Example future scenario for high performance sport organisations
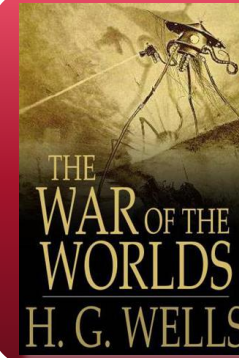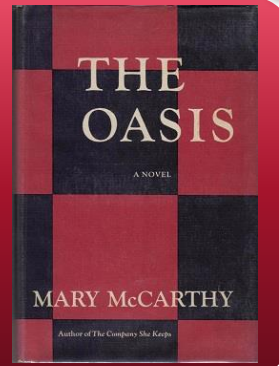
Using the four-box approach
Uncertainties: Globalisation; Pandemic trajectory

International Fragmentation

Geo-political rivalries have led to a multi-polar world order with little sense of common purpose in the face of global challenges

A relatively benign domestic environment surrounded by a world fraught by regional conflicts and rivalries

THE OASIS
A NOVEL
MARY McCARTHY
Author of The Company She Keeps

A world that has devolved into competing interests that have little prospect of overcoming the ongoing crises that afflict both global and NZ societies
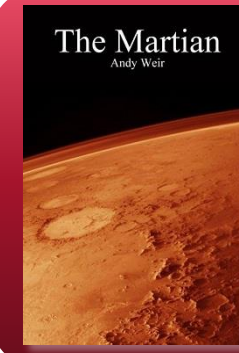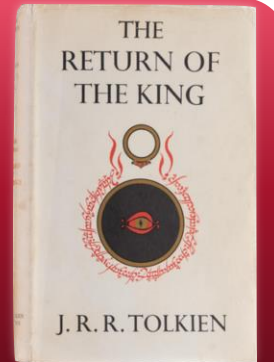

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS
H. G. WELLS

COVID Recovery

A 'new normal' emerges as populations adjust to post-pandemic routines with limited endemic outbreaks contained through regular screening and vaccines.

Pandemic   Globalisation   Trajectory

Pandemic Resurgence

Continued outbreaks of more lethal viruses are challenging the ability of health systems to manage, and social system coherence.

A global community that has broadly moved past conflict to come together and deliver citizen wellbeing
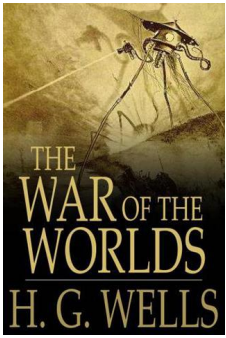

THE RETURN OF THE KING
J. R. R. TOLKIEN

A co-operative world that continues to face ongoing challenges from a position of common understanding and desired outcome

The Martian
Andy Weir

Global Re-Alignment

Global institutions contain conflict and ensure economic continuity. Rogue states remain isolated, while broader international cohesion is strengthened.
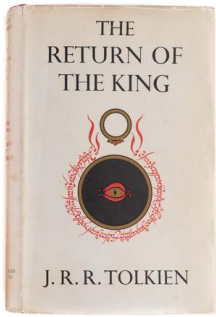
'War of the Worlds'

A world that has devolved into competing interests that have little prospect of overcoming the ongoing crises that afflict both global and NZ societies
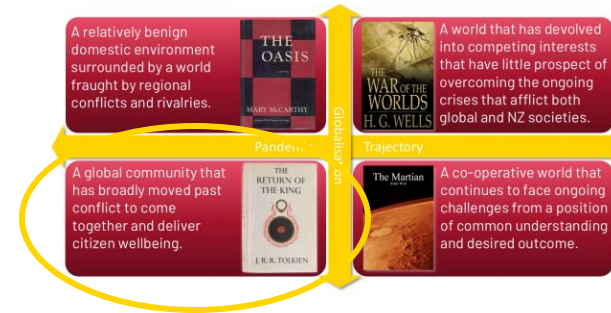

- The 'efficient' just-in-time economy of the late 20th century has gone with the retreat of globalisation. The need to create products closer to home has led to the relocalisation of manufacturing. The new 'blue-collar' jobs are not in monolithic factories but spread across an ecosystem of small operators using advanced 3-D printing manufacturing facilities.

- This trend has suited the entrepreneurial New Zealand spirit, and the country also benefits from proximity to Australia. Advances in AI, energy technologies, and 3D printing have helped resource-rich Oceania adapt and make the bloc economically viable, but prices for consumer goods have risen dramatically. By contrast, those countries unable to form similar blocs have been left behind and cut off. This dislocation is particularly acute for those unable to protect their citizens' health through access to leading-edge therapies.

