

This video discusses a debate surrounding the potential risks of long-term economic growth due to the depletion of non-renewable resources. It references early writings from 1931 that were forgotten and a revisitation in 1972 that sparked renewed interest among economists. Key figures in the debate, like Daly and Hering, critically examined existing frameworks of sustainable growth, particularly criticizing the assumptions made by the Solow model regarding the relationship between resource use and economic output.

The speaker argues that sustainable economic growth is achievable only under certain conditions, which they refer to as "in other conditions." These include acknowledging physical constraints related to resource inputs which must align with the law of conservation of mass. They propose that tangible outputs and the resources needed to produce them are fundamentally linked; thus, as production increases, so must the consumption of material inputs, contrary to the idea of dematerialization.

Through various assumptions about the properties of matter, the speaker lays out a framework suggesting that as economies grow, so will waste and pollution, unless significant efforts in pollution abatement and sustainable practices are implemented. The conclusion emphasizes the necessity for future research to account for the interplay between production, resource use, and environmental impact to foster sustainable economic growth.