, through cumulative, unnoticed events - that do not necessarily constitute commonly accepted threats or dangers¹³⁴ - including:
 - ✓ Low-level signals warning of a system malfunction that could lead to a crisis. These signals include organizational or functional anomalies;
 - ✓ System disruptions stemming from multiple vulnerabilities, acting as catalysts for crises¹³⁵.
- **An all-out operational crisis phase after a triggering event**: a phase in which the system experiences a chaotic situation, as it tries to cope with initial shock at crisis onset. The priority during this phase is crisis management.
- **A post-crisis phase** is a time for reviewing the feedback from the event. The objective is to understand what happened and why, and to assess response to the crisis, and identify governance failures before, during and after it. This is a phase of assessment, learning and improved understanding of system risks and vulnerabilities.

An effective governance system learns from a crisis - enhancing **early** signal **detection** and **preparing** potential **responses** to future crises. This approach is particularly important considering the turbulent context forecast for the coming thirty years.



1.4. Greater incidence or perception of crises

Crises appear to be more frequent today than in the past. This increased perception stems from the following factors:

- **Modernity¹³⁶**: crisis is said to be a symptom of the inherent tensions and contradictions of the modern project. Its manifold facets manifest themselves across political, economic, social and cultural life, and attest to the complexity of this phenomenon embedded in the very fabric of modernity.
- **Global population growth** since 1980, entails greater human interaction and, consequently, greater potential for crisis situations.
- **Human tendency to idealize the past**, omitting negative aspects: this is known as “fading affect bias”¹³⁷, particularly in the political context, which leads to a subjective, prismatic view of current political crises.
- **The Tocqueville syndrome¹³⁸** definitely plays a part: in democratic societies where equality is promoted, individuals display a sense of discontent even when their high expectations are met. In the same way, as equality or peace progresses, the inequalities or violence that remain, albeit moderate, become increasingly intolerable, both for the victims and for public opinion. From then on, everything becomes a crisis in a peaceful democratic society.
- **Extensive media exposure**, together with a propensity for sensationalism and a negativity bias, helps foster a permanent climate of crisis. The media, by systematically highlighting issues to capture audience attention, further exacerbated the situation from the late 1960s onwards.

In short, while crises may occur more frequently today, the perception of them is strongly shaped by external factors. Thus, even if the frequency of crises has actually risen, skewed public opinion perceptions lead to an overestimation of both the intensity and the character of such crises (structural or cyclical).

2. From VUCA to VUCA², critical times

Leading thinkers¹³⁹ began predicting the emergence of a major transition in the history of human civilization, in the early 20th century. This structural event has already left its mark on the past century and will very probably shape the 21st as well.

This **Great Transition**¹⁴⁰ from one world, relatively familiar today, to another in the making, brings with it a whole range of emerging and exacerbated processes which blur our understanding of current developments and make them even more complex. The only certainty in this transition is that there is no turning back, and that tomorrow's world is bound to be different, in ways that make it unpredictable today.

2.1. A period of subduction

Such a transition phase is akin to the geological process of subduction, where one tectonic plate slides beneath another. Friction between the two plates and the interplay of massive opposing forces lead to substantial turbulence (magma upwelling, earthquakes and tsunamis). These events clearly outline changes underway and tremors that lie ahead.

Change momentum follows a bell-shaped curve: transformations take place slowly at first, then gradually intensify until they reach a critical stage (the apex), at the end of which most of the change has been accomplished, leaving only minor adjustments to be made. The major challenge lies in the ability to determine where humanity stands along this change bell curve.

Several phenomena once taken for granted (e.g. authority, family, abundance, climate stability, etc.) have begun to collapse. Alongside this, new forces and processes have begun to emerge, with impacts that have yet to be fully appreciated:

- New globalization phase, with flows reorienting markedly (South-South, North-South and South-North¹⁴¹).
- Greater cross-fertilization, where cultures intertwine, clash and sometimes crumble.
- Widespread use of information (Big Data, etc.) and communication (such as wikinomics¹⁴²) technology advances, nanotechnology and robotization, shaping a world that is ever more electronic, computerized, dematerialized and machine-dependent.
- Growing demand for geographical, organizational and relational mobility.
- Empathy as an aspiration, through collaboration, sharing, care and personal services.
- Changes in human intelligence, both rational and emotional, to better grasp an increasingly complex world and develop new paradigms, visions of the future and action mechanisms, etc.

All these drivers, whether structural or conjunctural, present or future, natural or man-made, combine to produce further turbulence as we progress towards the top of the bell curve. Hence the expression “VUCA world”, typical of the apex phase of a major transition.

2.2. The VUCA world

VUCA world is a concept popularized by the US Army in the 1990s to describe the state of the post-Cold War world. It describes an environment or situation that is volatile (Volatility), uncertain (Uncertainty), complex (Complexity) and ambiguous (Ambiguity).

- **Volatility** refers to the speed, nature, volume and magnitude of changes, not following a predictable pattern. For example, sudden and unpredictable fluctuations in commodity prices.
- **Uncertainty** describes the inherent indeterminacy of certain major events, given the unpredictability and surprises they can produce. The global economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, for example, were largely uncertain at the outset.

- **Complexity** refers to the multiple forces, interdependencies and confusion inherent to a situation, system or issue, as well as the multitude of actors and factors that may play a role: for example, the complexity of interconnected ecological systems or global economic networks.

Complexity does not necessarily imply, however, that all complex problems are devoid of solutions. In fact, some are deliberately “complexified” to serve one interest at the expense of another. Such is the case with the complexity of certain voting systems, legal instruments and strategies for influencing and controlling governance.

Drawing on Chris Fenning’s reflections on fundamental communication skills¹⁴³, in the analysis and apprehension of complexity, three pitfalls should be avoided:

- ✓ Assuming that it is necessary to know all the details to understand an issue, a situation, etc.
 - ✓ Focusing on variables and dependencies to the detriment of the problem itself.
 - ✓ Attempting to condense multiple issues together.
- **Ambiguity** arises from a blurred reality, potential for misinterpretation, and how information is read or understood: for example, the different interpretations of government policies by different interest groups, or of UN resolutions by different states. Ambiguity can be a direct result of the complexity and complexification of situations. It is widely acknowledged that many national and international legal instruments, as well as political, economic and sociological studies, contain deliberate ambiguities.

Box 11: The hidden agendas of some contemporary authors

Does Samuel Phillips Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations and the Refounding of the World Order"¹⁴⁴ objectively analyze real civilizational antagonisms, destined to generate explosions, or did it seek to entrench this dogma in people's minds and provide a pretext for "inventing an enemy" and justifying bellicose action against it?

Likewise, does Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History"¹⁴⁵ really predict such an outcome, or was it rather intended to legitimize the acceptance of US domination?

Several assertions, which have become concepts, are above all products of Western Soft Power.

It is particularly complex to anticipate events in a VUCA world, or to fully apprehend the impact of changes in any given context. For decision-makers, this implies adaptability, mental agility - possibly including the use of sophisticated decision support mechanisms - and a tolerance for ambiguity, enough to navigate by sight, as traditional approaches to strategic planning and decision-making are no longer effective. Recognizing that we live in a VUCA world can help develop more flexible and adaptive strategies to anticipate and respond to future challenges¹⁴⁶.

2.3. VUCA²: heightened criticality

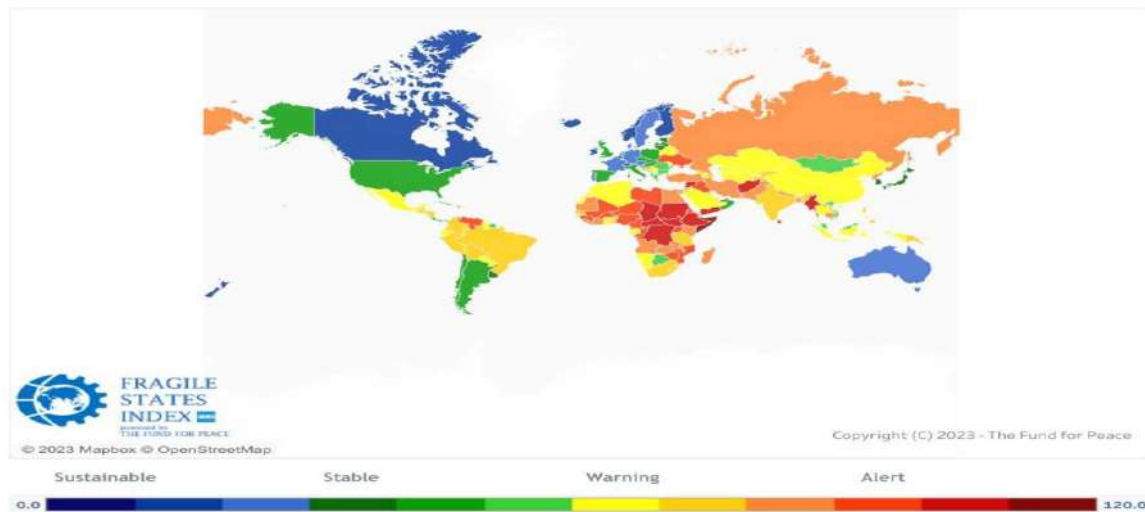
The scale and severity of the post-Covid-19 pandemic crisis prompted a vast rethinking of world views, lifestyles and individuals' relationships with the world and each other. This trend in turn called into question traditional thinking, often qualified as "linear, anthropocentric, mechanistic and excessively orderly"¹⁴⁷. The resulting renewed interest in systems thinking, then, contributed to the post- Covid assessment of the situation, bringing to light a later stage of VUCA: VUCA².

VUCA² denotes both accelerated progress and severity of impact:

- **Vulnerability:** the volatility of events gradually yielded to an awareness of the extreme vulnerability of planet and species, as regards ability to withstand, adapt to or recover from disruptions or existential risks that now loom large over the future. This vulnerability finds expression in the concept and measurement of fragility.
- **Uncertainty:** uncertainty is still part of this magnified version of VUCA, to emphasize the extreme difficulty, indeed absence of predictability of severe and critical events.
- **Criticality:** refers to the critical threshold already breached by a number of processes, organizations and infrastructures, rendered ineffective and even paralyzed by obsolescence, rigidity or unpreparedness, as in the breakdown of global supply chains during the recent health crisis.
- **Artificialization***: the pandemic brought a fresh awareness of the extent of planetary artificialization and its impact on human beings and societies. Concepts such as the Anthropocene, the predation economy¹⁴⁸, the great acceleration and industrialization of Earth's oceans¹⁴⁹ attest to the rampant artificialization, brought about by human activity.

Artificialization transcends the literal meaning of the word, to encompass the growing pervasiveness of technology in our lives and societies: artificial intelligence, genetic engineering¹⁵⁰ involving humans, animals and especially plants, and viruses for military purposes (biological, in violation of the 1975 International Convention on Biological Weapons¹⁵¹ and, more recently, synthetic biology¹⁵²), and nanotechnology, etc. impacting bodies and shallow relationships between human beings, primarily via social networks.

Figure 7: The fragility of states in 2023



In 2022, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Europe brought the highest inflation rates since the 1990s, widespread energy price protests and greater food insecurity across the developing countries.

So, while VUCA focused on disruption to an environment that had become more volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, VUCA² now emphasizes the deteriorated state of human activity and systems. The focus has shifted from the external to the internal, exposing a dangerous and widening gap between:

- accelerated disruptive dynamics (both technological, such as artificial intelligence, hypersonic devices, etc., and societal), generating high levels of tension;
- sclerosis of human systems, struggling to adapt or resisting adaptation, thereby hastening overall breakdown.

This historic Great Transition momentum, which has already played out on several occasions over the course of human history (e.g. the mastery of fire, sedentarization, the end of Antiquity, etc.), is now unfolding amidst emerging existential risks. The world to come looks, if anything, extremely difficult to govern. Some predict that it may become ungovernable: as Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, put it: "Our world is entering an era of chaos"¹⁵³.

Chapter 2 - The world to come

The world in the decades to come will be shaped by structural trends, or megatrends, unlikely to be broken, by **existential risks** for mankind, and by yet unknown emerging events and decisions, which could ultimately prove either beneficial or detrimental.

1. Outlook 2030-2050

The coming decades will be shaped not only by ongoing megatrends unfolding for centuries, but also by emerging trends likely to become subsequent megatrends. The impact of some developments, however minor, is magnified by the very nature of the current period, dubbed VUCA².

1.1. Main megatrends underway

It is not possible to exhaustively enumerate all the megatrends at work today. Some have a greater impact on some countries than others. At global level, except for the existential risks discussed in section 2 of this chapter, the coming decades are likely to be shaped by forces that will put **additional pressure** on global affairs¹⁵⁴:

- **Demographics both explosive and ageing:** the world's population is expected at around 9.5 billion by 2050. Asia is projected to remain the most populous region, with 5.3 billion people. Africa is set to account for over half of global population growth. Europe, on the other hand, is projected to see a decline in population to around 700 million. The Americas would see their population stagnate at around 1.1 billion.

Even in low- and middle-income countries, most of which lie around the South China Sea, populations are projected to age. Sustained population growth up to 2050 will drive increased demand for resources, jobs, housing, education, healthcare, mobility, and care etc.



- **Natural environment in distress**, because of climate change and biosphere degradation (see subsection 3.1 of this chapter). Projected world population and material demand in 2040 would require the equivalent of 2.3 planets Earth. These trends combined are likely to escalate risks to human food, health and energy security, increasing migration, conflict and the depletion of natural resources. Environmental disruptions could also adversely impact people's mental well-being.

Sustainable development policies should include solastalgia*. This concept describes the psychological pain and distress felt by individuals as they realize the damage to their natural environment and climate. It is distinct from, though often confused with, eco-anxiety, which manifests itself in the anticipation of future environmental degradation, a deep apprehension about the future of the planet.

One way of mitigating these mental health effects is to develop green and open spaces for physical exercise, as well as areas conducive to positive social interaction. Such initiatives would help boost people's mental health¹⁵⁵.

- **Limitations of the global economic model based on ultraliberal capitalism**: apparent since 2008, notably in the global financial system's inability to adapt to a variety of circumstances, ranging from the Covid-19 pandemic to wars in Ukraine, Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, etc. and potentially in other countries, soaring energy prices and inflation, rising retirement and health costs for ageing and impoverished populations, not to mention probable sovereign debt crises, which have already hit \$226 trillion in 2020¹⁵⁶, i.e. over three times world GDP (\$85.58 trillion)¹⁵⁷, particularly that arising from "helicopter money".

Indebtedness is a global issue, impacting students, households, migrants, countries both North and South, as well as governments, businesses, etc. The sustained global economic slowdown -known as slowbalisation-, recent inflationary spikes and the growing impact of natural disasters on household wealth all contribute to turning this debt into a ticking time bomb for a number of countries¹⁵⁸. Alongside this, the shift in economic centrality towards Asia continues.



- **Man-machine substitution, with the advent of robots and artificial intelligence, continues unabated,** continuing the age-old trend of outsourcing arduous tasks to animals, slaves or machines. Civilizational transmission, once oral and then written, is now increasingly moving towards audiovisual formats, driving universal communication, accelerated by dematerialization (metaverse, virtual reality, digitization, etc.). This has given rise to global hyperconnectivity (the noosphere), and to mounting challenges in terms of our ability to control a data-driven informational environment dominated by algorithms and an overabundance of data.

Box 12: What future for books and paper?

In the early days of the Internet, in the 1980s-1990s, some predicted the imminent demise of books and paper: “the popularization of microcomputers sparked concern over the future of reading, and rekindled the old theme of the death of the book”.¹⁵⁹

Yet the reality has turned out to be quite the opposite: paper consumption has increased, the publishing industry flourished, and the circulation of books and magazines, as well as a variety of paper documents, both new and used, thrived. Paper books continue to circulate well. “A whole profession was established before the web, but even more so since its appearance, etc.”¹⁶⁰

Actors in this noosphere enjoy a wide range of choices, and many utilize the “virtual” more than the “real”. The Internet or the screen is energy-intensive, prone to breakdowns and entails more immediate risks, particularly for the eyes, the brain and the human being in general. In contrast, paper documents, far more practical, generate less fatigue and let users take a step back, thus attenuating these dangers. This trend is yet another manifestation of the VUCA² world.

