

# Academics call for 'Five Capitals' approach to global resilience

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Writing in the leading academic journal, *Nature*, Cranfield academics are calling for global resilience to be shaped around the 'Five Capitals'—natural, human, social, built and financial. The academics

believe that too often silos exist within Government and within organizations and businesses that mean risks are not anticipated quickly enough or prepared for well enough.

Crucially, connections are not made between different parts of society. A recent example of this was illustrated in when two Permanent Secretaries in the UK Government revealed that previous exercises to tackle pandemics had not included any economic planning.

Professor Jim Harris, Professor of Environmental Technology at Cranfield University, and lead author of the published letter in *Nature*, said: "Too often risks are identified in isolation and opportunities are missed because Government and organizations are too siloed. Take [climate change](#) that is not just an environmental issue it effects all parts of society and contains threats to the [global economy](#) and our health and wellbeing. A 'Five Capitals' approach to resilience would enable us to examine interconnected risks and their interdependencies."

Professor David Denyer, who leads on resilience for Cranfield University, said: "Investment to often made in resilience far too late, usually just at the start of a crisis. If you look at COVID-19, the Government had identified a similar pandemic risk on the national risk register but the resources needed to prepare for the threat across society had not been deployed.

"At Cranfield, we are working across academic disciplines to shape an approach to [resilience](#) that draws on the expertise of colleagues in management, [environmental science](#) and engineering, aviation, defense and security and many other areas of the university. We believe this approach is one that other organizations should draw on as they look to identify future risks and prepare for the future."

**More information:** Jim A. Harris et al, Time to invest in global

resilience, *Nature* (2020). [DOI: 10.1038/d41586-020-01951-z](https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-01951-z)

Provided by Cranfield University

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