



## DrumBeat: January 20, 2007

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[GAO: U.S. energy R&D, policy are inadequate](#)

It is unlikely that DOE's current level of R&D funding or the nation's current energy policies will be sufficient to deploy alternative energy sources in the next 25 years that will reverse our growing dependence on imported oil or the adverse environmental effects of using conventional fossil energy.

[South Africa - Power cuts: Now it's the generator wars](#)

TOWNSFOLK raced against each other as an earnest battle for generators got underway yesterday when small Eastern Cape towns found themselves hardest hit by the country's "worst ever" power cuts.

East London generator dealer Milton Thesen watched in amazement as a doctor from Butterworth competed with a Peddie businessman to pay R35000 for his last generator.

"After all the newspaper reports the guys were going berserk," said Thesen yesterday.

[Pakistan: Power crisis remains a nightmare](#)

However, it is quite obvious now that people were wrong expecting good from the government, as the government failed at all fronts in trying to tackle the energy crisis. The industries located in the northern provinces of the country have been affected badly by the shortage of gas and resultant load shedding since the beginning of this winter season in early December.

[New Warnings on Climate Change](#)

The main international scientific body assessing causes of climate change is closing in on its strongest statement yet linking emissions from burning fossil fuels to rising global temperatures, according to scientists involved in the process.

[The Great Thirst: Looking ahead to a post-global warming life in California, 60 years hence](#)

The following extrapolation presents a worst-case scenario of California's water situation in the coming decades, but not necessarily an unlikely one. It is based on a variety of sources, including interviews and conversations over the past several years with scientists and government agency staffers, such as those associated with the University of California, the California Department of Water Resources and the Bay Institute.

### [Vattenfall: Curbing Climate Change Would Cost 0.6% of Global GDP](#)

A new study released by European energy company Vattenfall concludes that curbing climate change through a sustainable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is technically and financially feasible if existing technical solutions are applied consistently –and globally.

### [Slumbering giant awakens on global warming](#)

On global warming, the American public is slowly rising to attention. Congress and the White House cannot be far behind.

### [CTL Fuel Could Help America Wean Itself of Foreign Oil Imports](#)

The United States has the world's largest coal reserves with an estimated 268 billion recoverable tons. Converting just 5 percent of the U.S. coal reserves to Fisher-Tropsch fuels would equate to the existing U.S. crude reserves of 29 billion barrels. The U.S. could virtually double our nation's domestic motor fuel supply without drilling a single a well or building a new refinery.

### [Cuba: Energy revolution guarantees supply but demands savings](#)

Savings is the key word in the Energy Revolution that, after a year of major effort, is showing results in all sectors of the country's economy. Stability in electricity and the elimination of power cuts was attained in Cuba in mid-2006.

### [US grain farming disaster: a prediction for China?](#)

As with the Great Plains, northern China is dry and farmed intensely. Already, China's farmland is turning to desert at an alarming rate.

### [Statoil enjoys rapid growth of biofuel sales in Sweden](#)

Sales of Statoil's E85 biofuel grew by 270% in Sweden last year compared with 2005,

the Norwegian oil giant has revealed in a statement.

## [Turkey: Europe's Emerging Energy Corridor for Central Eurasian, Caucasian and Caspian Oil and Gas](#)

### [Canadian Leader Pledges \\$1.28 Billion for Alternative Energy](#)

The money will go toward boosting electricity generation from renewable energy sources such as wind and "small hydro," Harper told reporters in British Columbia. The measure will create 4,000 megawatts of renewable energy, equivalent to removing a million cars from Canada's roads, he said.

### [Straw and wood chips in line as sources of clean energy](#)

Biotech and energy companies are racing to glean ultra-clean fuel from untapped sources like straw and wood chips, betting policies to tackle climate change and rising food prices will make it competitive with oil.

### [The "High Energy" Crowd](#)

It appears that Democrats in Congress are interfering once again with the energy market. On January 18, as the grand finale to their 100-hour rampage, Pelosi and her radical comrades in the House approved \$15 billion in new taxes on the oil and gas industry. These levies include an insidious "conservation fee" on drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, along with "after the fact" taxes on past oil production.

### [Declining Prices for Wholesale Power, Natural Gas to Provide Measure of Relief for Baltimore Gas and Electric Customers](#)

Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) today announced that declining wholesale electricity and natural gas prices will reduce the amount of a pending 2007 residential electric rate increase.

### [Correa Says Ecuador to Review All Oil Contracts](#)

Ecuador President Rafael Correa said Friday in Rio de Janeiro that his country plans to review all contracts for oil exploration on its territory and may cancel some deals.

### [Cyprus Rejects Turkey's Objection to Exploration Deal with Lebanon](#)

Turkey has no rights over potential oil and natural gas resources in Cyprus' coastal areas.

### [Japan: Powering Ahead on Nuclear Technology](#)

Rapidly growing energy needs in the world coupled with a warm winter season, attributed to global warming, have boosted Japan's nuclear power sector especially the export of nuclear technology to other countries, say experts here.