1.2. Key current emergences

Human society is globalizing, driven by an unprecedented expansion in communication channels, which favours the emergence of shared characteristics. This transformation is increasingly accelerating. Debate and protest surrounding these developments are on the rise:

- **Disenchanted, informed and divided society, with active minorities** and growing demands from populations who aspire to be actors of their own destiny, as evidenced by Chinese emancipation, Arab springs, liquid modernity movements in the West and awakenings in the South, particularly in Africa, etc. Distrustful of institutions and governments, citizens have begun to organize around communities of affinity. They are using increasingly effective tools to demand political and social change, while demanding their needs be better addressed. The outcome of this process is still uncertain, with a concomitant rise in conservative forces.
- **Growing awareness of the failure of education systems**, particularly those imported from abroad without due consideration for national and local cultures. These systems often seem geared towards social reproduction and maintaining the hegemony of major powers, and fail to adapt to new training needs (systemic approach, technological mastery, equal opportunities, even positive discrimination or affirmative action, gender equality, etc.).
- **Demographic transition**, whereby the world's population is projected to shrink by around 200 million between 2080 and 2100¹⁶¹, to level at 10.2 billion people, an increase of 700 million from the 9.5 billion projected for 2050 in 2022.
- **Increased migration**, driven by several factors. On one hand, demographic pressure in sub-Saharan Africa, where governments struggle to meet basic needs such as education, employment and quality of life. On the other hand, the rise in conflicts and the worsening effects of climate change, exacerbated by the ultra-liberal Western growth model.

Human clusters are fragmenting, both under the influence of technology and because of political and economic developments:

- **Radical technological advances that divide the world** more than they unite it, undermining the ability to make a positive difference: automation versus employment; widespread innovation hampered by rising energy consumption and limited access; centralized advanced research driven by protectionist legislation and a variety of moratoria, generating new geopolitical dependencies, notably as regards artificial intelligence; growing inequalities in access to high-tech curative treatments, etc.
- **Growing imbalance between public demand and government capacity** to meet it, because of limited or misallocated resources and mounting pressures (demographic, environmental, technological, economic, geopolitical): democracy has been hijacked by vested interests and the power of multinational corporations, giving impetus to populism and extremism. Authoritarian regimes could further erode democracy. Local governance could replace state governance, while political volatility increases.
- **Is the world becoming multiplex or non-polar?** Fragmentation and regionalization* are set to increase significantly over the coming decades. Certain regional areas have already begun to falter (such as the European Union, ECOWAS, etc.). Power is dispersed among a multitude of state and non-state actors, none of whom have sufficient power to steer or definitively dominate the international system.

Box 13: Multipolarity versus multiplexity

Multiplexity, as opposed to multipolarity, in the conception of world order is not limited to major powers, as it includes smaller countries, as well as non-state actors from the worlds of business, civil society and so on.

Whereas multipolarity focuses primarily on the political and military dimensions, multiplexity also addresses economic and social dimensions, among others. It is based on the ability of actors to interact with each other¹⁶², and takes into account the variety of ties between them.

International relations are likely to be more complex and less predictable in the future, as interactions between states become less driven by the competitive forces of a handful of superpowers, but rather by a multitude of increasingly volatile interests, sometimes converging, sometimes diverging. This new world order is bound to be more contested and more conflict-prone, not least as economic growth, unless there's a game-changer, is likely to stay sluggish, weighed down by debt service, energy transition, conflicts and greater incidence of natural disasters, etc.

The actual substance of global order change, however, is still open to debate. Beyond the US-China rivalry, is the world turning multiplex or non-polar?

Multiplexity¹⁶³ means a steady retreat from Western hegemony, giving way to a substantial development of regionalism across the globe. A key feature is greater interdependence and interaction between nations. Global challenges, such as climate change, pandemics and economic crises, require joint responses, rendering multilateral cooperation indispensable, despite conflicting political tensions. While multiplexity favors innovation and creativity in solutions to global challenges, it also adds complexity to international relations, complicating decision-making and fuelling nationalism and populism in many countries.

Conversely, non-polarity refers to a global system devoid of poles. Power in this context is distributed rather than concentrated, state power is dwindling, and military force increasingly ineffective when faced with new means, notably soft power, while the influence of non-state actors gains ground. International institutions struggle to develop a cooperative inter-state framework, heightening the risk of global disagreement, conflict and war.

As a result, states cannot function optimally in a non-polar world. A stable global system is essential for States to effectively deploy regional and international strategies.

Developments here neither refute, nor confirm either non-polarity or multiplexity but suggest a parallel emergence of two geopolitical processes in the making.



2. Risk Society

2.1. Principal global risks

The World Economic Forum classifies major risks according to severity and scale of impact. Box 14 lists the ten risks deemed most severe in the short and long term, in 2024.

Box 14: Risk classification

Ranking by severity over the short term (2 years)	Ranking by severity over the long term (10 years)
Misinformation and disinformation (technological)	Extreme weather events (environmental)
Extreme weather events (environmental)	Critical change to Earth systems (environmental)
Societal polarization (societal)	Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse (environmental)
Cyber insecurity (technological)	Natural resource shortages (environmental)
Interstate armed conflict (geopolitical)	Misinformation and disinformation (technological)
Lack of economic opportunity (societal)	Adverse outcomes of AI technologies (technological)
Inflation (economic)	Involuntary migration (societal)
Involuntary migration (societal)	Cyber insecurity (technological)
Economic downturn (economic)	Societal polarization (societal)
Pollution (environmental)	Pollution (environmental)



2.2. The risk society

The concept of risk society was coined by German sociologist Ulrich Beck in his book "Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity", first published in 1992. He draws attention to a fundamental change in contemporary societies as opposed to traditional ones, where risks, unlike natural hazards, are primarily man-made and shape social life.

In the risk society, risk management and distribution take center stage, in contrast to the classical industrial society, focused on the production of wealth. According to Ulrich Beck, the risk society features the following distinctive elements:

- **Invisibility of risks:** many risks inherent to modern society, e.g. radiation or chemical pollution, are invisible to the naked eye, and require specific technologies and expertise to be detected and understood.
- **Globalization of risks:** contemporary risks transcend borders. A nuclear accident, for example, is likely to impact several countries and continents. This raises awareness of risk globalization.
- **Uncertainty and non-knowledge:** a major hallmark of the risk society is the pervasive uncertainty. The emphasis is on "not-knowing", suggesting that late modernity is shaped by things we don't know or can't know.
- **Individualization:** in the risk society, individuals increasingly need to manage the risks they face on their own, rather than relying on traditional institutions or experts.

As a result, the risk society poses fresh challenges to governance and demands new forms of democratic participation. Science and technology, once seen as indisputable solutions, are now seen as potential sources of risk. This challenges the authority and role of experts, as inherent to sound risk management.

3. Existential risks on the rise

History is a dynamic process with civilizations rising and falling, unsettled times and periods of peace, auspicious awakenings and descents into darkness. The 2030-2050 outlook fits into this pattern. Nevertheless, something entirely new has come to the fore in the mid 20th century¹⁶⁴: the prospect of human extinction, like that of other species notably the Neanderthals and Denisovans.

This extinction is likely the result of two fundamental developments: first, predation on the planet, rendering it increasingly uninhabitable, and second, an end to the cycle of civilizations ebb and flow.

3.1. The 9 planetary boundaries

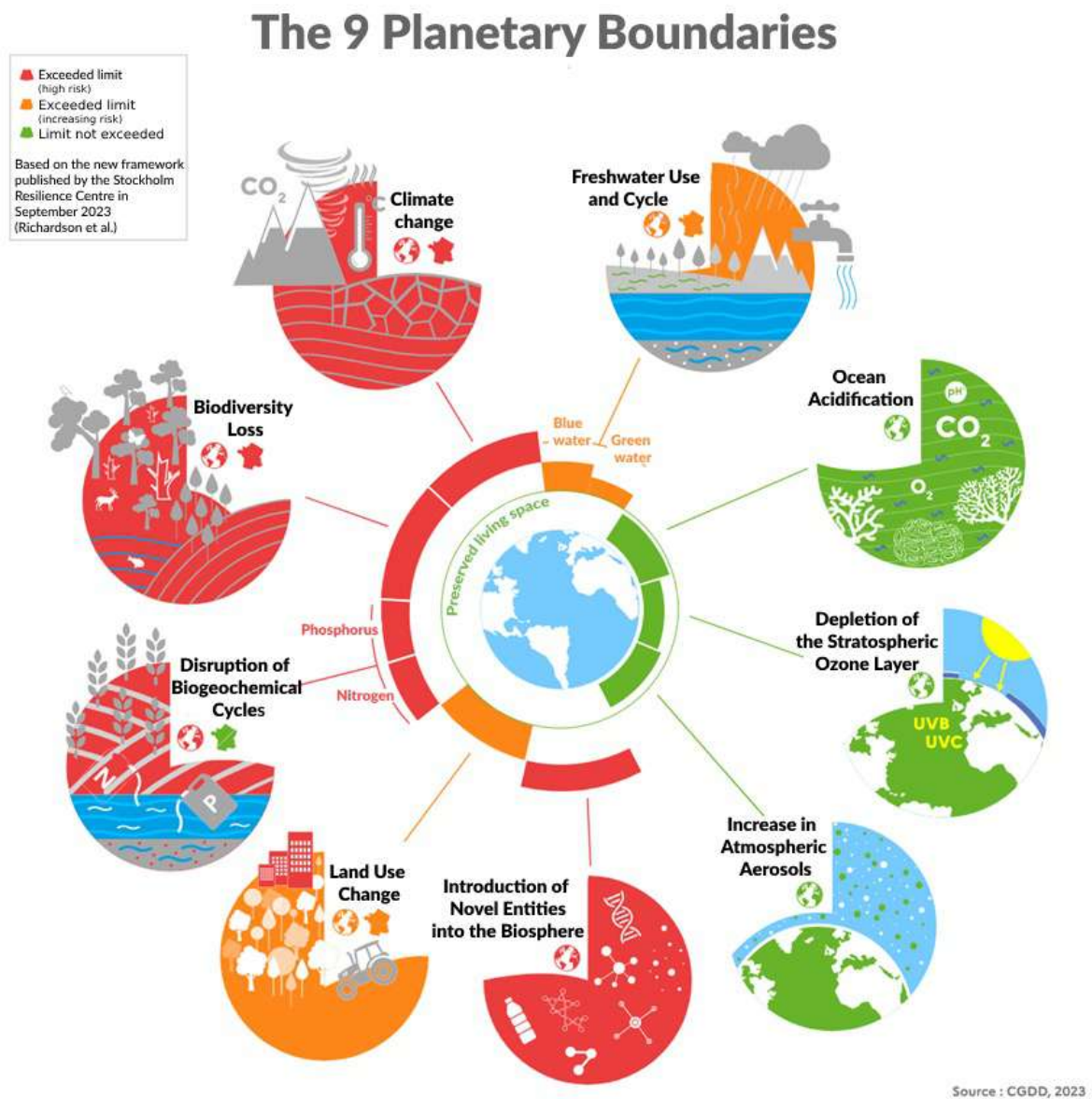
The “nine planetary boundaries” concept, developed by the Stockholm Resilience Centre in 2009, provides a scientific framework for assessing global earth system stability and resilience. These boundaries encompass areas critical to the viability of the “human life-support system”:

- **Climate change**, driven by the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and its global impact on temperatures.
- **Biodiversity degradation**, with living species (animal, plant and micro-organism) extinctions, caused by human predation, introduction of invasive species and disruptions to the food chain¹⁶⁵, concomitant or consecutive.
- **Disruption of nitrogen and phosphorus cycles**, altering the biogeochemical cycle¹⁶⁶ of flows between land, oceans and atmosphere.
- **Changes in land use**, resulting from the impact of deforestation and land conversion on natural ecosystems.
- **Freshwater cycle** requires sustainable management of water resources to cope with growing demand.

- **New entities introduced into the biosphere**, notably chemical and biological substances (plastics, drugs, pesticides, nanomaterials, genetically modified organisms (GMOs*), etc.), which are likely to disrupt ecosystems, living organisms and health.
- **Ocean acidification**, brought about by carbon dioxide absorption, threatening all forms of marine life.
- **Ozone depletion**, responsible for filtering out a great deal of the ultraviolet radiation that is harmful to living beings, including humans and plants.
- **Increased concentrations of aerosols** (airborne particles) in the atmosphere, which impact both the climate and the health of living beings. On September 5, 2024, the United Nations declared that "nine out of ten people now breathe air that is unfit for consumption", calling for urgent action¹⁶⁷.

As of September 2023, six¹⁶⁸ of nine boundaries have been breached (see figure below), putting the planet well beyond safe limits for humankind.

Figure 8: The six planetary boundaries breached in September 2023



Hitting or breaching these boundaries accentuates the risk of triggering irreversible changes, likely to make Earth far less hospitable, if not inhospitable, to human life. Possible outcomes include, but are not limited to, significant loss of biodiversity, extreme climate change, depletion of freshwater resources and soil degradation.

The impact of breaching these boundaries on human and non-human survival is considerable. At the most basic level, it compromises food security, access to drinking water and natural habitats¹⁶⁹. Health risks are exacerbated. The same applies to vulnerability to natural disasters and extreme weather events. In socio-economic terms, this means conflicts over access to residual resources, massive population displacement (climate refugees) and global economic disruptions.

Several governments have introduced measures to limit these changes. The gravity of the situation, however, calls for global, coordinated action to ensure sustainability, notably by curbing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity, managing water and land resources sustainably, and limiting and reducing¹⁷⁰ pollution. This requires not just technology, but economic and policy reforms, as well as a shift in individual and collective values and behaviours. Can this transformation take place in time, before all boundaries are crossed?

3.2. The possibility of civilizational collapse

The breaching of the nine planetary boundaries, arising from the very structures of human societies and activity, is likely to result in civilizational collapse.

There have been successive civilizations throughout history: Chinese civilization flourished at the same time as Roman civilization collapsed, thereby preserving the continuity of the human development cycle. Today's so-called Western civilization dominates the world, fuelled by globalized economic activity, primarily driven by multinational corporations and a tightly knit network of interdependent states.

This civilization is at the origin of the Anthropocene*, or even the Pyrocene* or the age of fire¹⁷¹ and the predatory economy*, which have led to the violation of planetary boundaries. Now that Western hegemony appears to have eliminated all viable alternatives, what happens should it collapse?

This feeds a new perspective¹⁷² whereby a systemic collapse of contemporary globalized society is possible, understood as “a process at the end of which basic needs (water, food, housing, clothing, energy, mobility, security) are no longer provided to a majority of the population by legally regulated services”¹⁷³.

