

**THE DISCOVERY OF ETI AS A
HIGH-CONSEQUENCE, LOW-PROBABILITY EVENT**

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The object of this paper is to demonstrate that all possible consequences of an ETI discovery depend very sensitively on specific circumstances. In this respect it is like the impact of an asteroid on Earth – another high-consequence, low-probability event. The recently proposed two-dimensional Torino-scale is a scheme to take into account both the potential damage an asteroid impact could do as well as the probability of a collision (lower numbers are used to describe less certain impacts of varying strengths). The Torino-scale was developed as a way to better communicate the dangers posed by near-Earth asteroids. In this paper a similar but three-dimensional scheme is suggested to characterize how the consequences of an ETI discovery would depend on a set of independent parameters. According to this pattern the social, scientific, etc. consequences of an ETI discovery would depend mainly on 1.) the type of discovery; 2.) the character or class of the ETI phenomenon; 3.) its distance. These three parameters are more or less independent, but most of the others (like activity level, message intentionality or certainty of ETI origin) vary with the above mentioned three. The scheme is analyzed with respect to its structure and the level of possible consequences are estimated in a scale of 1 ... 4.