

# THE FUTURIST

A Magazine of Forecasts, Trends, and Ideas about the Future

Exploring the year

# 2100

THE FUTURIST invited WFS members and friends to submit forecasts, scenarios, and wild cards, about the earth, humanity, governance, commerce, science, and tech for the year 2100.

Here are their stories

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## Geonautics

By Gereon Klein

Geonautics was the name of the spaceship traveling between Cosmos and Earth. They would be approaching their destination today. One by one, all geonauts came into the conference room for the briefing.

Ayanda was looking out of the window, her thoughts circling around the question of what to expect this time during her visit to Mumbai-II, when the commander's voice reached her: "When we come to pick you up again I expect every team to have got out at least 10% more from every GEP—just to make this very clear."



Initially, Cosmos had only been planned as platform for transplanetary journeys. But when the fight for survival had assumed super-human dimensions on Planet Earth, and when survival outside protective establishments had become impossible, Cosmos had developed into a place of refuge for space travel

experts, heads of state, and the affluent who could afford this place of residence. Hopelessly overcrowded, the station lacked virtually everything; in particular, however, energy was scarce.

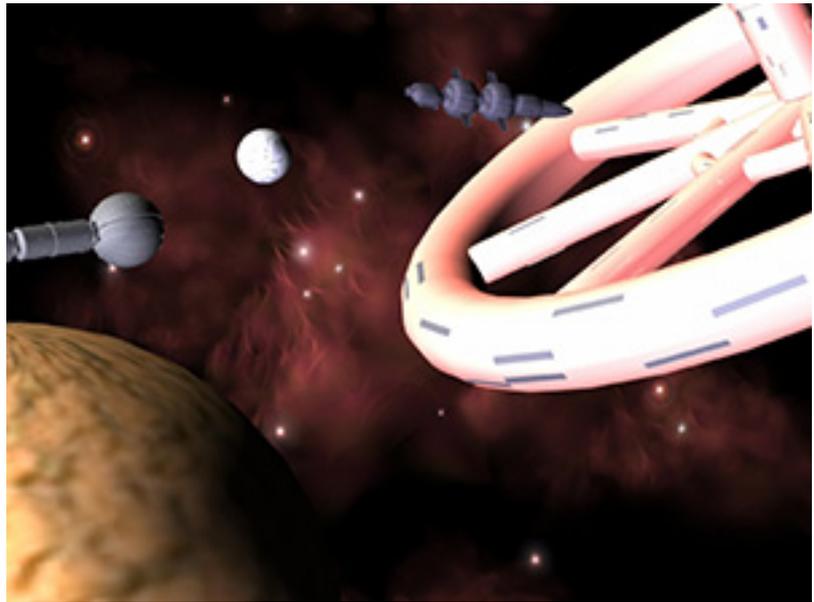
Everything that seemed reasonably plausible to produce energy had been tried. Then, the successful linking of small-scale biochemical power stations with electricity factories signaled a breakthrough.

The Earth served as factory premises. Light, oxygen and carbon dioxide as operating resources were available in sufficient supplies. Plants could be reconstructed on site to become reactors and could be configured into Green Energy Plants (GEP). A beam from

Earth to Cosmos had been installed for energy transport. Since an additional energy repeater had been positioned in a geo-stationary orbit, energy transfer ran smoothly and without interruptions. For the operation and optimization of the GEPs, teams of experts commuted between Cosmos and Earth with the Geonautics.

During this trip, Ayanda had the official task of increasing the energy density of GEP processes. Secretly, however, she was to investigate inconsistencies of GEP9. During the last maintenance, she had installed an innovative DNA for the filtering of electrons. This DNA had been developed from recombining germ cells of different mammals. Tests had yielded promising results, but ever since GEP9.1 was back in operation, interferences occurred constantly—and every time, it was a different error. They were faced with a mystery.

Ayanda remembered that ever since the modification her pulse became faster, and she became confused when she moved closer to GEP9.1. Upon closer inspection, Ayanda found a voice in her mind. It always occurred in the same tone and fell silent when her distance to GEP9.1 increased. She could hear the voice clearly, but was unable to understand it.



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Her frequency meter showed no signals. When she asked colleagues in passing, they noticed nothing. Then the geonauts had to head back to Cosmos.

Now she was back and would have a closer look at GEP9.1. Ayanda's thoughts were interrupted by the security briefing from afar: "And remember that without protective clothing you will have 10 minutes before you have accumulated the life-threatening dose of radiation."

What had happened to her electricity machine since the DNA modification? Did this generator have a language or even intelligence? If only she could understand the voice. Slightly uneasy and with gooseflesh all over her body, Ayanda was looking forward to her arrival at GEP9.1 on Mumbai-II.

#### **About the author:**

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