### [What Happened to the Oil Boom?](#)

It is amazing how short our memories can be. Just last summer, crude oil was trading at \$77 a barrel. In five short months, the price has fallen more than 30%, and it now sits near two-year lows. Being heavily invested in the oil patch, I decided it was time to dig into the market fundamentals to find out if the oil boom is really over, or if the current weakness has created some blue-light specials in the oil patch.

### [Gas price fluctuations need some managing](#) - a new use for the SPR?

We need a system in place to mitigate the wild changes in gas prices that have been seen in recent years. While most commodities are directly subject to the effects of the market, gasoline is too vital a commodity to allow it to ebb and flow based on market conditions.

### [Energy Crisis Threatens Investment](#): *Investors in Iraqi Kurdistan say escalating fuel costs are trying their patience.*

Like other parts of the country, foreign and Iraqi investors alike are plagued by power outages. State energy plants only provide electricity for a few hours per day - even in Kurdistan's capital, Erbil - and shortages force business to buy expensive fuel-powered generators.

But the problems don't end there because fuel is itself in short supply and rising demand means that it has become prohibitively expensive.

### [Energy crisis forces power cuts in Albania](#)



The public is frustrated and businesses are losing money due to the problems Albania has had in keeping up with electricity demands.

### [Money, Not Geopolitics, Drives Russian Energy Policy](#)

It is clear to the Russians that they can no longer afford to subsidize their neighbors with cheap natural gas while continuing to meet Russia's export obligations to the rest of the world.

### [The next big oil-price push](#)

With the 30% fall in the price of oil to US\$50 a barrel comes the inevitable global ideological free for all over the causes, impacts and general significance of the decline. The scale of the decline pretty much puts peak oil theorists out of commission, especially since the real price of oil in constant dollars is now lower than it was through much of the 1980s--hardly what you would expect in a world allegedly heading into an oil supply crisis.

### [Alaska to get British-style temperatures](#)

Parts of the world could heat up by over 10 degrees Celsius (18 Fahrenheit) this century with big areas becoming uninhabitable, according to a climate prediction experiment.

### [Markey caught in wrangling on global warming](#)

Pelosi's views on global warming are shared by most House Democrats and some Republicans. But the creation of the new committee, which was announced yesterday, is opposed by several senior Democratic House members, who argue that it would duplicate and even complicate ongoing efforts to explore the same subjects, and curtail the power of committee chairmen who have decades of expertise in their areas.

### [A convenient time for Saudi Arabia to be ambivalent](#)

What is the main driver behind Opec power Saudi Arabia's oil policy? This question is sweeping trading floors and it could be unanswerable.

### [Portland city report recommends oil use reduction](#)

The city of Portland's peak oil task force released a draft report Friday on ways to reduce dependence on oil and natural gas.

### [Energy policy at risk of going up in smoke](#)

The news story was certainly an attention grabber: Chevrolet had introduced a plug-in hybrid car that could get 100 miles per gallon and go as far as 40 miles on batteries alone. At long last, you say to yourself, Detroit is seizing the initiative in pioneering cars to shake off our dependency on foreign oil.

Then came the cold splash of reality. General Motors acknowledged to the New York Times that the batteries needed to make the Volt run don't exist yet. The Volt is a concept car.

### [The crystal ball outlook for 2007](#)

- Peak Oil is a fact and it is just a matter of when it happens. Peak oil is the point at which we can't increase production of oil, and production rates start to fall.

The United States has been increasing their infrastructure and technology to increase oil productions over the years, however:

1945 – 5.0 million barrels per day

1945 to 1970 – 10 million barrels per day

Now – 5.1 million barrels per day

### [House to mull alternative energy tax](#)

An alternative energy tax program to make use of municipal bonds to counter global warming through renewable and more efficient energy will be on the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means' agenda this session, the committee's chief tax counsel said on Friday.

### [Price of oil plunging, but cost of gas won't](#)

The headlines say oil prices have fallen 15 percent this year. Gas station receipts tell a different story — the cost of filling 'er up has slipped from about \$35 to \$33. Big deal.

### [Renewable energy gains still far off, reports show](#)

California's utilities are falling behind schedule in meeting a deadline that 20% of their electricity must come from renewable resources by 2010, newly issued reports from two energy agencies show.

### [Kuwait to cut dependency on oil revenues for growth](#)

Kuwait has begun implementing ambitious programmes to diversify its sources of income and minimize dependency on oil revenues, a top official said here Thursday.

### [Will the dam break in 2007?](#)

The world survived 2006 without a major economic catastrophe, despite sky-high oil prices and a Middle East spiralling out of control. But the year produced abundant lessons for the global economy, as well as warning signs concerning its future performance. Unsurprisingly, 2006 brought another resounding rejection of fundamentalist neo-liberal policies, this time by voters in Nicaragua and Ecuador.



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