Towards a utility optimised empirical ethical framework for humans and other life forms - based on widely distributed consensus mechanisms, a greater use of objective criteria and the potentially invariant value of life

Considers the potential for a new utility optimised empirical ethical framework (**EEF**) to deal with major decisions affecting different species (or classes) having different functionality, aliveness and qualities and quantities of sentience and sapience. Considers A.I., hypothetical alien encounters, game-theoretic decision making, Pareto optimality and utility optimal criteria.

The EEF foundations are expected to be built on objective and potentially invariant features of life acting as universal utility engines. This gives rise to the possibility of objective values as well as intersubjective ethical applications for a wide range of living entities and species.

The importance of entropy and negative capability in understanding the utility of life and living entities is considered, as evidenced by evolutionary theory's understanding of life in Earth's great synthesis.

Seeks to outline what a practical scientific ethical framework might include. The ethical legal structure is proposed to be based on empirically falsifiable axioms giving laws and principles of application of the laws. The primary ethical foundation is the universally invariant value of life, as manifested in a diversity life-forms and entities.

The operation of the EEF envisages the need for distributed polling using ‘behind the veil’ scoring - for potentially living species - of aliveness, feeling, intelligence and wisdom based on a Turing Test type structure. Polling would also be used for decision making on the utility of actions taking account of the qualities of beings and the value of species.

The value and interdependence of life, the capacity for suffering and avoidance of unnecessary suffering are balanced against the ability to undertake the most useful action (utility) and the needs of affected beings, entities before making material decisions (i.e. that impact a significant number of entities of any species).

Concludes with an outline of what an EEF might look like in practice, how decentralised consensus would play a key role including in its formation, constitution and adjudication for decision making and the initial work required to develop it further. A Decentralised Autonomous Organisation (**DAO[[1]](#footnote-0)**) would operate the EEF and information channels - this secure structure has been pioneered within the blockchain communities.

Some hypothetical thought-experiments are also included in order to bring into focus the issues involved and what the EEF has to be able to manage.

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decentralized_autonomous_organization> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)