

Title: Technology, Energy and Nature - Human Values and Open Choices

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Abstract: As humans, we have developed technologies to control energy transformations from agriculture to nuclear weapons. Increasing technological ability has co-evolved with increasing intensity of energy use and growing complexity of our civilization. These forces have shaped our environmental footprint and our very conception of nature. It's tempting to believe that physical limits constrain our energy and environmental choices as never before; but Dr. Keith argues precisely the opposite: our growing technological leverage makes access to energy and materials cheaper, opening up our options for co-existing with the natural world. These options force us to confront hard choices about our values. Should we treasure nature as it is, or purely as an instrument to human welfare? Our growing ability to engineer the planet makes these choices ever more pressing.

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