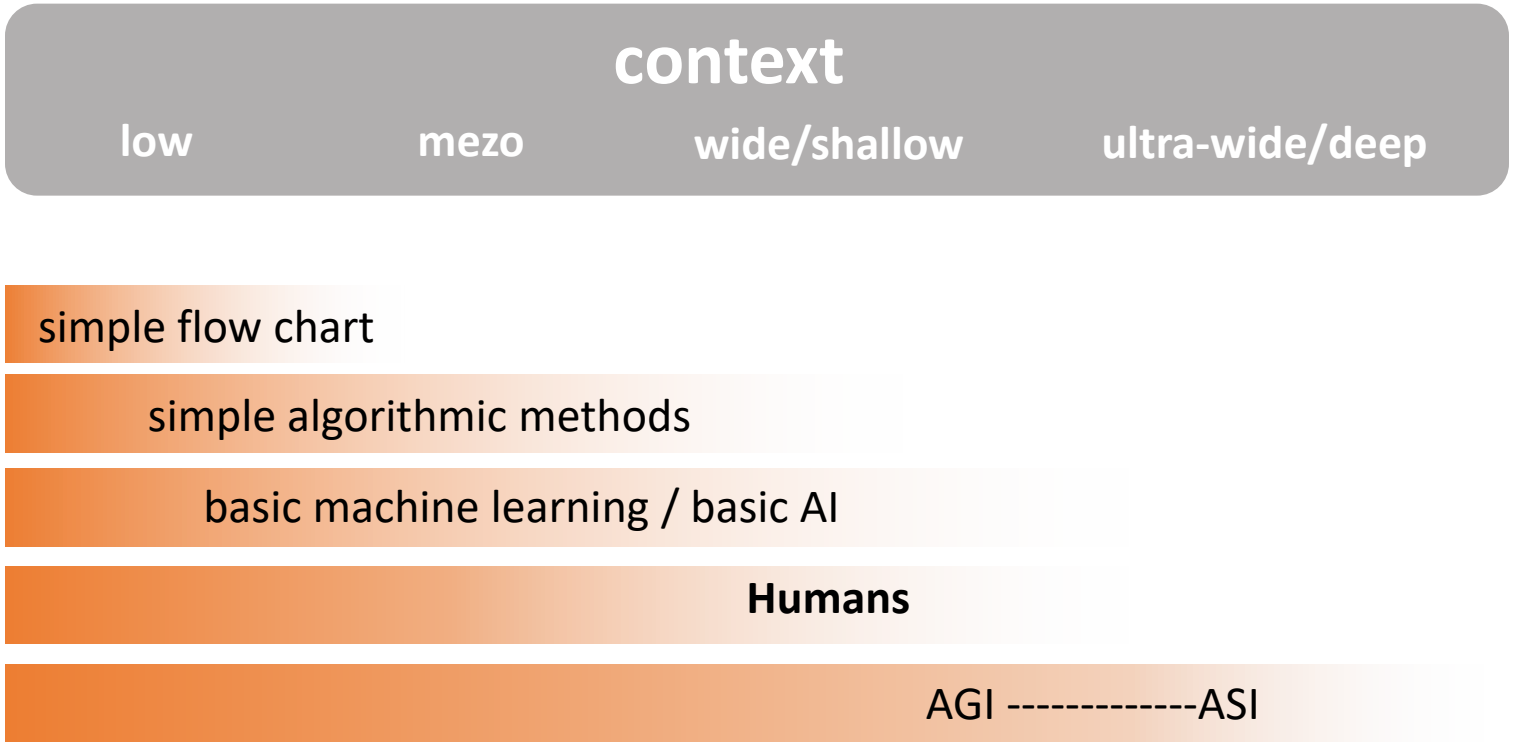
Context: An ability to consider a range of information which may be pertinent to recognizing and mitigating the impacts of your actions



The importance of context in differentiating AI risk in AI regulation

Algorithmic methods, machine leaning, and AI can all handle different degrees of context, i.e. ability to consider a range of information which may be pertinent to recognizing and mitigating the impacts of your actions.

We like to think of humans as the gold standard in recognizing context and wider good. However, humans and human organizations are known to be quite bad working with wide and deep contexts. A very common issue is that an organization will optimise for a narrow set of metrics. Chasing narrow metrics, if unchecked, inevitably results in unintended off target negative impact in the wider world. These organizations invariably have insufficient context or, are willfully blind to the wider context of their actions or are too slow to accept that their actions and metrics might be wrong or be damaging. We should recognize this as a very human problem.

At best humans achieve “wide and shallow” or “narrow and deep” context but for the most part our ability to process context is very limited.

This is pertinent when we think about AI harms and regulation as its important to differentiate between low context and wide context systems. Many present-day decisions support tools are in the low to mezo context range and need regulation. We already recognize the need for regulation at the human scale and those same rules should apply to systems which are making decisions at those levels. However, the ultra-wide/deep range of contextual understanding may be achievable in the future, by its natures this breadth and depth of understanding takes into account everything that humans could consider and more.

With ultra-wide and deep context AGI/ASI may be significantly better than humans at avoiding harms resulting from their actions. If we really want to avoid harms, we should be regulating positively for use of future AGI/ASI systems.