

# Mesurer l'urgence. Quantification des risques et identification des priorités

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## Abstract

In this text we will address the process of quantification of the environment at work since the 1960's, to see to what extent it allows us to interpret information in terms of sustainability and urgency. The explosion of means to collect data (known as Big Data) seems to open infinite horizons for the analyses of all kinds of socio-economic and environmental phenomena. Simultaneously, current environmental changes put the contested notion of limits back on scientific and political agendas. Some perceive the new available data as the possibility to better identify environmental or developmental limits. A contrario, the notion of limits, in particular that of «planetary boundaries», seems to stem from a double restriction: quantitative (the end of unlimited growth) and conceptual (simplification of complex realities). We will see, however, that limits also open the possibility of translating multiple data on the environment into regulatory information on fundamental equilibriums to be preserved and on priorities for action. Maybe the outmost urgency is to produce this regulatory information, which government, businesses, and individuals absolutely need to have access to in order to act more efficiently and with more pertinence in a complex and changing world.

## Keywords

Quantification of the environment, Big Data, planetary limits, sustainability and urgency

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