



DrumBeat: March 15, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 15, 2007 - 9:07am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Giants Like Stable Environments](#)

After analyzing giant fields discovered up to 2000, Mann and his colleagues predicted that new giant discoveries for 2000-09 would occur primarily in passive margin and rift environments, especially in deepwater basinal settings.

They also projected the addition of giant fields in known areas, including hydrocarbon provinces of the Persian Gulf, West Siberia and Southeast Asia.

So far, those predictions have been spot on.

[Kuwait looking to natural gas, nuclear options](#)

Kuwait is considering an import terminal for liquefied natural gas, gas imports from Iran and Iraq and nuclear power to help it match soaring demand for electricity, its energy minister said yesterday.

Kuwait was in discussions with Royal Dutch Shell and BG Group on a possible LNG import terminal and also for exploration and development of the country's gas reserves, Sheikh Ali al-Jarrah al-Sabah said.

[Brazil Plans to Triple Ethanol Exports in 7 Years](#)

Brazil plans to almost triple ethanol exports in the next seven years and will need investments of about \$13.4 billion to boost output, said the nation's Agriculture Minister Luis Carlos Guedes Pinto.

[Unconventional Oil, Gas Sources Limited](#)

Maturing hydrocarbon provinces, combined with the trend toward greater resource nationalism, is forcing international oil companies toward both technological and geographic frontiers.

[White House seeks to cut geothermal research funds](#)

The Bush administration wants to eliminate federal support for geothermal power just as many U.S. states are looking to cut greenhouse gas emissions and raise renewable power output.

[GAO Report: Safety Consequences of Terrorist Attack on LNG Tanker \[PDF\]](#)

The three studies that considered LNG explosions concluded explosions were unlikely unless the LNG vapors were in a confined space. Only the Sandia study examined the potential for sequential failure of LNG cargo tanks (cascading failure) and concluded that up to three of the ship's five tanks could be involved in such an event and that this number of tanks would increase the duration of the LNG fire.

[Trutnev Warns Oil Firms on Slow Eastern Siberian Finds](#)

Oil companies could be punished for not working fast enough to find new reserves in eastern Siberia to fill a new pipeline to Asia, Natural Resources Minister Yury Trutnev said Wednesday.

[War, Neoliberalism and Empire in the 21st Century: Noam Chomsky Connects the Dots](#)

As far as the U.S. economic interests I think we have to make a distinction. The primary interest, and that's true throughout the Middle East, even in Saudi Arabia, the major energy producer, has always been control, not access, and not profit. Profit is a secondary interest and access is a tertiary interest.

So in the years when the U.S. was not using Middle East oil at all, [the U.S.] was the largest producer and the largest exporter, it still had the same policies. It wanted to control the sources of oil and the reasons are understood. In the mid-1940s, the State Department made it clear that the oil resources of the region, primarily then Saudi Arabia, were a stupendous source of strategic power which made the Middle East the most strategically important area of the world. They also added that it's one of the greatest material prizes in world history. But the basic point is that it's a source of strategic power, meaning that if you control the energy resources, then you can control the world, because the world needs the energy resources.

[The Methane Economy](#)

A recent advance by a team of researchers at the University of NSW has pointed the way forward. Their work combined with two other technologies can lead to a method of producing methane, methanol or diesel fuel from sunlight, water and air.

[Why Is Saudi Arabia's Oil Production Down?](#)

We still have three years and nine and a half months to learn who will win the bet between energy investment banker Matthew R. Simmons and New York Times columnist John Tierney over whether oil prices would be above or below \$200 a barrel in 2010. Tierney bet "below" because he believes that over the long term, the prices of natural resources always tend to decline, and he cited a 1980-1990 precious metals bet that favored that outcome. Simmons has looked deeply into the extraction of oil from underneath the sands of Saudi Arabia, and has concluded that their oil production will most likely decrease or flatline in the coming years. Saudi Arabia claims 25% of the world's proven oil reserves, by far the largest share claimed by any country. Those who have watched *The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream* have heard Simmons say, "If it turns out that Saudi Arabia has peaked, then, categorically, the world has peaked."

