

THOUGHTSCAPES

PEOPLE, PLACE, POLICY, POTENTIAL

think like a mountain aldo leopold



The Ethical Forester

(Because even the right tools aren't enough)

Chris Perley

Forests as a Contest of Ideas

- “The Free Market provides the best Environmental Outcome” An economist c. 1994
- Um Mining gives you the best Net Present Value
- So does Privatising the Gains, and Socialising the Costs
- If you replace both a broad & long-term systems view and an ethic ... with financially-determined prescriptive practice you’ll get

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The result of ... Practices,
Events and Ideas



The History of Ideas

- **European Commons history left behind**
- **Colonial High Modernity**
 - **Grass-conversion phase; Pure MINING**
- **Early attempts to rethink the mining - regulate sawmiller feeding frenzy 1874. State Forest Service 1919 – First Plantings 1920s**
- **A Post-depression/post WWII ‘Development’ – Culminating in the 1970s Beech Scheme – “No more Depressions etc.”**
- **The generation shift early 1980s – where to from here strategic thinking and a more integrated approach.**
- **Capital:Nature Dualism 1987 (Descartes Dys-integration).**
- **The pure capital component corporatised, then privatised**
- **Forests as singular mechanical bounded ‘capital’**



**Wider Socio-Ecosystem – Indigenous Context - Belonging – Maintain
Functional Integrity – The Trickster**

Wider Intergenerational Multiple-Utility – Anthropocentric “Sustainable Yield” - Modernity

Forest Estate – Multiple Crops – “Resourcism”

Stand – Single Agronomic Crop – ‘Factory’ – Modernity on Steroids

The RED BOX

**Stand – Discounted Capital –
Whatever makes most short-term
money at least cost**

**Simplify, only consider \$, quick
discounted payback, mine, move
on.**

**Result: Functional Dysfunction,
Tipping Point, Life-Support
Disaster.**



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The result of ... Practices,
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The Ideas make the Practices



The Narrowing of Scope

- When Culture shifts to a narrowed breadth and term of consideration, then
 - Judgment is reduced ..
 - “Value Rationality” is replaced with the ‘Instrumental Rationality’ – Modernity on Steroids (The Certain, Controllable ‘System of the World’)





"Remember, children: Whenever you employ Instrumental Rationality, somewhere in the world a Gulag comes into existence!"



Or This



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 - The professional is replaced with the technical
 - Wisdom is replaced with the prescriptive
 - “Best Practice” Context thinking is replaced with Prescriptive Codes



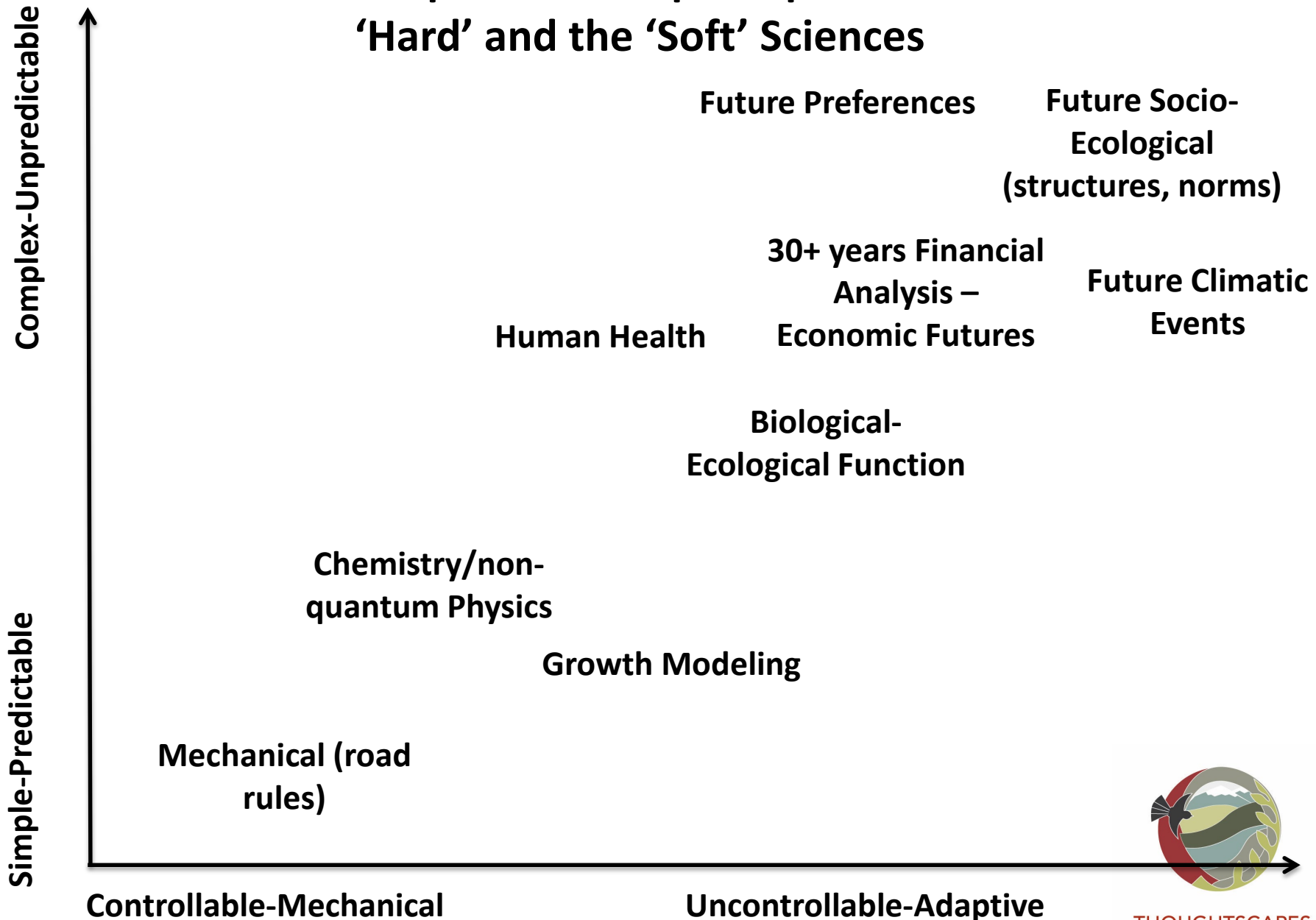
- Codes & technical prescriptions are suited to Certain, Predictable & Controllable Spaces