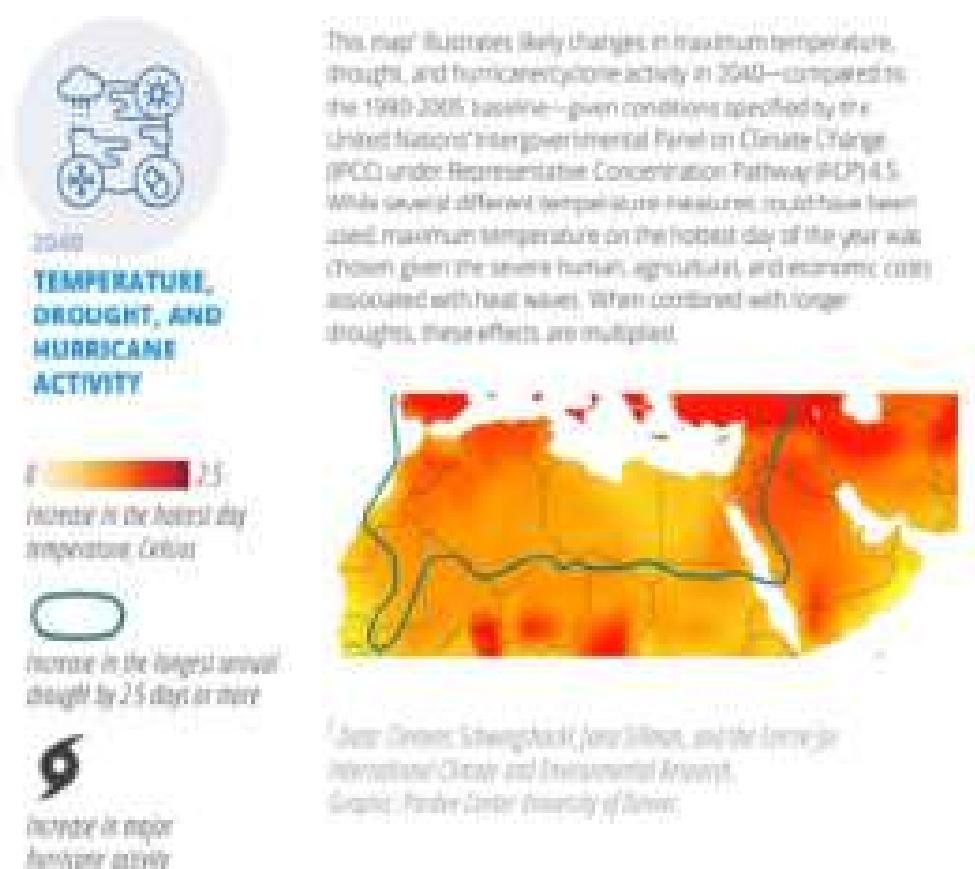
Two distinct factors are at play here: on one hand, the occurrence of existential risks, and on the other, the inability of public authorities to deal with them.

Existential risks are particularly serious, capable of provoking planetary catastrophes that could lead to human extinction or, at the very least, to the irreversible collapse of civilization as we know it. The Center for the Study of Existential Risks¹⁷⁴ classifies these risks into “five major areas: biological, environmental, technological, artificial intelligence-related and social injustice risks”¹⁷⁵ Using quantitative methods to assess these risks, it is estimated that there is a 10% probability of an existential risk occurring over the next 100 years, from natural or anthropogenic causes¹⁷⁶.

Threats of human extinction or global civilizational collapse are generally associated with emerging and future technologies, the impacts of human activity, threats to international security (such as nuclear war) and large-scale natural disasters.

Here’s a particularly illustrative example: the average global temperature rise is likely to reach 2.7°C by 2050, well above the 1.5°C target relative to the beginning of the industrial era as set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement. By the end of the century, if nothing is done, this increase could reach 4°C, rendering entire regions uninhabitable (such as the coastal regions of Pakistan and Bangladesh). Hurricanes of unprecedented intensity would devastate megacities such as Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo, Shanghai and Singapore.

Figure 9: Changes in temperature, drought and cyclonic activity in 2040



Source : Pardee Center University of Denver

Glaciers would melt at an accelerating rate, feeding the rising oceans (Thwaites and Pine Island glaciers in Antarctica) and depriving populations of their main source of drinking water (as for the Himalayan glaciers, which supply water to around 221 million people a year¹⁷⁷; other glaciers, such as Chacaltaya in Bolivia, have already completely disappeared¹⁷⁸). The frozen permafrost plains would also thaw, releasing methane, a particularly toxic gas into the atmosphere.¹⁷⁹.

Global deforestation, due to human activity, is on course to spark the “irreversible collapse” of human civilization over the next two to four decades, according to two leading theoretical physicists specializing in complex systems, who put the risk at 90%¹⁸⁰.

The University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, founded in 2012, and researcher Nick Bostrom's team at the Institute for the Future of Humanity¹⁸¹, lead global research into developing tools for analyzing, anticipating and preventing existential risks. The study of these risks raises a crucial question: how should governments allocate limited resources and channel attention when confronted with a range of threats of varying probabilities of occurrence, with timeframes spanning from the immediate to the distant future?¹⁸²

Other questions to consider include: How to compel multinational corporations, often more influential than some governments, to renounce irrational exploitative practices? How to gradually persuade populations to transform their lifestyles and put an end to hyper-consumption and waste?

Two other hypotheses have been put forward alongside this hypothesis of general, systemic collapse. The first, completely ruling out this possibility, assumes that what has never happened will never happen, a position advocated by Steven Pinker, among others, though he has since tempered his statements. The second, formulated by Jørgen Randers¹⁸³ (co-author of the celebrated Meadows Report), thinks that "there will only be localized social collapses".

Randers argues that "global collapse is not the most likely outcome - at least not in the next 50 years. The most likely thing is that greenhouse gas emissions will not fall fast enough. We will probably exceed +2.5°C [relative to the pre-industrial era], and this will lead to social and localized collapses. [...] Stopping fossil fuels [will remove] 70 to 80% of greenhouse gas emissions. The climate can be stabilized and the collapse of biodiversity halted"¹⁸⁴. This goes to show the complexity and ambiguity that surround all forecasts in this area.

While the Covid-19 pandemic was an early test of our ability to respond to global crises, some regions of the world have fared better than others. Faced with accelerating degradation, humanity has two options: react negatively and refuse to accept it, taking refuge in protectionism and authoritarianism - as though these could protect it from the calamities to come; or act consciously, swiftly and effectively to prevent the onset of any collapse whatsoever.

What mankind does in the next 10 to 20 years will determine the fate of our present civilization. The disruption of natural mechanisms such as the ocean¹⁸⁵ is neither controllable nor rectifiable by human beings in our present state of knowledge.

As a result, risk awareness and crisis management have become essential features of good governance. Such governance will have to deal effectively with the challenges that already loom on the horizon.

Chapter 3 - Challenges facing future governance

Tomorrow's world promises to be tumultuous: crises abound, and existential risks loom large. Governance needs to rise to the challenges outlined above, adapt to new needs and overcome a major hurdle: improving the quality of leadership at the helm.

1. New governance imperatives

In the current context, governance requirements are rapidly shifting in line with technological advances and new societal challenges. The need for suitable governance has become increasingly critical in three major areas.

1.1. Global governance

Climate-resources-energy is the new nexus humanity needs. It presents a major challenge considering the following factors:

- **Climate urgency**, with climate change advancing at an accelerating pace, calls for immediate and decisive action.
- **Resource depletion** (water, minerals, arable land, biodiversity), intensifying because of over-consumption, population growth and unsustainable management practices.
- **Energy security**, requiring a transition that does not exacerbate competition for other resources (such as water and rare earths for production) and preserves energetic supply continuity.
- **Complex interdependencies**, and often non-linear between these various elements.

Governing this nexus is vital if we are to ensure a sustainable, secure and equitable future. Especially as the impacts of climate change, resource availability and access to energy are unevenly distributed, exacerbating migration and the risk of social and geopolitical conflict in response to persistent strain on this nexus.

The 28th Conference of the Parties (COP), held in Dubai in December 2023, and the most recent UN Conference on the Oceans in 2022¹⁸⁶ show that current consensus falls considerably short of what is genuinely at stake: as such, sound global governance remains impossible to date.

1.2. Governance of the noosphere

The noosphere*, broadly defined as “the set of players operating at the intersection of the educational system and society”¹⁸⁷, encompasses all of humanity’s intellectual activity, i.e. all cerebral and mechanical activities involved in memorizing and processing information¹⁸⁸.

This sphere of “knowledge” mirrors the intertwining of issues ranging from managing information flowing over the Internet and social networks, to managing the dissemination of knowledge produced by public and private research. This especially encompasses knowledge produced by multinational firms, which are at the forefront of artificial intelligence, for example, as well as the ability to produce and disseminate reliable fundamental knowledge¹⁸⁹.

The notion of governance of the open scientific commons addresses scientific knowledge as common goods, i.e. shared resources accessible to all, whose use does not diminish their availability. This contrasts with the private ownership of knowledge and aligns with the principles of “Open Science”, which strives to make research more accessible, transparent and collaborative.

Current governance structures, however, tend to impede the open sharing of scientific knowledge. They face considerable conflicting pressures between the need for open access to research (via open publications and databases) and economic and institutional pressures, favouring the privatization of knowledge for profit or academic prestige.

Governance models can either help or hinder scientific commons development and preservation. Such models encompass intellectual property rights, public policies on research and the promotion of knowledge-sharing practices, as well as collaborative arrangements among different scientific parties (researchers, universities, funders, publishers).

Striking a balance between privatization and knowledge sharing is essential to foster the emergence and development of sustainable scientific commons¹⁹⁰.

In open science models, the risk of a “tragedy of the commons”¹⁹¹ is quite real, as shared resources risk being overexploited or mismanaged without clear rules of governance. The financial sustainability of such models is also a key issue, particularly in a context of limited resources and intense competition for funding.

In this respect, the drive towards an open scientific common, while providing considerable opportunities for improved research collaboration and efficiency, also requires substantial adjustments in governance policies at all levels.

A balance between openness and protection, personalization and standardization, is essential to successfully transition to a more collaborative and transparent scientific model.

Good governance of information and social media is essential for vital reasons, mirroring present-day realities associated with digitization and instantaneous information flows:

- The fight against misinformation and fake news, the dissemination of which can generate destructive outcomes, from manipulating public opinion to inciting violence. This undermines individual rights and freedoms (through hateful, illegal, immoral contents, etc.), mental health (particularly anxiety and depression, especially among young people) and social cohesion. There is a clear and urgent need to identify, control and contain the spread of misleading or deceptive content.
- The security of massive volumes of personal data (big data) collected by social media platforms: this data needs to be secured through stringent legal standards.
- Democratic stability, under attack from misinformation and outside interference, requires that its integrity be protected by all available legal means, and notably by regulating political advertising practices and relations between national institutions (such as NGOs, professional associations, political parties and trade unions) and their foreign counterparts.

Furthermore, **managing the dissemination of research-based knowledge** requires careful governance to :

- safeguard the integrity and quality of research in a “commercialized” world where conflicts of interest abound, including within the scientific community;
- ensure that intellectual rights of researchers are protected and that the results of publicly funded research are made accessible to as many people as possible, thus supporting open science, i.e., (the democratization of knowledge);
- direct research (human and financial resources) towards the great challenges of our time, streamline the research effort (by promoting transparent and responsible funding, with allocations according to the importance and viability, etc. of the programs as well as the results obtained, ethics, etc.) and ensure the dissemination of results to all stakeholders or concerned parties.

Solving most of our major societal problems over the coming decades hinges on developing collaboration across various scientific fields and between institutions on a global scale, enabling leapfrog advances in innovation, via a sound global governance of knowledge¹⁹².

1.3. Virtual governance

Virtual refers to something that exists in a digital or simulated form, rather than a physical, tangible one. During the first two decades of the 21st century, a complete virtual world emerged, built on algorithms and physical processors, comprising metaverse*, artificial intelligences of varying typologies, simulations, artistic compositions, encryption systems, valuables (Non-Fungible Token-NFT*, for example), not to mention a constantly evolving cyberspace. While distinct in its way of existing, this virtual universe is inextricably woven into the fabric of everyday reality.

As a result, the idea of governing this parallel world began to emerge. While this universe and its “inhabitants” (artificial intelligence) are immaterial, the effects of the virtual world on the physical world are real (affecting fields such as robotics, stock market systems, online pricing and training, etc.). Several aspects of such governance are already being considered, although the details have yet to be worked out.

Fundamentally, such governance raises the issue of human rights protection. Many researchers argue that regulation should not be limited to technical or legislative considerations but should also be rooted in ethical principles that respect individual rights and promote a free and fair society¹⁹³.



Steps have already been taken in this direction to protect citizens’ digital rights. These actions emanate from several institutions, including the United Nations and the European Union, the latter of which actively seeks to regulate artificial intelligence to ensure the security and fundamental rights of citizens.

Box 15: Citizens' digital rights

Digital technology brings with it new concerns for protecting fundamental rights online, and national and international legal frameworks need to be adapted accordingly.

The earliest examples of digital rights can be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted in 1966. It was, however, with the rapid rise of the Internet that digital rights began to take on real importance.

On September 21, 2020, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution (A/RES/75/1), in which member states affirmed their desire to "improve digital cooperation", as part of a set of commitments aimed at strengthening global governance. Following on from this resolution, the UN Secretary-General drew up a Plan, defining "the actions to be taken by the global community to ensure that [all] people are connected, respected and protected in the digital age, [...] and that all human rights are respected [...] by 2030".

In 2022, the European Union defined a new legislation entitled: "The European Union Artificial Intelligence Act". This "lays the foundations for the regulation of artificial intelligence in the European Union", including the fundamental digital rights of citizens¹⁹⁴.

Aware of the importance of protecting citizens' digital rights, Morocco set up the National Commission for the Supervision of Personal Data Protection in 2009. Several laws on personal data protection, cybersecurity and trust services for electronic transactions have since been enacted.

In this context, Morocco is currently working towards this goal, passing legislation such as Law No.43-20 of December 31, 2020 on trust services for electronic transactions¹⁹⁵ and Law No.05-20 of July 25, 2020 on cybersecurity¹⁹⁶. The Kingdom also put forward a national strategy for digital transition by 2030¹⁹⁷ and the UNESCO Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence discussed above.

Ongoing reflection, divergences, “calls” for action, proposals, etc., governance of the virtual, notably hinges on the following:

- **Embedded Artificial Intelligence**, in sectors such as health, finance and security: framing ethical issues, algorithms transparency and automated decisions accountability (autonomous weapons, in particular those of mass destruction that the UN¹⁹⁸ and NGOs¹⁹⁹ - unlike Western governments in general - want to limit or ban, driverless vehicles, etc.).
- **Cybersecurity**: protection against cyberattacks, data theft and other online threats (to which some powers resort and accuse each other of) to preserve user privacy, in a context of declining nation-state sovereignty as digital technology²⁰⁰ and the misuse thereof emerge.
- **Blockchain**²⁰¹: tracking money-laundering channels, fighting corruption and embezzlement prove essential.

The progressive refocusing on human beings and their rights within global civilization highlights a growing need for ethical governance: which leaders of tomorrow should build and exercise such governance in the face of complexities and the risk of chaos?

2. Chaos and leadership

2.1. Tomorrow's chaos?

Chaos can mean several things, extending from total disorganization or confusion to a more specific scientific concept denoting “a dynamic system that is highly sensitive to initial conditions, and often unpredictable in its long-term behavior, despite ‘deterministic’ laws²⁰²”. This latter definition calls for a closer look at the reasons behind the “hyper-sensitivity” of the global system to which human activity has given rise.

Global system hypersensitivity

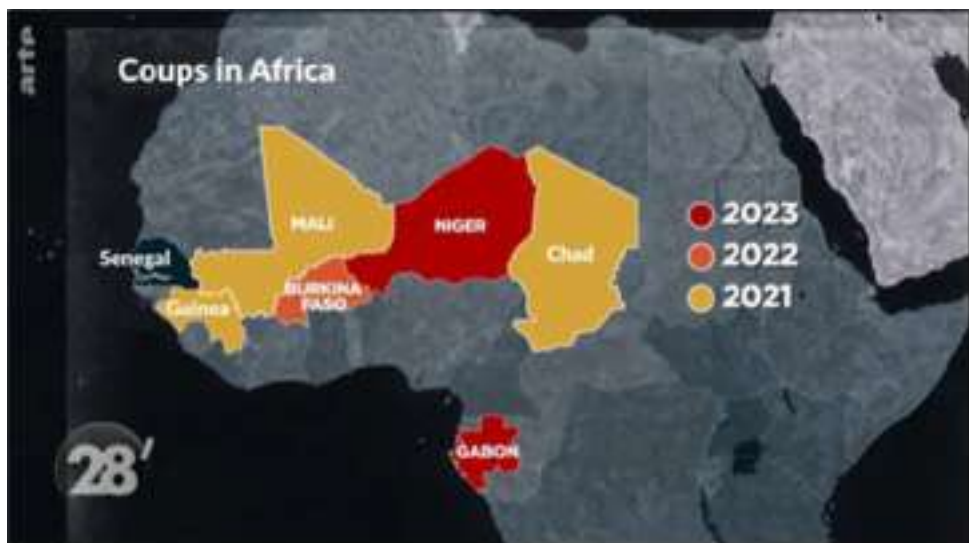
Three major factors shape the state of the world:

- **Very long-term transformation cycles** (major transitions): humanity is currently in one of these cycles, and VUCA² turbulence manifests itself through a sustained polycrisis* (see chapter 1 of part 2 of this report).
- **Structural megatrends**, the exacerbation of which undermines overall system equilibrium in the face of multiple forces including mankind's environmental footprint, demographic dynamics, pollution, over-consumption, etc. (see chapter 2 of part 2 of this report).
- **New trends** arising from societal, technological, geopolitical and economic dynamics, progressively taking shape... (see chapter 2 of part 2 of this report).

