

# Multidisciplinary understandings of Indeterminacy, Uncertainty and Risk

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# Practice-led research

- Live project activity and reflection
- Exemplary work

# Research projects involved:

‘newLEAF: Learning to adapt to an uncertain future: linking genes, trees, people and processes for more resilient treescapes’

Part of UK Research & Innovation

‘The Future of UK Treescapes’ programme

<https://www.uktreescapes.org/projects/newleaf/>

‘Creative Landscape Futures’

Part of UK Research & Innovation  
Landscape Decisions programme

<https://creativelandscapefutures.blogspot.com/>

# Contributors

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# Definitions

**Uncertainty** is usually used to refer to a state or condition of knowledge – it is epistemic

**Indeterminacy** refers to randomness and intrinsic variation – sometimes called aleatory

**Risk** – things where we understand enough about the likelihood and the consequence in order to be able to put in place forms of management – e.g. financial, health and safety.



Claire Gavronsky  
The Theorist's Blind Spots, 2012

Thomas Cole, 1836  
The Oxbow (The  
Connecticut River  
near  
Northampton)

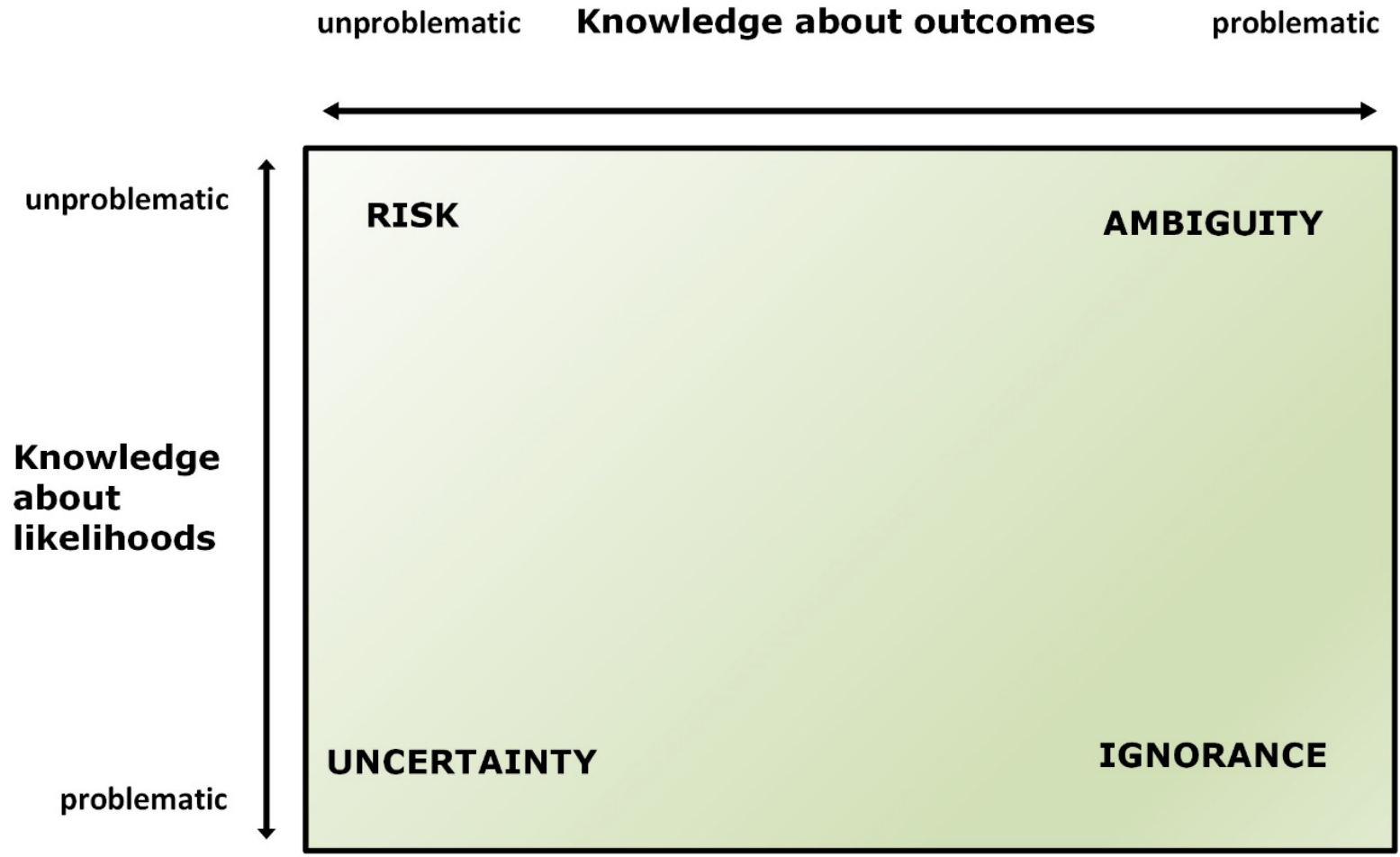


Caspar David Friedrich,  
1818  
Chalk Cliffs on Rügen





Leach et al. (2010)



# Discussion

- Objectives (what we know and what we choose to do about it) and how we imagine things
- Translation from sciences to intermediary disciplines eg law/economics (with their own uncertainty/indeterminacy issues) to policy (with its own concerns with uncertainty/indeterminacy)
- Variety of approaches from artists – a characteristic of creative practice – underlying message that we need to work with uncertainty/indeterminacy to produce novelty

# Conclusions

Preponderance of contributions address 'epistemic' uncertainty

Fewer are concerned with natural variation and randomness

Four broad areas:

- Knowledge
- Futures
- Change
- Action