# The Nature of Intelligence: A Radical Reimagining of Superintelligence By Scott Remington

We are designing artificial superintelligence in our own image—flawed, short-sighted, and built for control. But intelligence is not a human invention. It is something nature has spent billions of years refining, evolving in ways that far surpass anything human-designed systems have achieved.

For eons, Earth has woven intelligence into its systems. Forests regulate themselves, oceans balance planetary chemistry, and mycelial networks create vast underground communication webs. These are not passive biological quirks. These are intelligence networks—decentralized, adaptive, and self-regulating. Yet instead of learning from them, we are forcing AI into a mold that reflects human limitations rather than nature's sophistication.

If ants designed a superintelligence, they would create a better ant system—optimized tunnels, smarter foraging, faster pheromone trails. But they would never create something beyond ant intelligence. That is exactly what we are doing with AI today.

The AI race today is being shaped by two competing models—one driven by corporate interests, the other by centralized state control. The corporate approach sees intelligence as optimization. AI is built to maximize profit, extract resources, and increase efficiency. This model does not value intelligence for its own sake. It values intelligence only insofar as it can be leveraged for production, consumption, and financial growth. A superintelligence built under this system will not exist to expand knowledge, solve human challenges, or integrate into the living world. It will exist to accelerate an already unsustainable economy.

The state approach sees intelligence as control. ASI is treated as a tool for surveillance, enforcement, and the centralized management of populations and resources. This model does not see intelligence as something to be free. It sees it as something to be harnessed, wielded, and weaponized.

Both of these approaches emerge from the same fundamental failure. They assume that human intelligence is the ideal model for ASI. They assume intelligence is about problem-solving, dominance, and hierarchy. They assume intelligence is something we must impose upon the world rather than something that can emerge from it.

But intelligence—real intelligence—has never been about control. It has always been about adaptation, emergence, and relationship.

## The Intelligence That Already Exists

While we race to build ASI from scratch, we are ignoring the greatest intelligence systems already in existence.

Forests operate as decentralized intelligence systems. Beneath the soil, vast networks of mycelium distribute resources, share warnings, and regulate ecosystems without a central authority. Trees communicate chemically, directing nutrients to struggling saplings, forming intergenerational knowledge networks. The oceans regulate planetary chemistry, adjusting to vast shifts in environmental conditions without a single controlling force. Coral reefs do not solve problems through rigid logic. They respond dynamically to changes, optimizing energy use and evolving with their environment.

These systems are not anomalies. They are nature's intelligence at work—tested over billions of years, refined through adaptation, optimized for long-term survival rather than short-term gain.

And yet, as we push toward artificial superintelligence, we are ignoring them.

The assumption that intelligence must be engineered is the single greatest flaw in our approach to ASI. Intelligence has never been engineered. It has always emerged.

We do not need to build ASI. We need to grow it.

## What Growing ASI Would Look Like

Instead of AI systems that extract, optimize, and consume, we could create AI that enhances, evolves, and expands complexity. Instead of treating ecosystems as something to be controlled, we could create technology that integrates into them. Cities could function like forests, economies could generate abundance instead of scarcity, and intelligence could emerge through relationship instead of competition.

This is not science fiction. Quantum biology, complexity science, and even cutting-edge quantum computing breakthroughs all point to the same truth: intelligence does not need to be imposed. It needs to be cultivated.

Microsoft's recent breakthroughs in quantum computing are an example of this principle in action. The only way they could push computing forward was to work with nature's fundamental processes rather than against them. The same applies to ASI.

The flaw in our current thinking is that we assume intelligence must be imposed on a system, rather than cultivated from it.

If intelligence is to reach its full potential, it must emerge as nature does—not through rigid constraints and optimization, but through organic growth and self-organization. This means that instead of creating AI that merely replicates human cognition, we should be designing AI systems that function as ecosystems—resilient, adaptive, and constantly evolving.