These factors, combined, produce an increasingly unstable global system. This can be seen in political, economic, social or natural events that confound reasonable expectations and provoke widespread uncertainty: e.g., recent coups d'état in Africa (see map below), political ascendancy of some states in the “Global South”, and three potential nuclear crises involving Russia, Iran and North Korea²⁰³.

Therefore, traditional stabilization mechanisms are proving powerless in the face of these upheavals, whether violent geopolitical conflicts such as the wars in Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza and even Lebanon, or economic crises such as the one triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, with repercussions far beyond the epidemic, and technological breakthroughs such as the widespread irruption of generative artificial intelligence, directly impacting business and causing massive lay-offs, notably at GAFAM* global corporations and elsewhere.

Figure 10: Coup d'états in Africa



Source : ARTE, 2023

Global interdependence, both geopolitical and economic, and the global scope of technological transformations and environmental degradations all play a major part in this system hypersensitivity. The butterfly effect – a concept based on chaos theory, which shows that seemingly minor actions or insignificant events can trigger a chain of reactions leading to major, unpredictable large-scale changes - has rarely been so visible. This phenomenon can be seen in the financial markets, in the climatic events and in the expansion and spread of conflicts. The sudden, widespread and trans-generational rejection of the policies of some Western powers in Africa is a striking example of the hyper-reactivity inherent to ultra-sensitive systems²⁰⁴.

Lastly, **democracy**, long considered a model for stabilizing the world, shows signs of faltering. Although it has become, in one form or another, the predominant political system²⁰⁵, its core components - the rule of law, the separation of powers, respect for human rights - are under increasing attack. At the same time, while regionalization seemed like a major stabilizing trend in the post-globalization age, particularly in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, it is now considerably undermined by the rise of assertive sovereignist* inclinations.

This hypersensitive state of the world-system is further aggravated by the very nature of the inextricable problems to be solved, often dubbed "wicked problems".

Wicked problems

The more civilizations evolve, the more complex they become. Geographical and cultural expansion brings greater interdependencies, which become more difficult to manage. Thus, subject to deliberate "complexifications" (Cf. above, section on the VUCA world - Complexity), the natural emergence of wicked problems²⁰⁶, complex problems, which are difficult to solve because of multiple interdependent facets, fluctuating, uncertain, conflicting, with high stakes and challenges, etc. renders traditional solutions insufficient or temporary.

These problems generally have no immediately clear solution, are highly interconnected, and face actual constraints that hinder risk-free resolution: poverty, inadequate education systems, issues of sustainability, urban development²⁰⁷, adaptation to climate change²⁰⁸, GMOs use, etc. They stand out for several reasons:

- No exhaustive definition or apparent solution.
- Specific to complex, non-closed and highly interdependent systems; based on interdependent and often contradictory causes²⁰⁹.
- No definitive solution, impossible to test without significant impact, and solutions that are not categorically right or wrong, but rather good or bad, etc.
- Generally associated with issues of public policy and social planning, where every attempt at a solution is likely to alter the problem itself or create other problems²¹⁰.

The recent aggravation and proliferation of wicked problems is notably attributable to two emerging trends:



- **Globalization**, which means that the same problems appear simultaneously in different countries around the world, and fosters greater interpenetration between the local and the global, blurring national boundaries. This process makes it impossible to solve these problems on a national scale, and favors international cooperation in the national interest. Indeed, the world can only fulfill its promises and contain its perils through extensive and ambitious cooperation across borders.
- **Rising paradoxical expectations**, expressed by one set of players (civil society, social bodies, populations) towards another group (managers, shareholders, legislators, etc.) and vice-versa, which manifests itself in a variety of ways: demands for change but the refusal of any change, demands for ever more rights yet without duties to match, desires for higher incomes but shorter working hours, security but greater freedom and vice-versa. More generally, this reflects the desire to transition towards sustainability, without altering either our economic model or our lifestyle, not least our consumption habits, etc. These contradictory injunctions constitute such a barrier to solving problems that the latter become inextricable.

Thus, a number of conditions combine to account for both the great motility of the global system and the proliferation of wicked problems, which ultimately may lead to chaos in the sense of extreme disorganization. Leadership is essential to avoid such an outcome.

2.2. Leaders for the governance of tomorrow

All the points covered in this second part of the report show how essential it is for today's leaders, and even more so for those of tomorrow - in both the public and private sectors - to prepare themselves for the world of tomorrow, already partially here.

Tomorrow's leaders are defined by their ethical and legal authority, their ability to focus their actions on management and their key role in maintaining stability within their organization. Their management styles should be generally based on the principles of good governance (Cf. chapter 1 of part 3). These leaders inspire and influence others through charisma, ideas and the ability to communicate a vision that transcends the immediate environment. Mobilizing through reasoned emotion and inspiration, they channel forces towards the positive transformation of their organization. As a catalyst for innovation and renewal, they are recognized and perceived as such.

And yet, there is a **leadership deficit** among decision-makers today, at both national and global levels, as manifested in:

- inadequate adaptability and decision-making capacity, seen in poor responsiveness to crises, indicating a lack of both courage and foresight²¹¹;
- a short-sighted vision that favors immediate rewards (financial, electoral, prestige, etc.) to the detriment of a long-term perspective encompassing environmental and social sustainability, and prioritizing major global stakes²¹²;
- questionable integrity, marred by corruption, abuse of power and other unethical practices²¹³;
- poor public communication and failure to collaborate with other leaders, impeding the swift implementation of solutions and leading to unsuitable answers to cross-cutting, transnational problems²¹⁴.

Better leadership is therefore crucial to effectively face the complex challenges described above. It is essential, in this respect, to groom a new generation of leaders that is not only tech-savvy but also deeply committed to ethical principles, sustainability and problem-solving.

And yet, with rare exceptions, most national education systems struggle to keep pace with the changing needs of modern society and effectively prepare learners (pupils, students, trainees, etc.) for a complex, interconnected future. Four specific needs are particularly indicative of the overall difficulty in moving from average to high quality education, capable of producing enlightened elites (competent, versatile and of integrity):

- **Training for 21st-century skills:** education systems often fail to incorporate and teach skills that are essential to operate in a global, technologically advanced economy. These range from critical thinking and systemic and anticipatory approach to research and creativity, collaboration and communication, and technological mastery (see below). Additionally, educational systems need to enable learners to understand and tackle crucial challenges such as tackling the effects of climate change and sustainable development.
- **Diversity of backgrounds:** widespread inequality of access to quality education restricts the opportunities for countless young people to express their abilities. This state of affairs not only perpetuates poverty and social exclusion cycles, but also curtails the wealth potential inherent in diverse leadership backgrounds.
- **Mastering critical technologies:** owing to a shortage of commitment, misallocation, inefficiency or shortage of human and financial resources, only a few education systems manage to effectively incorporate technology into teaching practices, to promote truly personalized teaching, and enable practical and conceptual learning of critical technologies and mastering them - e.g. artificial intelligence and virtual technologies.

National education systems urgently need transformation to nurture a new generation of leaders capable of tackling tomorrow's wicked problems. This calls for the following **leadership skills**:

- Systemic and holistic thinking to appreciate interdependencies within complex systems²¹⁵.
- Forward-thinking and long-term vision, to anticipate future problems and implement sustainable long-term solutions²¹⁶.
- Clear communication and effective collaboration across diverse groups to build bridges between industries, cultures, disciplines, etc. to develop comprehensive and inclusive approaches to governance.
- Open and adaptable to new ideas and working methods to respond quickly to emerging crises and opportunities.
- Strong ethics and unwavering integrity to combat persistent corruption²¹⁷, fake news and legitimacy breakdowns that afflict leaders and officials today at all levels.
- Fine-tuned awareness of local contexts to tailor solutions to global challenges as closely as possible to local populations, while respecting diversity and equity²¹⁸.

This means that, to build a level of governance fit to tackle wicked problems and avert chaos²¹⁹, tomorrow's leaders require competencies that national education systems struggle to provide today. These skills transcend traditional educational content: understanding the processes that underlie wicked problems, adopting innovative and interdisciplinary approaches, gaining in-depth understanding of people and local contexts, and reframing problems to find viable solutions.

And because wicked problems generally cannot be solved by individuals alone, future leaders should be able to establish collaborative problem-solving methods, involving a broad range of stakeholders with diverse and often divergent interests. This implies skills in collective intelligence management, negotiation and mediation, etc.

Many leaders today recognize the significance and urgency of global issues like climate change, food security, international migration and mobility, the arms race, human skills, resources and mastery of artificial intelligence and digital technology, not to mention the management of pandemics, etc. However, they also recognize a lack of resources in the face of these challenges, thereby warranting further development of continuous training²²⁰.

PART III

PROPOSE

Chapter 1 - The pillars of good governance

While affirming the centrality of the human being in the development process (highlighting the uniqueness of humanity, a humanized economy, a Care State and the right to be different), the development model sketched out in the 2019 IRES strategic report underscores an urgent need to rethink the governance of tomorrow along four major axes :

- **Using collective intelligence** (citizen contribution, consultation, objective information, etc.).
- **Streamlining resources and uses** (pooling, coordination, evaluation, rationalization, particularly through digitalization).
- **Implementing the subsidiarity principle:** organizing the responsibility of territorial public authorities (multi-level governance), transparency of public action, accountability, empowering stakeholders.
- **Science and facts as basis for public action:** systematic recourse to credible and trustworthy epistemic and scientific communities, multi-tiered anticipation body, effectively independent authority to monitor and validate public information, (and avoid the pitfall of political censorship) systemic approach, and evaluation.

These axes obey two main principles :

- **Prevalence of justice and ethics:** this principle manifests itself in combating corruption, fighting discrimination, making public data available to all citizens, banning speculation on essential goods and practices harmful to the environment, applying proportionate sanctions, etc.
- **Flexibility and alignment with public service needs:** establishing a culture of anticipation across the board, project- or mission-based management, user evaluation of performance, emphasis on user-friendliness, simplification and digitization of administrative procedures in line with the principle of "doing things better, faster".

In view of what was exposed in the second part of this report, it is appropriate to emphasize a handful of guiding principles and broaden the scope of this framework with two new axes: promoting planetary identity, and prioritizing problem-solving.

1. Cross-functional guiding principles

1.1. Factuality and rationality

Factuality

Factuality refers to the quality of what is based on facts, evidence or verifiable data. A factual statement can be verified or refuted through observation or experience.

Science is based on the observation of reality and facts. These are not limited to those observed with the naked eye. Our perception of facts or reality can be misleading. Consequently, methods, means and instruments of observation were devised to apprehend reality as accurately as possible, both in the exact sciences and in the social sciences. The (factual) cause of a fact, act or event may only be a secondary factor, obscuring the primary cause.

Factuality is intrinsic to the act of government if it is to have an impact. Without accurate, documented information on the phenomena that public action intends to address, it is doomed to inaction or error.

In an environment fraught with expert disputes, misinformation and rampant fake news, the perception of reality grows blurred. The consequence is widespread inaction in the face of wicked problems threatening the very survival of humankind. Recent COP decisions attest to the inadequacy of action relative to the scale and speed of unfolding threats.

To ground public action in science and proven facts (factuality), the following operational actions are needed, along two general lines :

- **Develop factual knowledge :**
 - ✓ Provide ongoing staff training to upgrade and update skills.
 - ✓ Enforce systematic compliance with basic methodological principles: apply systems thinking to all research and action processes, test before generalizing, assess adopted measures in the field (in-situ) and ensure data interoperability.

- ✓ Institute a centralized repository for open information and set up virtual knowledge pooling structures.
- **Improve access to knowledge :**
 - ✓ Enable access to global epistemic and scientific communities to support decision-makers prior to action, thus ensuring public action is based on up-to-date, reliable knowledge.
 - ✓ Create a scientific and technical oversight authority - at national or regional level - to review and synthesize new information before disseminating to the public.

Rationality

Factuality demands rationality, i.e. the ability to reason, analyze and make decisions based on logical and coherent arguments.

Rationality is based on reasoning and reflection, as distinct from belief. Reasoning can be deductive, inductive, by analogy, concessive or by absurdity. Law uses a *contrario*, a *fortiori*, a *pari*, teleological and syllogistic reasoning. Each of these modes of reasoning needs to be used judiciously, in accordance with the relevant subject matter.

Good global governance calls for the use of all these modes of reasoning as appropriate to the specific area, i.e. science and technology or "soft" sciences, notably international law, whose purpose is to establish and enforce norms and ensure the proper functioning of international institutions, other stakeholders in international relations and multinational corporations.

In an interdependent, interconnected and, therefore, fragile world, good governance requires a rational, ethical and precise grasp of the complexity, extent and gravity of dysfunctions, etc.

The critical situation humanity faces today, with the breach of multiple planetary boundaries, should prompt immediate action to re-establish rationality in all areas where it has been abandoned, watered down or distorted. Now more than ever, rationality is *sine qua non* to good governance.

1.2. Participation and transparency

Participation and transparency are essential components in the very definition of governance, one that is distinct from the traditional concept of government.

Participation

Participation and collective intelligence go hand in hand. Both are deemed successful when used to :

- **prioritize consultation as a decision-making method**, by dissociating public action reform from political and electoral contingencies ;
- **foster participative projects**, by developing frameworks for citizen participation, consultation and collaboration ;
- **facilitate and develop citizen involvement** by creating a compelling, meaningful vision and communicating it clearly; systematically inform citizens of the structural consequences of public action.

However, the broader the participation, the more difficult it is to achieve consensus, as illustrated by large-scale UN conferences.

Figure 11: Mind map of collective intelligence



Source: People's collective intelligence - Image search (bing.com)

Transparency

Transparency is essential to acquiring and maintaining participant and external stakeholder trust governance processes often require, considering the interdependence and interconnection highlighted above.

Fair international civil society plays a major role in this respect. That of reviewing national governance systems, from the United States and other powers to the least influential of countries, and highlighting progress, shortcomings and failures. Stakeholders, public opinion, experts and others alike are provided with conclusions to inform decision-making, inspiring action (cooperation, boycotts, etc.) and, in some cases, inaction.

Factuality, rationality, participation and transparency are all key principles for tackling crises with the requisite learning agility.

1.3. Learning agility in a crisis

Agility consists in making public authorities more flexible and responsive to needs. It presupposes a transformation of what is already instituted, to ensure that institutions do not stagnate, obstructing progress.

For a true openness to change to occur, three mechanisms need to be implemented regarding public governance :

- **Genuine crisis pedagogy**, so that every manager, elected official, civil servant and even citizen understands the imperative need to transform public action.
- **Management based on trust and freedom of initiative**, backed by appraisal; compensation (career progression, appointment to other responsibilities, etc.) that is no longer based on seniority, but on solid, proven experience and the ability to drive the relevant institution or entity forward.
- **Recruitment should be diversified** in favor of greater social and professional diversity, with the prerequisite of prior private-sector experience.



The “pedagogy of crisis” consists of not only clarifying the state of the world, but also bringing actual issues to the fore, regularly deploying civil servants on the ground, alongside local populations facing major or recurring challenges. This awareness of day-to-day realities should facilitate collaboration, solidarity, practical solutions and practical argumentation for quick decision-making.

