

Mistakes in the moral mathematics of existential risk

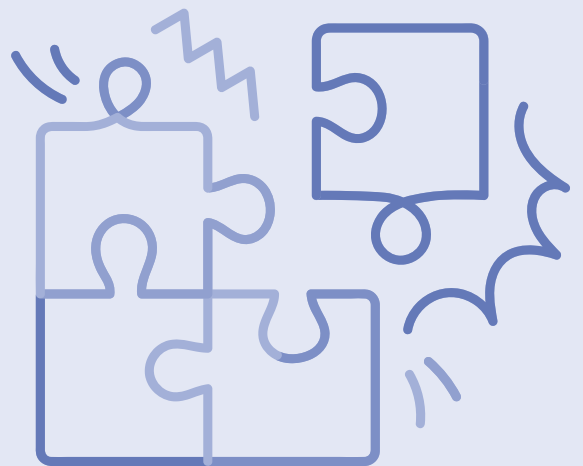


1. Focus on cumulative risk

Longtermists calculate the value of reducing *cumulative risk* over a long period (e.g. 1 billion years). But their interventions actually reduce *period risk* over a shorter period (e.g. one century)

2. Ignoring background risk

Interventions reduce some risks while leaving other *background risks* alone. These risks must be factored into the value of risk mitigation.



3. Ignoring population dynamics

The future human population is likely to be much smaller than longtermists project. This is because populations are constrained by human values and decisions, not merely by resources and technology.