- New and more lethal pandemic waves have continued to curtail human connection and exacerbate tensions. Relationships are more 'tribal' based on narrow worldview alignments reinforced through primarily virtual interactions. It is easy to avoid others. Work is remote wherever possible, and the economic stresses associated with labour shortages in areas that mandate physical exposure is acute. It was another factor that undermined global supply chains.

- Competition between countries ensures that resource consumption continues increasing. "Binge buying" is the norm for consumers looking to snap up items when they're available with an eye for selling on through the second-hand market. These are all virtual, with buying and selling patterns aligned with trust networks.

- Those with destructive motivations continually disrupt this virtual world, and cyberwarfare is mere 'background noise'. Consequently, the previously ubiquitous web landscape is now a fragmented territory aligned to regional alliances. Moreover, the strong firewalls around these closed web spaces are ideal for misinformation that maintains distrust of competitors. It is no surprise then that efforts to address climate changes at the global level have ceased.

- There is now significantly less domestic and international movement than in the early 21st century. With fear and mistrust significant social themes, mental health statistics are at crisis proportions.

- The tribal allegiances apparent at the individual level are also reflected through national psyches. Most people express deep skepticism toward international exchanges and institutions, and there is little effort invested in their ongoing development.
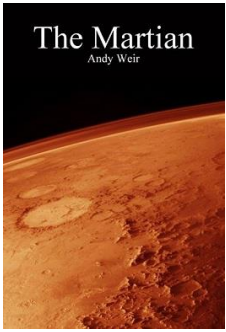
'Return of the King'

A global community which has broadly moved past conflict to come together and deliver citizen wellbeing
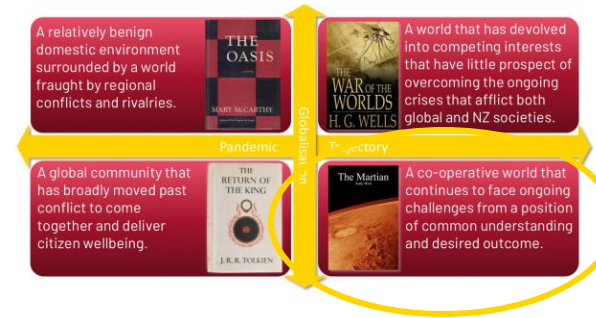

- The pandemic and conflicts of the early 21st century underlined the need for far greater global cooperation. As a result, there is greater access to services and products for all, as governments remove previous restrictions (e.g. copyright, intellectual property laws). The priority is to develop solutions that deliver on human and planetary wellbeing rather than monetary outcomes. This shift in emphasis has led to new transnational initiatives such as the European Union's Human Security Council that supports state and non-state actors to overcome the critical challenges of ecological and social wellbeing.

- A renewed understanding of the importance of direct interpersonal connections has led to a more profound sense of community. These social dynamics often focus on revitalising contact with the living world and ensuring its regeneration.

- With travel now more readily available, there is a renewed desire (especially for younger generations) to move about to experience new cultures. However, the expense of global travel makes this more of a 'once in a lifetime' adventure.

- The global economy recovered slowly after the early century crises that drove unsustainable debt levels. However, after a painful reset, consumers are now more conscious about their buying choices in terms of origin, impact, and disposal. While global products remain available, there is also a desire to spend money on experiences, leading to a growth in leisure and cultural activities.

- As the pandemic fades in consciousness, the global community has renewed efforts to tackle environmental breakdown, but the overshoot on energy and resource consumption associated with the economy of the last 150 years continues. Tensions have arisen as individuals, and economies, are now being restricted by governments and international agreements aiming to slow environmental impacts.

- The most significant source of international tensions has come from the former petro-states. These faced disruptive political movements through the energy transition, leading to prolonged periods of political and social conflict.

- International cooperation, supported by quantum and AI technologies, has led to significant improvements in the digital space with far greater transparency and control in the operation of social networks. In addition, the establishment of effective international domain governance has meant that disinformation is now easier to spot for the majority and less likely to be encountered as transgressing networks are terminated.