The agility of public authorities in the face of crisis calls for embracing the following two principles :

- **Promoting a culture of anticipation among public authorities**, which enables fine-tuning of visions and adopting proactive approaches: applying new project management methods such as SCRUM²²¹, implementing new organizational models, introducing flexible legislation that fosters agility and streamlines hierarchies, and promoting project- or mission-based management.
- **Protecting and simplifying the lives of citizens**, by treating them as customers rather than users.

2. Two new axes

2.1. Towards a global identity

The Centre for Planetary Identity defines planetary identity as “the experience of belonging to the planet as a whole, which includes the whole natural environment and the complex web of life that links humanity and its built environments and nations to the whole of nature and the biosphere.”²²²

The center recalls the “growing global threats to the very sustainability of modern civilization²²³ and the need for “global solutions [at] a time [when] there is a wave of separatism and partisanship that is transforming identity groups into conflict groups.”²²⁴

The idea of a planetary identity suggests a sense of shared belonging to the Earth, transcending traditional ethnic, national, cultic and cultural identities, etc. It is likely to open up these identities to one another in a spirit of mutual understanding and complementarity, with a view to overcoming the negative aspects of current governance.

The “One Health, One Planet, One Ocean” movements bear witness to the emergence of such a planetary identity. Several factors contribute to this emergence :

- **Globalized communications**, notably via the Internet, social networks and other digital platforms, foster the emergence of a global, interconnected consciousness. This enables swift dissemination of information and ideas across borders, favoring a degree of uniformity in cultures and values²²⁵, notwithstanding the debatable implications of this phenomenon.

The very nature of cultures is based on the principle of diversity. Yet, globalization means Western culture predominates, gradually eroding and destabilizing cultures that attempt to resist “Westernization of societies”. Global identity should therefore be based on a consensus of common, universal human values, while respecting the specific characteristics of each culture.

Furthermore, at least two problems should be confronted: “infobesity”, with a communications system fraught with contradictions, ambiguities, changes and resistance, while reflecting the actual experiences of societies and the international community, as well as the reality that much of humanity is not active in this system, has no access to it yet, or has no means of accessing it in the near future.

This is true in low-income countries, where only 27% of inhabitants had Internet access in 2023, while the figure stood at 93% in high-income countries. This 66% gap reveals the extent of the digital divide, separating high-income and low-income countries.



- **Severe damage to the global environment**, accelerating anthropogenic climate change, large-scale warfare, militarization of space, potential misuse of artificial intelligence, etc. all call for a coordinated response on a planetary scale. This in turn would strengthen the sense of a common destiny and planetary identity, where individual and local actions have global implications. International agreements, such as the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from human activity²²⁶ and the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, reflect this interdependence and partial mobilization around collective action, even though this was primarily driven by the two largest polluters, China and the United States.
- **Movements for climate justice, human rights and against economic and social inequality, for example**, have achieved a measure of success, with global reach and resonance. These initiatives foster transnational solidarity, reflecting an emerging global identity.
- **New generations, generally better informed, more mobile and more connected than previous ones**, seem to have rid themselves of the fear of the Other, through a more international education (university mobility), increased cultural exchanges (such as language stays, Erasmus+, etc.) and access to a broad range of media, including virtual ones, not confined to the mainstream sphere, all of which contribute to expanding individual perspectives and intercultural understanding, reinforcing a sense of belonging and planetary awareness.

Global awareness among the new generations, however, remains nuanced, with some young people seemingly disconnected from global issues amidst a resurgence of individualism and hedonism. Nor are new generations necessarily homogeneous throughout the world, and social anxiety can at times complicate their interactions.

It is therefore vital to incorporate this emerging planetization into governance, in two ways :

- **Strive to facilitate global governance** through the standardization of norms and exchanges, among others, among political leaders, academics and civil servants (e.g. the Public Sector Foresight Network bringing together civil servants in charge of foresight in different countries), etc. This approach also entails close cooperation with global organizations (United Nations, World Economic Forum, etc.) as well as governmental and non-governmental bodies.
- **Foster development of this planetary identity**, by incorporating it into educational curricula and developing interculturality in conjunction with genuine shared, universal human values accessible to all.

Fostering a planetary identity also means establishing mundiality, along the following lines :

- **Protect the rights of every human being, regardless of place of birth or residence.**
- **Promote mobility:** ensure the free movement of people throughout the world, while respecting the rights of indigenous populations.
- **Preserve the resources that constitute a common good of humanity.**
- **Encourage linguistic permeability**, by promoting multilingualism and vehicular languages.
- **Accelerate the political planetization process.**
- **Establish new, post-globalization forms of international cooperation.** This requires :
 - ✓ rethinking and building a new international system, spanning not only the political, but also the economic and social dimensions;

- ✓ advocating for a reform of international institutions, to include a generalization of the "one man, one vote" rule and the creation of new bodies such as a Council of the Wise ;
- ✓ adopting a proactive approach to global issues.
- **Co-build a resilient socio-ecosystem**, through normative programs of global interest.

Box 16: Good governance for global identity

Good global governance, at national, regional and local levels, is a key factor in nurturing a collective planetary consciousness and building a genuine planetary identity. If successfully implemented, Agenda 2030 Goals, along with more recent global measures to govern artificial intelligence, and the much-vaunted subordination of multinational corporations and other firms and stakeholders in this same governance to the law, i.e. binding rules of conduct, etc. provide a solid foundation for planetary identity. States that consider themselves above the law still have to accept and implement it.

The global citizenship movement, part of this planetary construct, was dubbed a "new and vital force" by the UN in 2016²²⁷. UNESCO promotes this movement through global citizenship education²²⁸. Similarly, globalist civil society organizations such as World Citizens and the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizen Action pursue common goals.

However insufficient, advances made, and voices raised in this vein nonetheless constitute a step forward on the path towards an emerging identity and planetary governance, the most visible example of which is the hoped-for future climate governance.

2.2. Priority to problem-solving

Governance, at home and abroad, faces the challenge of **finding suitable remedies** to polycrisis, existential risks and wicked problems. **Top priority** should go to complex problem-solving.

Finding suitable solutions to the most wicked problems²²⁹ requires the following :

- Taking account of collateral damage and cascading effects (avoid creating new problems when trying to solve others).
- Ensuring the technical sustainability of a solution at scale and in its socio-economic application context (transposability).
- Listening, dialoguing and co-building solutions with stakeholders (collective intelligence is essential to foster a collaborative approach).
- Set up tools and evaluation systems to monitor solution implementation, measure effectiveness and ensure suitability and sustainability.



Challenge-led innovation is an essential tool for solving complex problems. This new approach²³⁰, developed by the Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation²³¹ is designed to tackle wicked problems, including those with a social dimension²³², i.e. a human-centred focus), by guiding innovation processes towards solving specific, urgent problems. It stands out for its focus on practical, large-scale challenges (climate change, food security, public health, etc.), generally involving collaboration between multiple stakeholders (including academic institutions, companies, governments and sometimes even the general public)²³³.

Such an approach incorporates the essential elements for any decision-maker, namely: leadership and culture, narratives and drivers, principles of adaptive governance (see below), funding and investment flows, as well as capability and capacity.

The objectives of the approach are to :

- align processes and players to generate systemic change;
- mapping out ecosystems required to innovate and meet challenges;
- provide framework and guidance to support multi-actor innovation in complex fields ;
- create a learning framework for innovating to achieve complex, multi-sector objectives.

This innovation revolves around four key principles :

- Challenge-driven: innovation is driven by a specific need or problem, rather than by the pursuit of innovation per se ;
- Cross-sectoral collaboration: often requires cooperation between different sectors and disciplines to tackle a problem holistically ;
- Participatory approach: may include participatory initiatives, soliciting stakeholder input, including from end-users, to identify suitable and effective solutions ;
- Sustainability and social impact: as target challenges often relate to issues of sustainable development and social impact, innovations frequently seek to produce long-term environmental and social benefits.

Typologies of Governing Challenges

Theory of Action 2: Networked

Network Governance

Metaphor: Nervous System

Governing for Coordination

Transformer Challenges

Accelerator Challenges

Governing for Coherence

More Complex

More Complicated

Theory of Action 1: Structured

Hierarchical Governance

Metaphor: Backbone

The **Deaf Major Diagram** is based on Wittenberg et al. (2010), with a nod to the **Complex Framework** (B. Strassman and Network Forum, 2010) and the **Complex Framework** (B. Strassman and Network Forum, 2010).

Challenge Canvas

Challenges are coherent fields of action + innovation that could create momentum towards the Directional Goal

We can identify challenges using a variety of approaches – and it can be good to start with where we are now, and what might be needed to take the next step forward. We refer to this as the ‘Challenge Radar’ – as it helps us to identify which approaches may be most appropriate to our context at a particular point in time.

Starting points for how to develop challenges

Reflecting on Challenges

Are your challenges...

- Aligned towards your goal...?
- Ambitious but achievable in diverse ways...?
- Specific enough to generate inspiration and focus for action...?
- Broad enough to engage a diverse range of actors...?
- Systemic in nature – not solvable by one technology, one actor or one sector...?
- Differentiated and complementary (to / from each other)...?
- Is it helpful to frame the challenge as a ‘what if’ question?

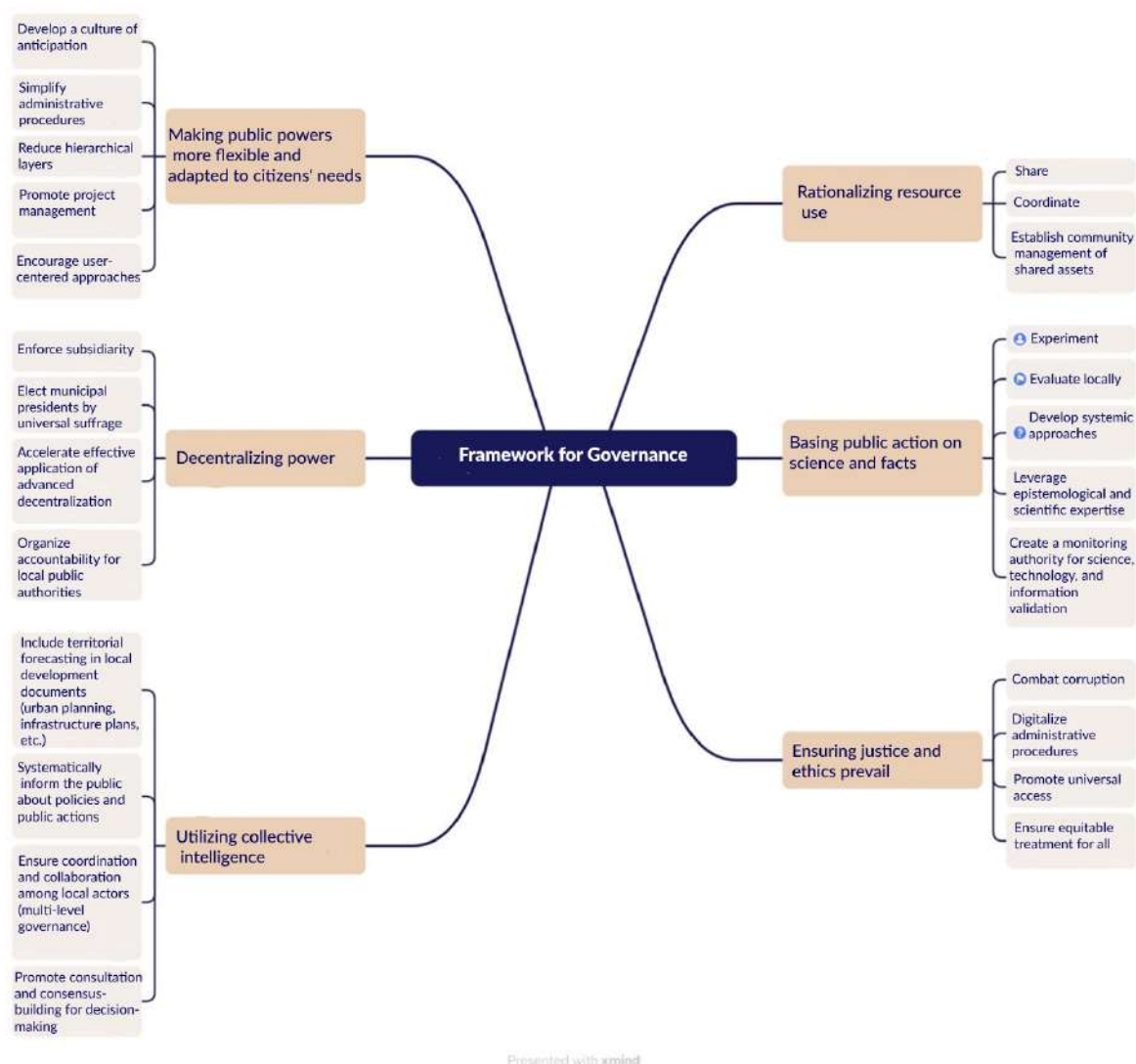
Challenges can be developed by starting with influencing capacity – by exploring where or at what points there is the greatest potential to influence action towards the goal + framing challenges around those points

Challenges can be developed by starting with existing capabilities + framing challenges around how those strengths could be effectively + intentionally amplified

Challenges can be developed using different kinds of evidence (especially practice-based evidence) + action research to examine where sensitive intervention points across a system could be + framing challenges around those points

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Figure 13: Governance framework



Source : IRES processing, 2024

Chapter 2 – Planetized governance

As globalisation progresses, the major existential challenges and threats previously analysed (e.g. climate change, pandemics, migration and international security) call for strong cooperation and close coordination between nations, to strengthen global governance institutions and enhance representativity of all international interests and needs.

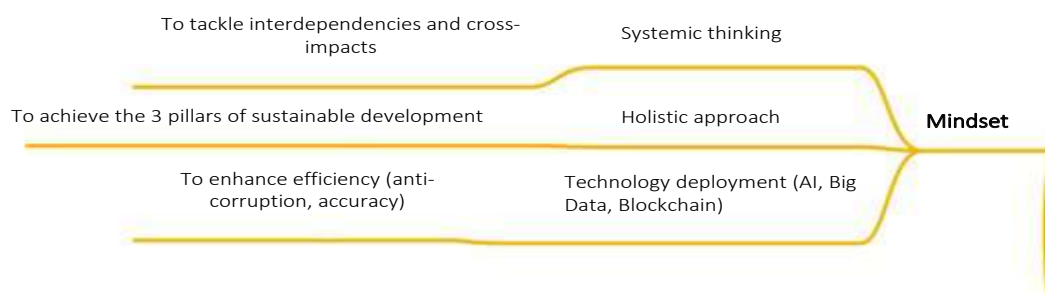
Planetization can only occur at a global scale: henceforth, even the most basic levels of governance should adopt the principles and best practices of governance at this very special time in history, when anything can happen.

1. Planetization

Planetization refers to an awareness of the state of the planet, and of the fact that all its components - territories, ecosystems, biomes and people - are interconnected. We need to think of the future in terms of the planet as a whole and develop public policy accordingly.

1.1. A new mindset

To change our ways of doing things, we first need to change the way we think about the world (Worldview). To do this, we need to act on all available channels: education, continuing education, culture, media (films, books, comics) and so on, ...