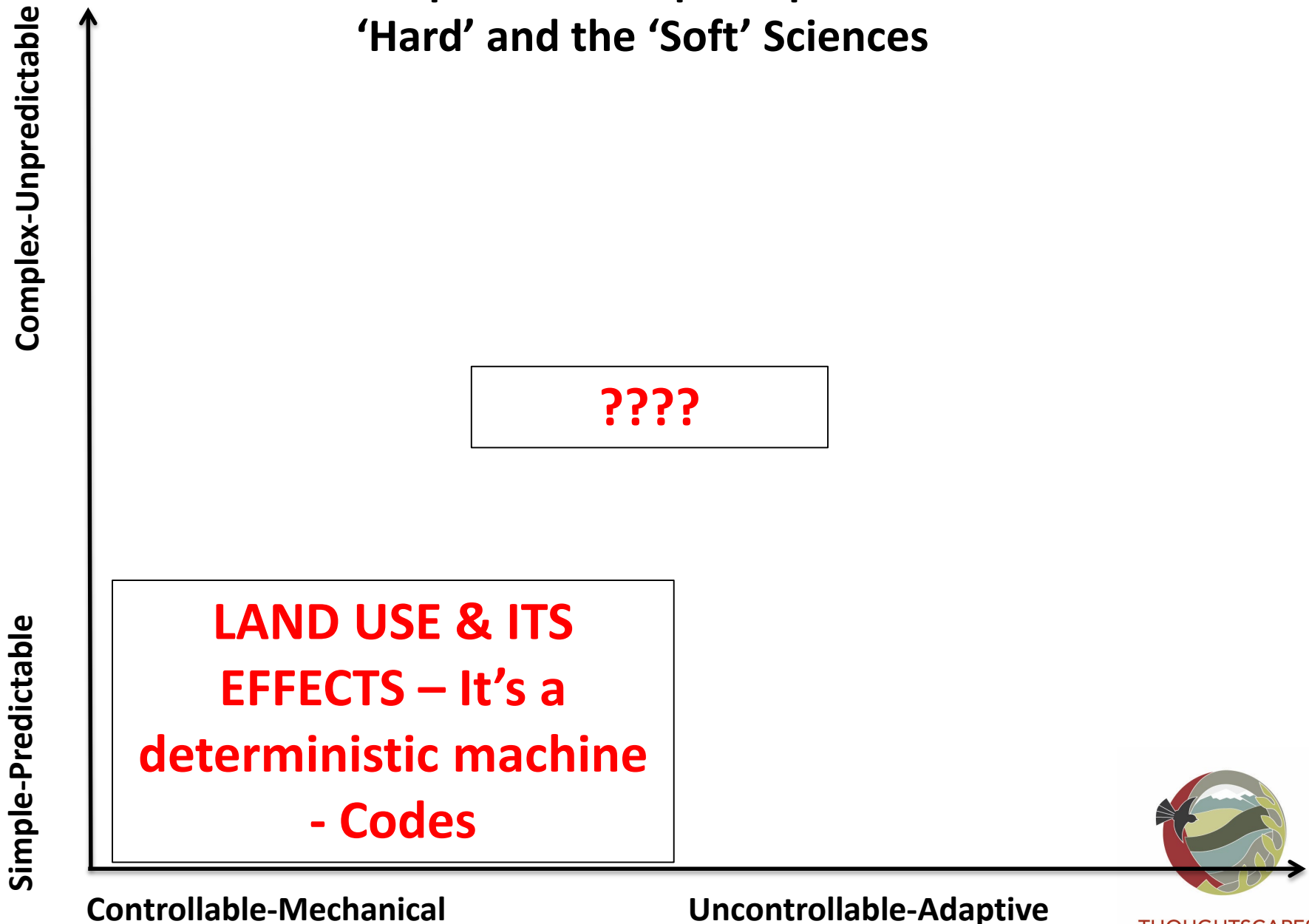
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Simple and Complex Space – The ‘Hard’ and the ‘Soft’ Sciences



Simple and Complex Space – The 'Hard' and the 'Soft' Sciences



Simple and Complex Space – The 'Hard' and the 'Soft' Sciences



- Codes & technical prescriptions are suited to Certain, Predictable & Controllable Spaces
- But when we are dealing with Complexity, Uncertainty & Uncontrollability, then
- We need to act through ...
- **Systems Thinking** – Get off this Mechanical Modernity Myth
- Broader & Longer-term Multi or Trans-disciplinarity **Knowledge Systems**
- **Value-Rationality** relative to shifting contexts
- **Resilience Thinking**



The Challenge – Shifting to the Complex Uncertain Space