- Renewed international perspectives drive alternate forms of human identity that are less aligned to. Consequently, collaborative international approaches are taking over from competitive national identity.
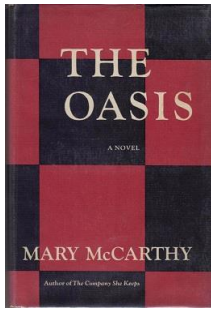
'The Martian'

A co-operative world that continues to face ongoing challenges from a position of common understanding and desired outcomes
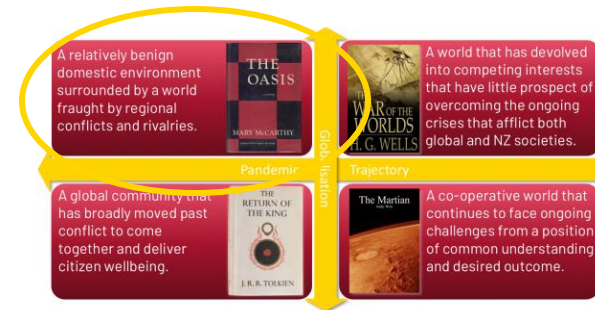

- Continued pandemics and the looming challenge of climate change have led to a renewed understanding of the rationale for international cooperation. The global economy is struggling with restricted movements across borders, and supply chains navigate ongoing pandemic and (more increasingly) climate disruptions. Physical products are now only shipped when necessary, with far greater emphasis on local production based around regional hubs. These exchange centres facilitate local development through global networks, emphasising services that support well-being, including 3-D printing manufacturing, automation, and bio-technologies.

- Societies (if not all individuals) are now generally reconciled to the acceptance that direct physical connection implies risk. Remote working practices are the norm, and the shift away from the office environment and associated commute has led to a reappraisal of work and its central place within societies. Reduced working hours are now the norm in most countries.

- However, people are not prepared to accept total isolation, and new technologies that enable virtual presencing and connection are enjoying a boom. With full-motion capture and mixed-reality, there is an increased blurring of the line between the virtual and physical.

- This need for connection (and use of innovative technologies) is also evident trans-nationally, with significant benefits for the collective addressing of both ongoing health challenges and pressing global issues such as climate change.

- Urban environments have transformed as traditional retail spaces are re-purposed in response to the wholesale shift to online buying. Consumption is generally lower as people move around less, have fewer shopping choices, and increasingly act on resource-use concerns. Most rely on algorithms to shop for them rather than spending further hours online. People instead spend more time on social or leisure interests.

- There is, however, a sense of lost freedom associated with movement restrictions. Health systems globally remain under severe pressure and have become increasingly reactive and less able to sustain elective treatments. Sadly, some areas of the globe are now effectively walled off as health care systems fail despite the best efforts of global agencies.

- The realism of online environments now enables strong distance relationships that continue to redefine the basis on which relationships are formed. As a result, the strongest are often no longer those who are physically the closest.

- Individuals now have the time and technology to explore and re-evaluate what it means to be human. Identity is no longer based on consumption and ownership as such behaviour is now seen as outdated. The national-state concept is also seen as similarly outmoded, with informal regional and international groupings between non-governmental groups becoming exceedingly effective at tackling global issues.

'The Oasis'

A relatively benign domestic environment surrounded by a world fraught by regional conflicts and rivalries

- Trading within tight political boundaries has enabled the supply chain to re-align and deliver to markets associated with respective blocs. However, scarcity of some previously familiar products is now a significant issue, with access to critical commodities subject to geopolitical limitations. Consequently, resourceful entrepreneurs are innovating using locally available resources and, for example, in New Zealand's case, this has seen new developments in casein (main protein present in milk) plastics.

- There's some freedom for individuals to travel within limits with movement intra-regionally no longer health-affected. However, political barriers affect it globally, and energy prices have made long-distance travel prohibitive. In addition, China and the United States have formed rival "communities of common values", and New Zealand has taken an isolationist approach to both. The two remaining superpowers aggressively compete for markets and resources under opposing domestic systems.

- This global instability is a deterrent to movement, and a casualty of this has been the international education sector, with students studying closer to home or online.

- The pervading uncertainty about the availability of products drives periodic panic buying both through physical stores and in the online world. However, the turbulent global environment has tempered the shift online, with consumers focused on supporting local producers and services.

- Any sense of global cohesion has gone. Co-operation is limited by the relative impact of emergent crises on particular blocs. While many in the global south are desperate for climate relief, the wealthier economies have failed to act beyond lip service for fear of local political reaction and a sense that 'others' need to act too. Little seems to have been learned from the successful suppression of the century's earlier pandemics, and critical challenges are going unaddressed.

- Ongoing cyber-wars have heavily impacted the open digital environment and reduced it to a series of restricted 'walled gardens' (environment that controls the user's access to network-based content and services). However, the upside was a renaissance in human connection, with many looking to their local communities for creative engagement. Therefore, local associations, cultural societies, and sports clubs are bouncing back from previous years of decline.

- New Zealanders have shed their 'OE loving' globe-trotting image of the past as travel overall is low and the rest of the world seems further away. Most are comfortable with this transition as they contemplate the turbulence of the world and compare it with local stability. However, externally they are seen as somewhat insular, and the global influence of the country' punching above its weight' has declined.