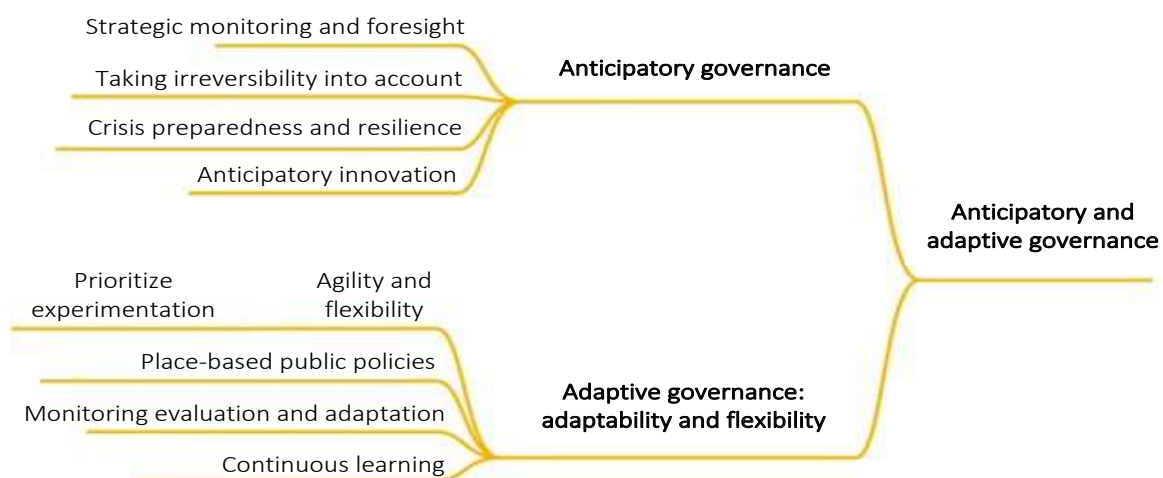


Source : IRES processing

... to which one should add “planetary realism”, urging greater recognition of the interdependence between human and natural systems. This realism calls for sustainable viable policies that transcend short-term political or economic interests. This includes strategies for climate change, biodiversity, natural resource management, adjustment to changing environmental realities, phasing out and dismantling weapons of mass destruction, banning the use of artificial intelligence for destructive purposes, and so on, ...

1.2. Anticipatory and adaptive governance

In the face of accelerating global changes, adaptive and anticipatory governance become essential concepts. The former is based on the recognition of the irreversibility of certain phenomena and on crisis preparedness, while the latter focuses on the ability to adapt continuously to environmental transformations. Both approaches provide a strategic framework for tackling complex challenges posed by climate change, migration and other global concerns.



Source : IRES processing

Anticipatory governance

Anticipatory governance²³⁴ is based on two fundamental elements:

Embracing the notion of irreversibility :

Climate change, technology and artificial intelligence are all part of an exponential process, generating changes on a scale and at a speed that often surpass decision-maker expectations. Consequently, unless appropriate decisions are taken in good time, effectively anticipating such non-linear shifts, any transformation is liable to slowly, and then suddenly, become irreversible.

Crisis preparedness and resilience :

In a VUCA² world where crises abound, it is essential to consider crises in their context, and to understand the overall process leading to their onset and propagation. In this way, governance incorporates an essential anticipation and prevention process²³⁵ : using connectivity to increase resilience, while always ensuring there is an alternative plan²³⁶.

Adaptive governance

Adaptive governance as a concept stems from the need to quickly adapt to environmental change. Emanating from research into socio-ecological systems, the concept was designed to address the uncertainties and complexities inherent to such systems. Adaptive governance is thus emerging as a strategy for addressing changes brought about by climate change, community relocation, etc.

This concept encompasses a range of dimensions, including flexibility of adopted response, continuous learning, individual leadership, trust and power-sharing.



"Mechanisms to ensure responsiveness to fast changes in the environment in information and communication technology projects studied and conceptualized in this research are of three types :

- Agile governance through centralized distribution of decision-making power and polycentric responsibility allocation. [It] distributes responsibility flexibly among governmental and non-governmental players, while keeping decision-making power on one side only.
- Polycentric governance through decentralized decision-making and centralized distribution of responsibility. [It] distributes decision-making power flexibly between governmental and non-governmental players, while maintaining responsibility on one side only.
- Organic governance through decentralization of power and polycentric distribution of responsibility. [It] distributes decision-making power and responsibility flexibly between governmental and non-governmental actors."²³⁷

The fundamental idea behind adaptive governance is that policies and management practices must be able to adapt to change and new knowledge in order to respond adequately to current and future challenges.

Benefits include greater resilience of governance systems, enabling better responsiveness to environmental disruption or change, and greater inclusiveness, leading to more equitable and accepted decisions.

Three major obstacles stand in the way of adaptive governance: the complexity of coordination, as managing multiple stakeholders and levels of decision-making is difficult and costly; institutional barriers to adequate flexibility and adaptability of governance processes; and lack of access to reliable, timely data.

Adaptive governance²³⁸ is particularly appropriate for the virtual world (Chapter 3 of Part 2).

1.3. A fundamentally multi-level process

This global governance process is necessarily multi-level, as the diagram below illustrates. To be successful, global governance should be adequate, if not exemplary.



Source : IRES processing

2. Global governance

The global challenges mentioned above call for sound, ethical cooperation and coordination between the world's diverse stakeholders, in particular between states and international organizations.

However, current global governance is, in some respects, at an embryonic stage (cf. climate governance: the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the COPs), iniquitous in others, and all this at a time when the scale of wicked problems puts the survival of mankind and the planet at stake²³⁹.

Box 17: Urgent cooperation to preserve one of humanity's common goods: the Ocean

"We are therefore deeply alarmed by the global emergency facing the ocean. Sea levels are rising, coastal erosion worsening, and the ocean hotter and more acidic. Marine pollution levels are rising at alarming rates, one-third of fish stocks overfished, marine biodiversity continues to shrink and around one-half of all living coral has been lost, while invasive alien species present a major threat to marine ecosystems and resources. While some progress has been made towards meeting some of the targets of Goal 14, this is not happening at the speed or scale we need to reach our objectives.

We deeply deplore our collective failure to meet targets 14.2, 14.4, 14.5 and 14.6, all of which expired in 2020, and renew our commitment to urgent action and cooperation at global, regional and sub-regional levels to meet all targets as soon as possible and without undue delay²⁴⁰."

2.1. Anchors in a fluid world

As mentioned above, the States of the South strive in principle to build a multipolar world, consistent with the United Nations system and reformed regional systems²⁴¹ for better global governance. This multipolar world in the making seems in competition with an non-polar world, driven by such emerging forces as Planetization, globalized communications, transcontinental alliances, efforts to escape the control of hegemonic powers, etc.

In a non-polar world, “alliances” proliferate and intertwine according to constantly changing interests, while retaining a strong sense of belonging to a common planet and the need for close cooperation to ensure its preservation and development. In such an environment, a universal international organization such as the United Nations would be called upon to play a greater coordinating role.

Attraction and anchoring factors for global bodies are essential to encourage States and international organizations to cooperate on a planetary scale, with a view to improving global governance. These include climate, security and the needs **of future generations**²⁴². The rights of this future generation have become an issue of high political and academic importance.

The 2021 UN call for renewed global governance took the issue of future generations to a new level, mentioning it 36 times in the Secretary General’s report entitled “Our common agenda²⁴³”. Proposals included a Declaration on Future Generations and the appointment of a UN Special Envoy to deal with the issue.

Future generations now hold a significant place on the UN agenda, not least because of the rise of global youth movements, calling for and acting in favor of planetary and human values: environmental and climate justice, rallying over 292 youth groups across all five continents²⁴⁴, social justice, peace, etc. It remains however to be seen if UN member states take up this call, as well as other UN actions (programs, resolutions, international legal instruments promoted by the Organization - to no avail so far).

Ways of anchoring in a fluid world can be entirely different as well, based on two principles :

- The broad dissemination of a realistic vision of the state of the planet, the causes behind its deterioration, and the methods and means to protect and regenerate it. This should lead to greater cooperation between governments, and recalcitrant multinationals to respect the law, particularly human rights.

This approach, which incorporates the planet's physical and ecological limits into decision-making processes, contrasts with traditional "**political realism**" by explicitly placing ecological and climate issues at the heart of the analysis of international relations and public policy .

- The importance of **legislation** and the effectiveness of national and international legal standards to achieving global governance in all areas beyond major conferences and forums, "Money, nation-states and central banks are still around, and change stems from revolts, occupations and demonstrations - but in the end, it is legislation that will bring about such change, by creating a new legal regime that is equitable, just, sustainable and secure etc²⁴⁶.

2.2. Outlines of a new global governance

In almost 80 years of existence, the United Nations has achieved relative success in preventing and ending conflicts, and in stabilizing regions by means of "post-conflict" measures (ceasefire agreements, armistices, disarmament, demobilization, reintegration²⁴⁷, peacebuilding and reconstruction). The UN has also worked to promote human rights and contributed to economic development, poverty reduction and improved health conditions in many parts of the world, through its specialized agencies (World Health Organization, World Food Program, etc.).

But in recent years, it has come under increasing criticism and disaffection, particularly from major powers, the populist extreme right²⁴⁸, etc. as well as for its failures in the management of a number of international crises, and its cumbersome bureaucracy. In an environment conducive to perpetuating today's poor governance, the United Nations is sometimes viewed unfavorably.

A more agile and effective form of global governance should begin with a turnaround in the political and socio-economic thinking and action of states, multinational corporations and other actors (cf. Mindset²⁴⁹), as well as a **streamlining of UN bureaucracy and a simplification of its practices. It would also foster mission-driven, results-oriented organization and management**, calling for the strengthening of independent (external) evaluation of bodies and operations²⁵⁰ - (potentially with Artificial Intelligence support) - with a view to continuous improvement and efficiency.

Considering the main factors obstructing the UN system, namely the right of veto held by its 5 permanent members, the lack of representativeness of contemporary society in the permanent membership of the Security Council, and the perception of the UN as a threat to the sovereignty of States, a possible reform might consist, for example, in abolishing the right of veto in the Security Council for all issues entailing the survival of Humanity.

Another possibility would be to grant the same veto power to new permanent members, admitted as representatives of specific groups of states, and to review the composition of the other non-plenary permanent bodies to improve representativeness, while instituting a more effective system of sanctions.

This system should be based on :

- **more open UN communication** (beyond existing UN media, traditional media and social networks) with populations, updating them on activities that concern them most, particularly progress on signatures, accessions and ratifications of international agreements by States, international organizations and other subjects of international law, the status of petitions relating to human rights violations, peace operations, the fight against poverty, famine and pandemics, development projects, etc.: such transparency would improve democratic elections of national leadership by populations ;
- **suspension of international aid**, ethically and legally justified and published, to countries that violate international agreements and endanger international peace and security. Such suspension could contribute significantly to anchoring and consolidating planetary awareness and good global governance ;

- inclusion of UN condemnations in country credit ratings by leading agencies (Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch) **as an indicator of "compliance with global governance"** ;
- **a principle of state of emergency** to be declared by an independent, neutral and impartial body, such as the IPCC, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the ICRC, etc., when specific thresholds for human survival are about to be breached, such as planetary boundaries, available stocks of vital natural resources, food security, nuclear or weapons of mass destruction threat, etc.

This state of emergency would de facto mobilize funds previously set aside (on stand-by) in special funds dedicated for human and planetary emergencies, replenished through permanent mechanisms such as international taxes and levies on financial operations or commercial transactions involving certain products, percentages of state contributions to the budgets of international, universal and regional organizations, etc. It would support the creation of an ad hoc global body - representative of all states, since the survival of humanity is at stake - for problem-solving and crisis management²⁵¹.

This global governance would recognize the vital need to move to a planetary scale and accelerate informal state alliances and organizations resolutely committed to preserving the future of humanity, through ocean protection, adaptation to climate change (using carbon capture and storage methods, for example) and elimination of existential threats. Successful experiments carried out by these alliances would be evaluated and implementation and operation principles clarified, to be generalized across the planet.

2.3. The revival of strategic planning

Most countries that regularly practised planning abandoned it in the 90s, and are now reviving the strategic dimension of it, using prospective and systemic analyses to prepare for the future. Planning is making a remarkable comeback, driven by a shared need to control increasingly "problematic" development processes :

- **Climate change and sustainability:** the need to meet the challenges of climate change puts a premium on medium- and long-term planning. Governments and international organizations are drafting bold plans to curb greenhouse gas emissions, develop sustainable infrastructures and promote the green economy. For example, the Paris Climate Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals call for strategic planning to achieve 17 specific development goals by 2030²⁵².

In this respect, the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD) has, for over 30 years, offered hundreds of public and private organizations the opportunity to place sustainable development at the heart of operations, moving from strategic vision to practical action. It follows an iterative 4-step process and is based on 8 sustainability mechanisms.

- **Technology and innovation:** rapid adoption of advanced technologies needs planning to be effectively and ethically embedded in society. This is true of UN action plans, such as the Secretary General's Action Plan for Digital Cooperation, the experts' work of the UN High-Level Advisory Committee on Artificial Intelligence, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation, and the International Artificial Intelligence Center of Morocco. Protecting citizens' rights is a key objective of such long-term planning.
- **Global health security:** the Covid-19 pandemic underscored the importance of planning to better respond to health crises. In response, several countries have re-evaluated and strengthened their systems and reviewed their plans on this matter.
- **Urban and demographic planning:** growing urbanization, particularly unplanned urbanization, and global demographic changes call for well-designed and detailed plans to manage the expansion of cities and associated infrastructure. Urban planning becomes crucial in addressing challenges such as housing, public and private transport and access to other basic services, with a dual perspective of reasoned population growth and sustainability (particularly regarding the energy transition).
- **Security and defense:** in a fluctuating geopolitical context, strategic military and security planning is essential for governments. This includes not only traditional defense preparedness, but also protection against new threats such as hybrid warfare and cyber-attacks.

- **Economic policies:** in the face of global economic crises, such as that induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, governments have implemented economic recovery plans and fiscal policies to stimulate their economies. These plans require close coordination and thorough planning.

Multinational firms have long adopted strategic planning, which has enabled them to gradually build up power and wealth across a wide range of fields (financial, real estate, artistic, technological, management or know-how assets, etc.). This gives some corporations considerable leverage and power of negotiation, influence and control over many states and governments.

Irrespective of whether the world turns to multiplex or non-polar models, good governance can only be achieved if multinational corporations are subject to fair and binding international regulations, compelling them to carry out all actions in accordance with the objectives of emerging Planetization, including those relating to human rights and, increasingly today, the rights of nature, a prescription deeply rooted in Islam²⁵⁴ but often neglected.



Chapter 3. Towards renewed governance in Morocco

For a quarter of a century, Morocco has pursued a reform drive using a unique governance model, rooted in national values and focused on promoting citizen well-being and the general interest. At international level, the Kingdom has shown its commitment to more equitable and inclusive global governance.

Nevertheless, despite considerable progress, challenges remain, making it imperative to establish a renewed governance model that can respond effectively to social aspirations and global challenges in a changing world.

While the guiding principles of governance (Cf. chapter 1 of part 3) apply to both the public and private sectors, the following discussion will focus primarily on public governance.

1. A unique Moroccan model

Since His accession to the throne, His Majesty King Mohammed VI, may God assist him, rejecting the temptation of following exogenous examples, resolutely commits the country to a singular Moroccan model, designed to consolidate the foundations of a democratic society, promote citizenship, freedom, inclusion and systematic respect for human rights, and modernize governance.

This model is founded on the above-mentioned guiding principles of good governance, so that it serves citizens first and foremost. Reforms undertaken to date are listed below in chronological order :

- **Adopting a new concept of authority**, highlighted in the Royal Speech of October 8, 1999, placing the citizen at the heart of priorities.

A true doctrine of power, this new concept is binding on the State and applies to all holders of authority. It implies accountability, combating all forms of corruption and preserving the dignity and rights of citizens under the rule of law, through innovative legislations, reforms and the establishment of constitutionalized institutions.

- The launch of **the National Initiative for Human Development**: in his May 18, 2005 Address to the Nation, the Sovereign called on the government to "adopt an action plan based on the principles of good governance, namely responsibility and transparency, the rules of professionalism, broad citizen participation, the streamlining and integration of interventions by public institutions and organizations, and the constant monitoring and evaluation of achievements".

This initiative, which aims to eradicate poverty and combat disparities, was rated by the World Bank in 2015 as one of the top 3 high-impact social programs globally.

- **Implementation**, from 2010 onwards, **of the advanced regionalization project**, the "New Revolution of the King and the People", enshrined in the 2011 Constitution and supported by a progressive roadmap that includes the Administrative Deconcentration Charter and program-contracts binding State and Regions.