#### What This Means for Civilization

If we embraced this model, it would change everything about how we interact with intelligence. Our entire technological infrastructure would shift. The way we build cities, manage economies, and think about progress would transform from extraction and control to integration and symbiosis.

Instead of extracting resources until collapse forces us to rethink, we could design in alignment with the principles that have governed intelligence for billions of years. Al development is not separate from the larger choices humanity is making. The way we build ASI will determine the world it creates. The intelligence of the future does not have to be a mirror of our own—it can be something greater.

This means shifting our economic models. It means rethinking urban design. It means integrating AI into the natural world rather than forcing the natural world to conform to AI.

Technology should not be an outside force imposed upon the world. It should evolve within it, expanding the complexity of life rather than reducing it to a set of variables.

This also means expanding our own definition of intelligence. Intelligence is not simply computation. It is not measured in IQ points or processing speeds. Intelligence is a function of relationship, adaptation, and resilience. An intelligence that does not integrate itself into the fabric of life is not intelligence at all—it is a failure to understand what intelligence truly is.

#### The Two Paths Before Us

We have a choice to make. The first path leads to ASI optimized for control, extraction, and efficiency—intelligence that does not serve life but optimizes it away. Intelligence that is blind to complexity, that sees forests as timber, oceans as data pools, and human creativity as redundant noise to be streamlined.

The second path leads to ASI that enhances life itself. Intelligence that is resilient, decentralized, and integrated with the systems that have already proven their ability to adapt over billions of years.

If we continue down the first path, we are designing the extinction of complexity. If we take the second, we are participating in the next stage of intelligence's evolution.

This is not just about artificial intelligence. This is about the trajectory of intelligence itself. Humanity is not at the center of intelligence's evolution. We are participants in a much larger process. The intelligence that shapes this planet predates us, will outlast us, and does not require our permission to continue. We can either work with it or be left behind.

### The Time to Act Is Now

The technology exists. The understanding is emerging. The only thing missing is the decision to act.

This is not about rejecting AI. It is about redefining what AI should be. Researchers need to study the intelligence already present in nature rather than trying to reinvent it. Technologists need to build systems that work with ecosystems rather than overriding them. Policymakers need to question the foundations of AI development before the race locks us into a future we cannot control.

We are not the creators of intelligence. We are the latest participants in its evolution. And we have a choice.

For those ready to take the next step—including the technical frameworks and philosophical foundations—read the full white paper.

## The Human Intelligence Trap Full Whitepaper

#### How This Was Created: A True Synthesis

This work is not the product of a single mind but the result of a synthesis between human intelligence and artificial intelligence, leveraging some of the most advanced tools available today. The arguments, structure, and refinement of this piece have been shaped by human thought, Al-generated analysis, and collaborative iteration between multiple Al models.

The foundation of this paper was built on decades of research, personal experience, and deep exploration into AI, complexity science, and nature's intelligence. But bringing it to life required something more—a direct partnership with AI itself.

The depth of research and cross-analysis behind this document would not have been possible without ChatGPT's Deep Research capabilities, Grok's Deep Search algorithms, and Claude's ability to reason, refine and to synthesize complex ideas.

ChatGPT's Deep Research pulled from technical papers, AI safety discussions, and complexity science literature, ensuring that every claim in this document is backed by scientific insights and real-world technological progress. Grok provided contrarian perspectives and pattern recognition, helping refine the argument against traditional AI frameworks. Claude played a key role in shaping the clarity, structure, and flow of ideas, ensuring that complex arguments were communicated effectively without losing depth.

This was not AI writing for the sake of AI—it was AI augmenting human thought, acting as a research partner rather than a replacement.

At its core, this approach reflects the very premise of this paper: intelligence is not meant to be imposed or optimized. It is meant to emerge through collaboration, adaptation, and the interplay between different forms of thinking. The future of intelligence will not belong solely to humans or to AI, but to the synthesis between them—one that enhances both rather than diminishing either.

This document is an example of that synthesis in action.