

Yakov Ben-Haim, What strategic analysts and planners for national security need to know, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence*, 35: 57–72.

**Abstract** Strategic analysts and planners need two distinct capabilities. First, extensive disciplinary expertise and broad understanding of the world, is needed to handle complex subtleties of human affairs. Second, methodological expertise in decisions under uncertainty is needed for dealing with innovation, discovery, and surprise by friend or foe. Three arguments support this claim. First, decision-theoretic expertise is needed to manage uncertainty in human affairs. Second, the dichotomy of capabilities is needed to manage uniqueness of historical circumstance. Third, consensus of intelligence assessment is demanded by decision makers, but pluralism of models is prevalent in complex uncertain environments. We propose nurturing plurality of assessment, and embedding those assessments in the analysis of robustness to uncertainty. Specifically, the analyst evaluates the robustness (of a policy) to uncertainty (plurality) of assessment. A more robust policy is preferred over a less robust policy. The analyst must have both topical expertise in the disciplines underlying the analysis, as well as decision-theoretic expertise in managing uncertainty. We demonstrate this by applying info-gap decision theory, and the concept of robust-satisficing, in analysis for policy selection for responding to Al-Qaeda prior to 9/11. This illustrates the combination of topical and decision theoretic expertise.

**Keywords** intelligence methodology, strategic planning, decision theory, robustness, uncertainty, info-gaps.