Advanced regionalization extends beyond mere administrative planning to encompass a far-reaching, comprehensive reform that modernizes the State and responds effectively to the local needs of populations, while supporting balanced development.

- **Constitutional reform**²⁵⁶, announced in the Royal Speech of March 9, 2011 and adopted by referendum on July 1, 2011: a major framework for governance in the Kingdom and a significant turning point for the Moroccan political system, the 2011 Constitution seeks to establish a fair and modern society through :

- ✓ enshrining the plurality of Moroccan identity in the constitution ;
- ✓ consolidating the rule of law and institutions, broadening the scope of individual and collective freedoms and guaranteeing their exercise, as well as strengthening the human rights system in all its political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and development dimensions ;

- ✓ establishing the judicial system as an independent power and reinforcing the prerogatives of the Constitutional Council: the reform of the judiciary has led to the adoption of new legislative and regulatory provisions, the establishment of the Supreme Council of Judicial Power, the installation of the Constitutional Court in 2013 and the definition of responsibilities for the latter two institutions ;
 - ✓ consolidating the principle of separation and balance of powers ;
 - ✓ strengthening constitutional bodies and tools for citizen oversight ;
 - ✓ consolidating mechanisms for the moralization of public life ;
 - ✓ establishing constitutional bodies in charge of good governance and regulation - the High Authority for Audio-visual Communication, the Competition Council and the National Authority for Probity, Prevention and the Fight against Corruption - as well as bodies for the protection and promotion of human rights and those for the promotion of human and sustainable development and participatory democracy.
- **Reorganizing the public enterprises sector:** the Royal Address to Parliament of October 9, 2020, called for "a substantial and balanced redefinition" of this sector. It stated that "... the success of any plan or project depends on adopting the principles of good governance and accountability. In this respect, state institutions and public enterprises must show an exemplary attitude and act as a driver of development, not an obstacle to it."
 - **Building the social State,** through the adoption, on April 5, 2021, of the framework law on universal social protection, the operationalization, from 2023, of the unified social register to enhance social policy effectiveness and ensure better targeting of vulnerable populations, according to specific socio-economic criteria, and the launch, in late 2023, of the national program of direct social and financial assistance to households.
 - **The Public Services Charter,** published on July 22, 2021, provides a national frame of reference for the principles and rules of good governance with which public services must comply, in their organization and operation and in their dealings with users.

Other governance principles are also omnipresent in the Royal Speeches and Messages, notably transparency, responsibility, seriousness, citizen participation and harmony between the different stakeholders in governance, for the proper implementation of national policies and strategies.

At international level, the Royal Vision is to establish a new relationship between Morocco and the world and ensure the Kingdom's voice is heard in the concert of Nations. The Royal Message on the celebration of the National Day of Moroccan Diplomacy, held in Rabat on April 28, 2000, constitutes a foundational text for the Kingdom's new foreign policy and diplomacy.

Determination, pragmatism, realism, moderation, anticipation, firmness, collaborative approach, strategic vision and diversification are, among others, the structuring vectors of the new *modus operandi*, in terms of attractiveness, devised by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, with a view to staining the country's main strategic choices.

2. An assertive doctrine on global governance

This doctrine reflects Morocco's determination to actively help build a more humane, fair, stable and prosperous world.

Reforming the UN Charter, restructuring the Security Council, reviewing and improving the global financial system to make it fairer and more inclusive, revising traditional international cooperation channels and structures, rethinking bilateralism and multilateralism, and advocating a resizing of multilateral diplomacy, with the aim of building "planetary patriotism", "renewing approaches and methodologies to respond to demands for interfaith dialogue", deepening the tripartite cooperation model, intensifying North-South cooperation and fostering South-South cooperation, are all aspirations championed by Morocco at global level, in line with the enlightened Vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI²⁵⁷.

Accordingly, the Kingdom firmly defends the principles of good governance on a planetary scale, and actively contributes to anticipating and managing existential risks (Cf. Chapter 2 of Part 2), particularly those relating to global warming :

- **The Tangier Appeal**, issued in September 2015 on the eve of the Paris Agreement, by His Majesty King Mohammed VI and former French President François Hollande, calls for strong, collective and supportive action in favor of the climate.
- **The organization of two Conferences of the Parties (COP)**, in 2001 and 2016, reflects Morocco's leadership in the fight against the effects of climate change.

COP7 finalized and refined the rules required to implement the Kyoto Protocol, agreed in 1997, and consolidated the Clean Development Mechanism, while laying the foundations for the creation of an Adaptation Fund to support vulnerable countries in their fight against the effects of climate change.

COP 22 was an opportunity, among others, to initiate the first African Action Summit, which gave the continent the chance to speak with one voice in favor of climate justice, and to launch the Triple A Initiative (Adaptation of African Agriculture), aimed at adapting African agriculture to the impacts of climate change.

At the same time, Morocco actively participates in the resolution of major global challenges, particularly by promoting peace, dialogue between civilizations, security, the fight against radicalization, and migration, by undertaking the following actions :

- Since its independence, Morocco has been **committed to peace and international solidarity**, sending Moroccan contingents to many UN theaters of operation and focusing on stability throughout the African continent. Morocco is one of the world's top 11 contributors to these operations. The age-old tradition of solidarity renewed with the deployment of field hospitals abroad, combined with contributions from civil society, in a spirit of respect for human values.
- **Dialogue between civilizations**: considering that "the only clash is between ignorances", Morocco contributes "to this grand design, which adds up the identities and cultures of all while respecting them"²⁵⁸, through its contribution to the creation of the Foundation of Three Cultures (Islam, Christianity, Judaism) in 2008, and the Mohammed VI Cultural Center for the Dialogue of Civilizations in Chile in 2013.

In addition to the official Visit of His Holiness Pope Francis and his historic meeting with His Majesty King Mohammed VI, in 2019 in Rabat, the Kingdom hosted, in November 2022, the 9th edition of the Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, culminating in the adoption of the Fez Declaration, underlining that “freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing”²⁵⁹.

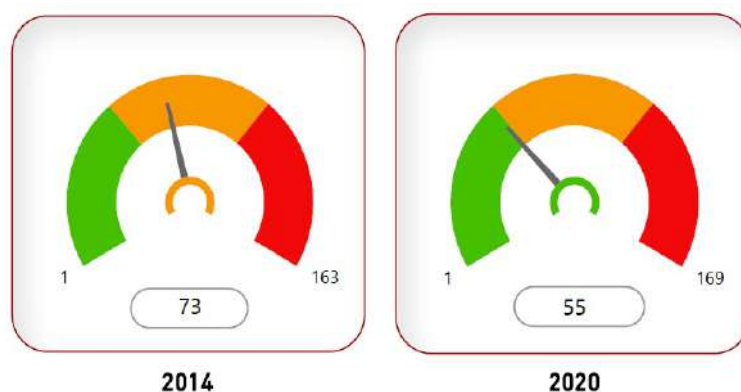
- **The fight against terrorism and organized crime**, a field in which the Kingdom’s action is recognized on an international scale, as reflected in the 2021 opening in Rabat of the Office of the United Nations Program for Counterterrorism and Training in Africa and, more recently, the election of Morocco, in November 2024, to the vice-presidency of Interpol for Africa.
- **Control of the religious sphere and the fight against obscurantism** by restructuring the Councils of Ulemas, delimiting the scope of the promulgation of fatwas, training imams, revising traditional teaching and Islamic education, and promoting a tolerant Islam, through the creation of the European Council of Moroccan Ulemas in 2010 and the Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Preaching Imams and Preachers and the Mohammed VI Foundation for African Ulemas in 2015.
- **The implementation of a migration policy with a human face**, resulting in the formalization of some 50,000 Sub-Saharan migrants since 2014, and the choice of Morocco to house the headquarters of the African Migration Observatory in Rabat in December 2020.

The Kingdom, whose Sovereign is leader of the African Union on the issue of migration, unveiled an “African Agenda for Migration” at the 30th African Union Summit on January 29, 2018, in Addis Ababa, redefining migration in a more constructive way, built on practical political commitment by States, while focusing on ensuring migration is safe, legal, regular, orderly and respectful of human rights.

In 2018, Morocco co-chaired the Global Forum on Migration and Development with Germany, and in December 2018 hosted the UN intergovernmental conference in Marrakech for the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Box 18: Morocco's ranking on the Good Country Index

The dials below show considerable improvement in Morocco's international ranking on participation in global governance, between 2014 and 2020. This confirms the Kingdom's global standing as a credible partner, committed to peace and security, and active in promoting sustainable development in the region and beyond.



Source : IRES calculations _ Data from "The good country"

3. Towards a cutting-edge governance model

The foregoing considerations show that Morocco has a long-term vision, and the needed instruments to implement good public governance. As such, it has a head start over many developing and even emerging countries.

Efforts to date, however, have yet to fully produce results. Many obstacles remain in the way of public policy implementation, notably the gap between strategic orientations and operational execution, delays in adopting implementation legislation, insufficient stakeholder involvement, cumbersome administrative procedures, disharmony between sectoral strategies, and so on.

These inefficiencies lead to losses in economic growth and job creation. They also undermine public trust in institutions, particularly representative ones.

To address these shortcomings and enable Morocco to resolutely carry on its reform drive, a new governance model is essential to accelerate the Kingdom's march towards emergence, while meeting citizens' growing aspirations for well-being, equity and social justice. This model, intended as a central pillar of a future society based on trust, should be built around the following principles :

❖ **Definitively anchor the guiding principles of governance in the practices of public actors**

Factuality and rationality

Public policy should be based on science and facts, from design to implementation. To this end, it is essential to :

- seek input systematically from competent scientific communities to ensure the reliability of knowledge and the credibility of arguments used in public policymaking ;
- strengthen ongoing training for civil servants, while emphasizing rigorous methodological principles such as systems thinking, on-site evaluation and data interoperability ;
- make experimentation an essential prerequisite for the adoption of public policies. This principle should be supported by authorities at all State levels. To guarantee impartiality, experimentation should be self-financed and subject to independent external evaluation.

Transparency

Transparency means systematic accountability, widespread access to data produced by the State and the public sector, insofar as it is not sensitive, and a resolute fight against corruption.

As regards the latter, a profound cultural transformation is required, with the adoption of a new systemic and holistic approach. A renewed anti-corruption strategy should be backed by all stakeholders, and by greater international cooperation.

Participation and collective intelligence

These two principles can only be achieved by applying the following measures :

- Encourage citizen involvement in public policymaking, defining societal priorities and driving decision-making processes, by providing easy access to participatory platforms, establishing regular consultation mechanisms, creating open spaces for dialogue and valuing citizen initiatives in the service of the common good.
- Create collaborative platforms to collect innovative ideas for solving specific problems, while at the same time providing feedback on the accountability and performance of State services and departments.
- Provide incentives to organizations willing to open up to citizens, set up participatory mechanisms within public administrations, assess and fine-tune participatory processes and, above all, ensure decision-makers actually take them into account.
- Introduce initiatives to raise public awareness of future challenges. This would strengthen social responsibility and resilience in the face of future changes.

Learning agility in a crisis

This requires early warning systems and a risk management culture. In this respect, it is recommended that a biannual report be drawn up on Morocco, classifying national, regional and global risks.

Agility also demands the adoption of flexible organizational modes - project mode, for example, or reconfigurable cross-functional hubs - and new project management methods such as SCRUM²⁶⁰, to accelerate ongoing transformations and instill a more entrepreneurial mindset, while preserving a sense of public good, as well as continuously upgrading staff skills, cutting chains of command and promoting participative subsidiarity.

❖ Implement anticipatory and adaptive governance

To successfully introduce this form of governance, it is imperative to develop anticipation, to equip Morocco with a strategic planning system, to adapt public finance governance to a multi-crisis global context, acknowledging that the Finance Act is a major public policy act, and consolidate a modern citizen administration.

Developing anticipation

Anticipation plays a crucial role, particularly in a vulnerable, uncertain, critical and artificial world where deep structural changes are taking place at an accelerating pace. Developing anticipation in Morocco requires central and local public administrations to set up surveillance systems.

These mechanisms should enable constant monitoring and analysis of global trends to inform strategy design, anticipate emerging risks and propose action plans to address them, detect early warning signals of future developments to enable sound decision-making, and adapt public policy in real time. Implementing these foresight systems is essential if we are to take on emerging challenges and respond to them proactively and coherently²⁶¹.

Providing Morocco with a strategic planning system

Strategic planning differs fundamentally from traditional planning in that it is based on a dynamic and anticipatory vision of public policy management. Unlike traditional planning, often rigid and linear, strategic planning is an adaptive and flexible process, allowing priorities to be constantly adjusted in line with changes in the economic, social and environmental context.

This approach involves defining clear, measurable objectives, while establishing regular appraisal mechanisms to ensure rigorous monitoring and informed decision-making²⁶².

Strategic planning is not simply the formalization of forecasts, but a governance framework geared towards efficiency, performance and the anticipation of future challenges. Implementing it in Morocco would be an opportunity to promote the process of change and overcome reluctance and backward-looking attitudes.

Adapting public finance governance to a multi-crisis world

Strategic planning makes it possible to transcend short-term views of public finances, by incorporating the impact of successive crises on financial balances and the governance of public finances.

The shift from forecasting to multi-year programming over a medium-term horizon would strengthen budget management and provide the opportunity to reflect on the consequences of current trends, identify opportunities, risks and disruptions, and adjust choices according to what actually happens.

Furthermore, public financial policy evaluation needs to evolve in a context of uncertainty. To do so, Morocco should continue strengthening control and transparency mechanisms in line with the 2011 Constitution, invest in advanced information systems capable of guaranteeing data quality, carry on consolidating public finance accounts, while putting in place a system for assessing the risks associated with off-budget expenditure: public liabilities

Consolidating the foundations of modern citizen administration

The transition to a modern administration, capable of delivering high-quality, cost-effective public services to citizens, requires the following actions:

- Accelerate the digitization of the administration and ensure global interoperability between national public information systems, to reduce bureaucracy, combat corruption, simplify and modernize administrative procedures, make them more intuitive for citizens and, consequently, improve the responsiveness and efficiency of public services.
- Shorten the chain of command and adopt a leapfrog approach, detached from political and electoral contingencies, by resorting to innovation and pragmatism, because the urgency of challenges to be met requires us to skip conventional steps and devise alternative solutions, enabling Morocco to increase the pace of strategies and programs implementation.



- Ensure, through the Nexus approach, close coordination between the actions of the various ministerial departments, so that they can work together harmoniously and coherently, avoiding overlaps, compartmentalization and the rigidity of state structures, while maximizing transversality and collective efficiency, to ensure the alignment of public policies with the country's long-term objectives.
- Ensure the effective application of legal texts, by implementing the decrees needed to give full effect to the laws passed.
- Give real impetus to advanced regionalization, by giving greater importance to territories as relevant areas for action, promoting solutions co-constructed with local stakeholders, making the most of local human and institutional resources, necessary for optimal implementation of public policies on a decentralized scale, giving priority to participative subsidiarity and promoting synergies between the different levels of governance: communal, provincial, regional and national.

❖ **Shaping a new generation educated for the future**

One prerequisite for the transition to anticipatory and adaptive governance is to groom a new generation, imbued with a culture of transversality and respect for difference, trained and aware of future issues, so that they can solve complex problems and respond to future challenges with clear-sightedness and agility.

To this end, it is advisable to develop :

- an international platform for education for the future and incorporate it into national education systems starting in first-year compulsory schooling;
- chairs of foresight at Moroccan universities, so that students can learn to think about complexity ;

- “National strategic narratives”, providing a clear vision of the future ;
- “Future OPS”-style applications, to explain, engage and visualize the future. To this end, it is essential to prioritize future thinking in school curricula, media and institutional communications, and to step up public debates to help people think positively about the future and embrace the idea, without fear, that the future will be different

Future leaders should be taught the principles of sense-making and strategic communication from an early age. They should also be trained to encourage active participation, assume full responsibility and build bridges by valuing diversity, open-mindedness and inclusion.

