



## Drumbeat: July 15, 2013

Posted by [Leanan](#) on July 15, 2013 - 8:36am

### [The receding threat from 'peak oil'](#)

Mr Halff told BBC News that concerns about an approaching "peak" in oil production have been "moved to the back burner".

"Just a few years ago, everybody thought US production was in permanent decline, that the nation had to face the prospect of continuously rising imports - and now the country is moving towards self-sufficiency," he explained.

"In the last few years, many forecasters have had to revise their forecasts upwards continuously - sometimes the ink was not dry on the previous forecasts before they had to raise their outlooks again."

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### [The danger in wishful thinking on oil](#)

"I've taken a stand and made statements. Because of the nature of what has gone on the last few years, it makes me look foolish," Kunstler says. "I just have to soldier through that. But I have a serene conviction that my version of the story is probably more correct than the other side's."

So what is his story?

"What we are seeing now is an enormous amount of wishful thinking by people who ought to know better but don't," he says flatly.

### [Sign of the Times? Peak Oil Website Shuts Down](#)

For years, we've been pointing out that Peak Oil is a dominant social theme, a scarcity meme used by the powers-that-be to reinforce the US petrodollar and generally to control economic and sociopolitical elements of society.

And now comes word via various news reports including a story at MarketWatch that a main Internet proponent of the Peak Oil myth – The Oil Drum – is shutting its doors.

### [WTI Fluctuates After Third Weekly Advance as China Grows](#)

West Texas Intermediate crude declined after a thirdly weekly increase amid evidence that the economic expansion in China, the world's second-largest oil consumer, is slowing.

Futures retreated as much as 0.8 percent in New York. China's growth dropped to 7.5 percent in the second quarter from 7.7 percent in the first, as factory output and investment in fixed assets decelerated, data from the National Bureau of Statistics in Beijing showed. Crude retreated even as Islamists in Egypt, the location of the Suez Canal, called for mass protests today to demand the reinstatement of ousted President Mohamed Mursi.

### [Hedging Costs at Two-Year Low as Crude Surges](#)

The cost of hedging against swings in Russian equities has fallen to its lowest level in almost two years relative to emerging-market stocks on wagers oil's longest rising streak since May will bolster the country's shares.

### [Diesel losses for oil companies widen to Rs 9.45 per litre](#)

NEW DELHI: With the rupee continuing to remain weak against the US dollar, losses on diesel have climbed to Rs 9.45 per litre, upsetting the government's subsidy maths.

"We are now losing Rs 9.45 per litre on diesel as against Rs 8.60 (in the previous fortnight)," said P K Goyal, Director (Finance), Indian Oil Corp (IOC).

### [Pirate Kidnappings Surge in Waters Off Nigeria as Attacks Spread](#)

Kidnappings of sailors on merchant ships in waters off Nigeria and nearby countries surged in the first half as pirates attacked a broader range of vessels and sought targets farther out at sea.

Pirates operating in the Gulf of Guinea kidnapped 30 crew in the period, compared with three seized worldwide in 2012's first six months, the International Maritime Bureau, a London-based group tracking sea crime, said in a report today. Attackers previously tended to seek out ships involved in the regional oil industry and now are targeting container ships and other merchant vessels, it said.

### [Libya's Zueitina port resumes work, oilfields still down-source](#)

TRIPOLI (Reuters) - Operations at Libya's eastern Zueitina port have resumed but so far only oil stored at the terminal is being exported as oilfields remain shut down by striking workers, an engineer said on Monday.

### [Pro-Mursi Protesters Gather in Egypt Demanding His Return](#)

Protesters against the Egyptian army's removal of Islamist President Mohamed Mursi plan to maintain their sit-ins and rallies after a day when tens of thousands of people demonstrated in the capital.

### [Koreans to drill for oil in UAE soon](#)

SEOUL // The South Korean joint venture exploring for oil in Abu Dhabi aims to start drilling within months, the first stage of a US\$500 million spending plan for the next five years.

Korea National Oil Corporation (Knoc) and GS Energy - companies that last year made South Korea the first new country to partner in an Abu Dhabi oil concession in four decades - are securing rigs for three appraisal wells planned at the Haliba field on the Omani border.

### [The high cost of railroading unconventional crude](#)

The derailment and explosion of a shale oil train in Canada highlights desperate attempts by refineries along the US/Canada East coast to offset the conventional oil peak of Atlantic basin producers who traditionally supplied them with Brent type crude.

### [Chevron granted access to environmental activists' email accounts](#)

Is oil giant Chevron trying to stifle criticism of its Ecuadorian oil drilling operations by accessing private email accounts of critics?

### [How San Onofre's new steam generators sealed nuclear plant's fate](#)

San Onofre's replacement generators were supposed to extend the nuclear plant's life and save money. The opposite ensued.

### [Without San Onofre, San Diego and south O.C. power could be tight](#)

The energy landscape of Southern California will look vastly different without San Onofre, officials said in a state Senate committee hearing Wednesday, the first in a series of public discussions on life without the nuclear plant.

The 2,200-megawatt behemoth in northern San Diego County brought a steady supply of power to about 1.4 million homes until equipment problems forced it to close in early 2012.

But the plant's owner, Southern California Edison, announced last month that it would be permanently retired.

### [Why the plant went offline](#)

High vibration and other issues degraded tubes in steam generators at San Onofre, which led to a leak of radioactive steam in one generator. Click through to see the three main types of wear.

### [French Greenpeace activists break into nuclear power plant](#)

More than 20 Greenpeace activists climbed fences to break into an EDF nuclear power plant in southern France and demanded its closure, the environmental campaign group has said.

