

# Summit for the Future Report



## Summit for the Future Report 2006

published  
by

*Club of Amsterdam*



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# Welcome



## FELIX B BOPP

Chairman, Club of Amsterdam

Dear Friends of the Club of Amsterdam

The Club of Amsterdam presents its second "Summit for the Future Report".

This year we focus on the subject of **risk** and the role of risk in **innovation** and **global growth**.

Living with risk requires a trade-off, a vision of the good-gamble as well as the nerve to take that gamble. The complexity of modern life, the proliferation of new forms of communication and the deluge of available data makes this more difficult than ever before. This Summit is about the role of risk in our lives as individuals, as members of organisations and as a society.

*This year we had 300 attendees from more than 30 countries - a truly global event!*

Personally I found observing the cultural differences when dealing with risk most interesting:

"The tolerance for risk is higher in North America and Scandinavia, while Japan and continental Europe tend to avoid uncertainty."

"It became obvious that the Dutch culture is driven by fear of risk on almost all levels."

"Youths in China are behaving quite differently from youths some 10 or 20 years ago. Chinese youths today are optimistic and more confident. They are more willing to take risks, change jobs for a better future."

... or as Sir Paul Judge puts it: "The basics of business and competition have not changed. Darwin was right. The fittest survive. In evolutionary terms, risk-taking could be said to have arisen as a response to the harsh environment. Species that took risks survived to propagate."

We would like to thank the delegates, speakers, knowledge stream leaders - simply everybody who helped making this Summit for the Future a memorable and inspiring event!

Special thanks go to all of our partners - especially to HES School of Economics and Business and its students, the Institute for Media and Information Management and the University of Amsterdam!

My best wishes





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# Summary



## PATRICK CREHAN

Chairman, Summit for the Future 2006  
CEO and Founder, Crehan, Kusano & Associates

### Summary of the Summit for the Future 2006

We've been looking at the issue of risk, through many different lenses and we started out with many, many questions. In listening to the conversations today, a couple of threads have emerged – this is my personal sense-making, and I want to share that with you as a conclusion. Starting out with one of the negative ideas; we've been looking at death, and that somehow led to a discussion about health. The prevailing approach is 'curing the disease', a kind of response to when things are going wrong. What people seem to be saying is that we should think more about a proactive way of looking at these things, 'from curing to caring'. Looking beyond the body - and looking at the being. Going from a fragmented view of healthcare to a more integrated view of the individual, that combines the physical health with the psychological, mental and emotional health of the patient. We had discussions on entrepreneurship, innovation; these are all part of the human experience everywhere in the world. People have needs, and parts of those needs are to plan, to care for their families, to build and construct, to change the world. Our most basic biology demonstrates the fact that we are driven to embrace change, and to be vectors and factors of change. This is how we are anticipating the world's development. The downside of our investment is that we are fighting these changes as if they were dangerous risks.

Another thread was the 'politics of fear' as associated with

risk. People manipulate people. Communication is a form of manipulation, and one of the things we do is invite force. It's a form of violence, the way that we propagate politics of fear to influence how people behave. We need to understand what is real in terms of our perception of risk. Risks to business, risks to the environment, risks to the planet, risks to ourselves. And in terms of reality, one point was that money is not a map of the world, but it is certainly a partial one. And if it is the only one we use we will not navigate this landscape of risk very well. So the idea is to move beyond money towards something that is more value-based and includes money. After all it is one of the most powerful tools ever invented, and it is the most powerful cause for change in the world, but so is communication, and knowledge. In that sense, like for instance in any diet, it needs to be balanced or we break out in spots. So this whole idea of money, scarcity, fragmentation again, another thread leading to values and the idea that there are scarcities but other things that you value exist in abundance. Looking at the whole area of media and entertainment, the experience economy – it's interesting, young musicians tend to look at the media business as a great evil, but well, you know, nothing is simple and with success and other things those views will change. But what is also interesting is how the world in media and entertainment is driving communication, connectivity, and the diffusion of knowledge, thus creating new forms of the economy.



Peer to Peer sharing, Open Source, all of those things are already movements beyond a mere money-driven society towards a broader, more value-based economy. So it is quite interesting that in this area, there are already models emerging of different methods, and these are very positive images for the future. It shows that it is possible to go beyond money. The thing is not to say to people 'oh you shouldn't do this because no money is coming out, you should give them directions to go. Business has been a creative force in that, entrepreneurs, and small businesses, and some of the people speaking of entrepreneurship spoke about the role of small companies and the fact that small companies can co-exist with large companies and compete, not necessarily in a nasty way, but in a healthy, evolutionary, Darwinian way that is never personal.

Another thread is the whole idea of systems. It is so easy to blame the system. On the other hand, it's not easy to make changes. So if you feel the need to blame, you can instead look at the system and recognize that part of the way the world is today is in the system, so to speak. But you mustn't forget that it does come down to individuals – individuals matter, they can make a difference. But they must want to make a difference, they need to know that they matter, and they need to give themselves the freedom to participate in the world in that way. There is movement from the system, where you delegate responsibility away from yourself towards the individual, which has led towards those wonderful emerging ideas about the collective ideas, a collective consciousness, collective intelligence, and the idea that the system as such is a form of life.

Part of the evolution occurs in this early phase of thinking, where the system changes and then moves on. But this emerging collective consciousness is a very positive image, the idea that we are part of that system that decisions do come down to individuals and they can make a difference. So our attitude to governance and leadership – we all are leaders in some way – changes in the way people lead. People become more affluent, more educated, more free. Leadership and governance systems are changing. So there are a lot of interesting concepts emerging from this. In terms of our perception and the meaning of risk, rather than seeing risk as something evil, unnecessary, and the basis of the politics of fear, to see risk as something corresponding to opportunity, see it as a challenge, see it as a force for good. Instead of thinking in terms of problems, give yourself the freedom to do something about it. Maybe having a new view on risk, on your life, on health, happiness, the meaning of money and so forth, this would give you a new freedom to undertake risks and to live with the consequences.

This is where I want to end; it has really been a fantastic meeting. You are an incredibly stimulating and wonderful bunch of people and I am truly happy that we came together.



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