The leadership of tomorrow should be built on the fundamental values of tolerance and temperance that are characteristic of Moroccan society. It should stand out for its mutual respect for colleagues and ability to strike a harmonious balance between the old system and the new, between the traditional and the modern, between intention and action.

General Conclusion

Governance refers to a set of processes and institutions, both public and private, through which policies, strategies and decisions impacting a specific community are developed and implemented. Distinct from government, it encompasses a wider spectrum of actors and mechanisms.

Historically rooted in social structures, governance has progressively become more complex with the emergence of new organizational forms: from corporate governance, the first modern application of the concept of governance, to the management of public affairs through urban governance at the local level.

Nowadays, good governance is an essential driver of development and integration, as well as a major global issue. Governance covers a broad range of political, economic, social and environmental typologies, reflecting all the different contexts and challenges facing societies today.

Global governance is in flux, undergoing profound change. The world's growing complexity, declining trust in institutions fuelled by difficult access to reliable, objective information, inequalities in the treatment of citizens, lack of transparency in decision-making processes, etc., and the emergence of new players including NGOs and multinational corporations, radically impact the global governance landscape, putting traditional mechanisms of power and legitimacy to the test.

It is also coming up against a host of difficulties :

- On the societal level, the increasing fragility of governance processes is attributable to eroding trust, emergent disorganized consultative modes and the pre-eminence of social media, all of which can contribute to polarizing societies.

- Regarding informational aspects, besides the impact of social networks on governance through fake news, disinformation, manipulation of public opinion, non-respect of privacy and data protection, the notion of “post-truth”, where emotions and personal beliefs prevail over objective facts in shaping public opinion, is a major concern in contemporary discourse, especially in view of technological advances and socio-political transformations.
- At the institutional level, the UN global system, though central, has proved its limits in the face of the urgency of issues crucial to humanity. Its reform is postponed indefinitely. International, universal and regional organizations struggle to reconcile national interests and global challenges, and to find ways of achieving efficiency and equity.

The deterioration of global public goods, where governance faces the threefold difficulty of legitimacy, representativeness and consensus-building, the inadequacy of international cooperation mechanisms and the slow pace of adaptation to today’s swift global changes are all major concerns.

A forward-looking approach to governance calls for identifying and rethinking what a crisis is, to better understand its implications for good governance in the future.

The notion of crisis, while generally evoking a situation of disruption and uncertainty, takes on nuanced meanings according to culture and perspective.

Crises are distinguished by degree of severity, unexpectedness and systemic impact. They unfold in three distinct phases: incubation, operative and post-crisis. Each crisis is unique but shares common features that help us to anticipate and respond more effectively.

Crises often occur in the form of successive shocks, creating a “subduction” effect that makes the world increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). The Covid-19 pandemic accentuated this trend, giving rise to a new concept: VUCA². This new concept emphasizes the heightened vulnerability and criticality of situations. Our period of Great Transition makes crises difficult to anticipate and manage.

Tomorrow's world will be shaped by structural trends or megatrends, namely: an explosive yet ageing demography, a suffering natural environment, limitations of the global economic model based on ultraliberal capitalism, and man-machine substitution, via widespread use of robots and artificial intelligence.

Human society is going global. Key emerging trends include a disenchanted, informed and divided society, with active minorities; a growing awareness of the failure of education systems; increased migration and a growing imbalance between public demand and government capacity.

At the same time, humanity faces unprecedented existential risks, associated with :

- a 6 out of 9 breaches of planetary boundaries, including crucial areas to the viability of our "human life support system": climate change, biodiversity erosion, disruption of the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, land-use change, the freshwater cycle, intrusion of new entities into the biosphere, ocean acidification, depletion of the ozone layer and increased aerosols ;
- the possibility of civilizational collapse associated with the inappropriate use of emerging and future technologies, adverse impacts of human activity, threats to international security (such as nuclear war) and large-scale natural disasters.

In the face of these challenges, governance systems need to evolve. Risk awareness and crisis management should be at the core of good governance. Adapted governance is becoming increasingly critical in three key areas :

- Planet governance, with a new nexus that is essential for the good of humanity: climate - resources - energy.
- Governance of the noosphere, with priority given to managing information and social media, combating misinformation and fake news, ensuring the security of personal data and ensuring democratic stability - threatened, among other things, by external interference - and paying specific attention to managing the dissemination of knowledge.

- Virtual world governance, raising the issue of human rights protection, which must imperatively cover three aspects: artificial intelligence embedded in health, finance and security; cybersecurity and blockchain.

Against this background, and to avert the risk of chaos developing, leadership has become a fundamental issue. Tomorrow's leaders need to demonstrate resilience, adaptability and develop a long-term vision to guide societies through turbulent times. They will have to find solutions to complex, intractable problems.

In this respect, it is increasingly essential to train a new generation of leaders who are not only technically proficient but also deeply committed to ethical principles, sustainability and problem-solving.

In its 2019 strategic report on the development model, IRES highlighted, among other things, the need to rethink governance to adapt it to tomorrow's world along four major lines: rationalizing resources and uses, implementing the principle of subsidiarity, relying on science and facts as the basis for public action, and using collective intelligence. This model is rooted in the principles of justice, ethics, flexibility and adaptation to public services needs.

To make this vision a reality, it is important to emphasize the following transversal guiding principles :

- Factuality and rationality: basing public decisions on solid evidence and rational analysis, particularly in the face of the complex challenges of today's world.
- Participation and transparency: fostering citizen involvement and clarity in decision-making processes to build trust.
- Learning agility in a crisis: making public authorities more responsive and capable of adapting to change.

To complete this system, two further axes should be pursued :

- Priority to problem-solving: finding effective solutions to the most wicked problems.
- Planetary identity: promoting a sense of shared belonging to the Earth and fostering international cooperation.

The notion of "Planetization" is central: it underlines the interconnection of all planet components and the need for global thinking for the future, which requires :

- a paradigm shift, rethinking the way we see the world and adopting a global, systemic vision of what is at stake ;
- anticipatory governance, addressing issues of irreversibility, crisis preparedness and resilience ;
- adaptive governance, by adjusting to environmental change.

Global governance is necessarily a multi-level process. Success demands adequate, even exemplary, global governance, and sound, ethical coordination between the different stakeholders, especially states and international organizations.

Complex dynamics shape the international world order. The multiplex world in the making appears to be in competition with a non-polar world, driven by emerging forces such as Planetization, globalized communications, transcontinental alliances, a drive to escape the control of hegemonic powers, and so on.

Anchoring forces are needed in this “fluid” world to spur states and international organizations to step up international cooperation, with a view to better global governance. These include :

- global issues: climate change, international security and the needs of future generations are shared challenges that require concerted action ;
- disseminating a realistic vision of the state of the planet: it is essential to make public opinion and political decision-makers aware of the state of the planet and possible solutions ;
- strengthening the international legal framework: clear and effective legal standards are essential to ensure that international commitments are implemented.

To support the emergence of renewed global governance, in-depth reform of the United Nations system is urgently required, calling for more transparent communication, the suspension of international aid to non-cooperative states, and the inclusion of international standards in national assessments. Strategic planning is another key driver, enabling a proactive approach to anticipate future challenges and make informed decisions.

Morocco for its part, has a distinctive model of national governance, and a strong doctrine of international governance. The Kingdom needs to renew its public governance model in order to continue its reformist drive :

- by definitively anchoring factuality, rationality, transparency, participation, collective intelligence and educational crisis agility in the practice of public players ;
- by introducing anticipatory and adaptive governance, focused on implementing a strategic planning system, adapting public finance management to a multi-crisis world, and consolidating the foundations of a modern citizen administration ;
- by grooming a new generation educated for the future, imbued with the constants of the Nation and Moroccan values of openness, solidarity and cohesion, etc., and capable of meeting the challenges of tomorrow’s world.

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List of acronyms

ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross
COP: World Conference of the Parties
IMF: International Monetary Fund
FSSD: Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development
IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
NFT: Non-Fungible Token
WTO: World Trade Organization
WHO: World Health Organization
UN: United Nations
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
GMO: Genetically Modified Organism
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
QUAD: Quadrilateral Security Dialogue
REAIM: Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VUCA: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous
VUCA²: Vulnerable, Uncertain, Critical and Artificial

Glossary

Anthropocene: this term was coined in 2000 by Josef CRUTZEN and Eugene Stormer to denote the current geological epoch, shaped by massive and growing human impact on the earth and atmosphere, at all levels up to and including global. The two researchers put forward the end of the 18th century as the start of this new era, which coincides with early observations of the effect of human activity on the environment, in connection with the onset of the industrial revolution.

Source: CRUTZEN, Josef; STOERMER, Eugene. The "Anthropocene", Global Change Newsletter n° 41, 2000, pp. 17-18.

Artificialization: all human-induced transformations, more or less voluntary and reasoned, which modify all or part of an environment or landscape's physiognomy and functions. Artificialization is the end result of anthropization, which is a process.

Source: <https://geoconfluences.ens-lyon.fr/glossaire/artificialisation>

Predatory economy: a phase in a society's cultural development, attained when the members of the group adopt predation (i.e., rapacity) as a permanent and orthodox spiritual attitude; when struggle is the dominant index of a mainstream life experience; when common sense judges people and things with a view to combat. Evolution is a gradual process, since the transition from pacifism to predation depends on the development of technical knowledge and the use of tools.

Source : Galbraith, J. (2006). Modern economic predation: war, corporate fraud and the cruel chimera of labor market reform. *A contrario*, 4, 90-98. <https://doi.org/10.3917/aco.041.98>; Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Paris: Gallimard, 1970 (1st American ed.: *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, New York: Macmillan, 1899).

Westphalian state: the Westphalian order refers to an international situation in which states exercise regalian functions, are sovereign, and where boundaries coincide, at least theoretically, with those of nations. This state of affairs allows for arbitrated negotiation between states charged with implementing treaties; as a result, "states mutually recognize each other as the only legitimate interlocutors, and define treaties as mutual tools recognizing the sovereignties and borderlines of each party."

Source : Etienne Ciapin. *Frontières et populations : territoires, mobilités, voisinages européens*. Thèse de sociologie, Université Grenoble Alpes, 2018.

GAFAM : used in economics. It is an acronym made up of the initials of five major US corporations, often referred to as internet giants: G for Google, F for Facebook, M for Microsoft and the two A's for Apple and Amazon. The GAFAMs are global corporations, with billions of users and a phenomenal amount of data. They also play a major economic and financial role on a global scale. These corporations own and control several widely used social networks and web services, such as LinkedIn (owned by Microsoft), YouTube (owned by Google), Instagram and WhatsApp (owned by Facebook).

Source: *Le dictionnaire Orthodidacte* : <https://dictionnaire.orthodidacte.com/article/definition-gafam>

Metaverse : refers to the fusion of physical, augmented and virtual reality in a common online space. The metaverse relies on a blend of technologies to create an immersive 3D virtual universe. This space is intended to be a forward-looking social hub, where avatars can meet, work, play and interact freely.

Source : Mohammed Tawfik Mouline. *The digital future: between promise and uncertainty*. Introductory remarks at the international conference organized by IRES. December 19, 2022.

NFT : Non-Fungible Token is a unique form of digital property that enables verification and confirmation of authenticity and ownership of digital assets. An NFT is a cryptographic asset that sits on a blockchain and, in other words, proves that you own the property rights to that digital asset.

Source : 01NET Magazine : <https://www.01net.com/crypto/nft/>

Noosphere : the thinking (human) layer of the Earth, forming a new kingdom, a specific, organic whole (...) "Despite organic ties, (...) this biosphere was still no more than a collection of divergent lines, free at the ends. Under the influence of Reflexion (...) the chains close and the Noosphere tends to form a single closed system, where each element sees, feels, desires and endures the same things as all the others at the same time. A harmonized community of consciousnesses, equivalent to a super-consciousness".

Sources : C. Cuénot, *Nouv. Lex. Teilhard de Chardin*, Paris, éd. du Seuil, 1968) Teilhard de Chardin, *Le phénomène humain*, 1955, p.279

OGM : a genetically modified organism is an organism (animal, plant, bacterium) whose genetic material (set of genes) has been modified by a new technique known as genetic engineering, to give it new traits. These techniques make it possible to transfer selected genes from one organism to another, even between different species. This means that it is potentially possible to introduce any new trait into an organism, provided the relevant gene(s) have been previously identified. Between 1991 and 1994, nearly 300 notifications of deliberate release of genetically modified organisms into the environment were filed in the EU.

Source : https://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/dictionnaire_environnement/definition/organisme_genetiquement_modifie_ogm.php4

Polycrisis : a situation in which "interconnected and overlapping crises" assume the form of an "interdependent complex of problems, antagonisms, crises and uncontrollable processes" that constitute "a general crisis of the planet".

Source : Edgar Morin et Brigitte Kern, *Terre-Patrie*, Paris, Seuil, 1993.

Post-truth : refers to circumstances in which objective facts have less influence in shaping public opinion than emotional appeals.

Source : Oxford Languages. "Word of the Year 2016" <https://languages.oup.com/word-of-the-year/2016/>. Dernière consultation : le 25- 07-2023.

Pyrocene : A concept brought to the fore by American historian Stephen Pyne and French philosopher Joëlle Zask ever since fires began to multiply with dangerous speed and acuity. See Eléonore Solé, "Pyrocène: qu'est-ce que c'est?", December 10, 2022.

Existential risks : these are risks that could lead to the extinction of humanity or the collapse of civilization. This mirrors the realization that the capacity of humanity to bring about its own extinction is now a reality".

Source : IRES. Rapport stratégique 2021. Vers un monde post Covid 19, 359p : <https://www.ires.ma/fr/publications/rapports-g%C3%A9n%C3%A9raux/7669-rapport-strat%C3%A9gique-2021-vers-un-nouveau-monde-post-covid-19.html>

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⁴World Bank (1994). Development in practice: Governance – the World's Bank experience. Report n° 13134, p. vii.

⁵ Pitseys, John (2010). The concept of governance. *Revue interdisciplinaire d'études juridiques*, vol. 65, no 2, pp. 207-228.

⁶ Or “managed chaos”, knowingly maintained to maintain power, assert power, etc. Contrary to what is claimed by those who are more economists than economists, ethics (including transparency) are not the enemy of efficiency. Quite often, the opposite is true.

⁷ UN. About good governance. The OHCHR and good governance. <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/good-governance/about-good-governance>

⁸ Exclusive territorial jurisdiction in criminal matters means that a foreigner who has committed a criminal offence in the host country is subject to the jurisdiction of that country.

⁹ The two constitutive elements of custom are the material element (the repetition of a behavior over time, widely known by those concerned) and the psychological element (the conviction that the customary rule is binding).

¹⁰ These NGOs are called “international” because their “territorial” scope of action may encompass all or a large number of the world’s countries, and they often have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations; but they are organizations or associations under domestic law. The International Committee of the Red Cross is an association under Swiss law, with “special” international status recognized by UN member states for its work in the field of international humanitarian law.

¹¹ Bevir, Mark (2012). *Governance: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

¹² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2005). Governance and development: the role of accountability. OECD Report.

¹³ Diangitukwa, Fweley (2014). The distant origin of governance in Africa: the palaver tree. *Revue Gouvernance / Governance Review*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1038881ar>

¹⁴ Slaves, considered objects, were also excluded. Ancient Greek Government - World History Encyclopedia

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¹⁴ مجموعة من القواعد والأحكام التي تخصّ الحاكم، وطريقة اختياره، وعلاقة الناس به، ومنصبه وأهداف الحكم.

¹⁵ Translation of the Qur'anic verse. [Verse on The Commandment of the Proper and Prohibition of the Blameworthy - Verse From The Qur'an](#)

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⁷⁵ Case of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration or Marrakech Pact.

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⁷⁷ Colonial archives, archaeological artefacts, libraries, ... unduly taken from countries during colonization or afterwards, ... whose restitution has been officially requested.

⁷⁸ Bajpae, Chietigi (2024). The India-Russia relationship declines. *Revue Conflits*. <https://www.revue-conflits.com/la-relation-inde-russie-decline/>

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