### [Flying wind turbines could cut costs and boost power generation](#)

A new generation of flying wind turbines will enable wind power to be harnessed more cheaply and efficiently, say researchers into the technology.

Airborne wind turbines can access the enormous volume of wind that is beyond the reach of traditional turbines, while cutting out the need for the huge structures and foundations that can make the current model expensive and difficult to transport.

### [Sunday, Solar Sunday: Germany's Recent Solar Energy Record In-Depth](#)

On Sunday, *CleanTechnica* broke the news that Germany broke yet another solar power record when the country's 1.3+ million PV systems turned a sunny summer day into 23.9 GW of solar power at about 1:30 PM. This short breaking news has drawn quite a lot of attention, which is reason enough to follow it up with some in-depth analysis and additional data.

### [Food waste could power 600,000 UK homes](#)

Societies all over the planet are running out of holes in the ground in which to dump their waste, so they're under increasing pressure to find alternative solutions.

In the European Union one of the problem wastes is food – rich people buy too much in the supermarket and throw a lot away.

This is a disaster for local authorities that have to find a way of disposing of it, and a problem for the planet because rotting food produces large quantities of methane, a global warming gas 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

### [Like-Minded Rivals Race to Bring Back an American Icon](#)

FORCE, Pa. — Capping decades of research, two groups of plant breeders and geneticists appear to have arrived independently within reach of the same arboreal holy grail: creating an American chestnut tree that can, at long last, withstand the devastating fungus blight that wiped the trees out by the billions in the first half of the 20th century.

### [City in Russia Unable to Kick Asbestos Habit](#)

ASBEST, Russia — This city of about 70,000 people on the eastern slopes of the Ural Mountains is a pleasant enough place to live except for one big drawback: when the wind picks up, clouds of carcinogenic dust blow through.

Asbest means asbestos in Russian, and it is everywhere here. Residents describe layers of it collecting on living room floors. Before they take in the laundry from backyard lines, they first shake out the asbestos. “When I work in the garden, I notice asbestos dust on my raspberries,” said Tamara A. Biserova, a retiree. So much dust blows against her windows, she said, that “before I leave in the morning, I have to sweep it out.”

### [Bangladesh Pollution, Told in Colors and Smells](#)

SAVAR, Bangladesh — On the worst days, the toxic stench wafting through the Genda Government Primary School is almost suffocating. Teachers struggle to concentrate, as if they were choking on air. Students often become lightheaded and dizzy. A few boys fainted in late April. Another retched in class.

The odor rises off the polluted canal — behind the schoolhouse — where nearby factories dump their wastewater. Most of the factories are garment operations, textile mills and dyeing plants in the supply chain that exports clothing to Europe and the United States. Students can see what colors are in fashion by looking at the canal.

### [Innovation's vastly cheaper than green subsidies](#)

In the long run, we need to switch to green energy because of global warming. But as long as green energy technology costs more than fossil fuels, this change will never happen. Governments can't afford to heavily subsidize it directly at the hundreds of billion dollars per year — instead, it will remain a feel-good niche.

But supporting innovation as with fracking turns out to be a much cheaper solution. If ramped-up innovation can help us discover solar panels 2.0 and 3.0, which would be better, smarter and cheaper than fossil fuels, everyone — including the Chinese and Indians — will switch. The switch would happen just as fast as the recent transition from coal to shale gas, because the economic fundamentals would encourage it, instead of the

present, uphill fight for heavy and unaffordable subsidies.

### [Culture's role in environmental change](#)

The national digital development programme AmbITion Scotland (designed and project managed by Rudman Consulting and Culture Sparks) seeks to support organisations hoping to make environmentally sustainable operational changes – from products to audience engagement – using digital tools.

The Touring Network have used the support of AmbITion Scotland to create Tourbook, an online social network for promoters and touring companies focusing on bringing work to remote geographical areas. It encourages a change in behaviour, away from more analogue forms of social networking: meetings! Digitising some of the work done in these meetings cuts back the carbon footprints of the promoters as they avoid travel to do business, but it also makes immediately public when artists are in Scotland.

### [Adaptation decision-making shifts to locals in Kenya](#)

LONDON (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - A new series of pilot projects in Northern Kenya will place greater decision-making powers about climate change adaptation into the hands of community members – a move backers hope will create sustainable solutions for area farmers and pastoralists.

### [Some data center operators take their chances with floods](#)

Computerworld - Given the dire warnings about climate change, some business leaders and IT professionals are pondering this question: How should data center managers handle the crop of so-called 100- and even 500-year storms, coastal floods and other ecological disasters that climatologists predict are heading our way?

Some experts suggest that managers of mission-critical data centers simply need to harden their existing facilities, other observers say data centers need to be moved to higher ground, and a third group advises data center managers to pursue both strategies.

### [Politics of Climate Change: A Well-Oiled Machine](#)

Public databases give indications of the magnitude of lobbying on climate and energy legislation, but the figures alone don't connect all the dots in terms of the effect of this spending on the policymaking process. For that, we need case studies. Robert A. G. Monks documents the contributions of ExxonMobil to many organizations that attacked the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, a scientific consensus document published in 2004 that called for mitigation of climate change through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Monks states,

“Soon, the conservative George C. Marshall Institute (\$630,000 in donations from ExxonMobil between 1998 and 2005) had joined the fray with a press release attacking the Arctic report for ‘unvalidated’ climate models and ‘scenarios’ that bear little resemblance to reality and how the future is likely to evolve. And thus the story continues to this day. In 2010, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, generously funded by ExxonMobil and many other energy companies, tried mightily to get the EPA to reverse its findings that greenhouse gas emissions endangered human health. When that failed, the Chamber sued the agency.”



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