With oil prices having fallen into the \$50 range and now trading in the \$60 range, for the moment it looks like Tierney's ahead in the bet. But the more important question for the worldwide economy is whether Saudi Arabia can increase its oil output in the years ahead or not. The Oil Drum has hosted a spirited debate on that question recently.

[Dimwits: Why 'green' lightbulbs aren't the answer to global warming](#)

...Low energy bulbs are much more complex to make than standard bulbs, requiring up to ten times as much energy to manufacture. Unlike standard bulbs, they use toxic materials, including mercury vapour, which the EU itself last year banned from landfill sites - which means that recycling the bulbs will itself create an enormously expensive problem.

Perhaps most significantly of all, however, to run CFLs economically they must be kept on more or less continuously. The more they are turned on and off, the shorter becomes their life, creating a fundamental paradox, as is explained by an Australian electrical expert Rod Elliott (whose Elliott Sound Products website provides as good a technical analysis of the disadvantages of CFLs as any on the internet).

If people continue switching their lights on and off when needed, as Mr Elliott puts it, they will find that their 'green' bulbs have a much shorter life than promised, thus triggering a consumer backlash from those who think they have been fooled.

[OPEC's Saudi Arabia Warns Angola on Oil Expansion](#)

Saudia Arabia, the most powerful member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, has told Angola, its newest entrant, not to assume it will be able to expand production past 2 million barrels a day, The Financial Times reports Wednesday, without citing sources.

This is a blow to the world's biggest oil companies, which have already paid Angola billions of dollars for the right to explore and produce its oil.

[Renewing a Call to Act Against Climate Change](#) - an article about Bill McKibben.

[Oil's going down, down, down](#)

For reasons I've never understood, people love disaster scenarios. Tell them their portfolios will rise 7% this year and their eyes glaze. But say the world economy is teetering on the edge of an abyss and they jolt upright with excitement: "Really? Tell me more!"

The best scare story of them all has been about peak oil. At least as interpreted by many financial advisers, the peak oil theory amounts to the belief that \$100-per-barrel oil is just around the corner. (All figures in U.S. dollars.) With expensive oil will come deep recession and — dear me — a complete re-engineering of our oil-guzzling, SUV-driving lifestyles.

[John Michael Greer: The Amphetamine of the Intellectuals](#)

As the first part of this review suggested, David Korten's widely praised book *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* proposes what amounts to a political solution for the predicament of industrial society. Korten argues that replacing current "developmentally challenged" politicians with new leadership drawn from the upper ranks of today's progressive social change movements will foster a shift from a society based on the old ideology of Empire to one based on his preferred ideology of Earth Community. This shift, he claims, is the only effective response we can make to the crisis of industrial civilization he surveys so eloquently in the third chapter of the book. Yet it's only fair to ask just how Korten anticipates that a society guided by his "emerging values consensus" will deal with, say, the immense practical challenges of coping with peak oil

[Saudi Aramco's Shaybah expansion breaks ground](#)

[Energy crisis aggravating in Tajikistan](#)

Supply of electricity to the Tajik capital has been toughened ever more. Now electricity will be supplied eight hours a day instead of 17 hours as before.

Ghana: [VALCO To Suspend Operations](#)

The Volta Aluminium Company (VALCO) Limited will, with effect from tomorrow, suspend its operations, due to inadequate power supply from the Akosombo Dam.

The shutdown, the 11th in the history of VALCO since its establishment in 1967, will result in declaring majority of the 700 labour force redundant.

[Tech leaders call for 'green' policies](#)

A group of technology executives said Wednesday that the world is facing an energy crisis, and they called on US policymakers to embrace a "green tech" agenda focused on encouraging energy conservation and reducing US dependence on foreign energy sources.

[Libya to Launch Gas Bidding Round Later in 2007](#)

Eager to tap into abundant natural gas reserves, Libya is planning to hold a bidding round later this year to develop gas fields onshore and offshore, the head of the country's oil industry said Wednesday.

[US-Pakistan firms sign LNG LoI](#)

US-based Excelerate Energy has signed the LoI with Pakistan 's Associated Group to provide one of the world's only four LNG Regasification Vessels at Port Qasim, Karachi , and to provide LNG through its network of international producers.

[U.S.-Israel energy act introduced](#)

The American Jewish Congress applauded the introduction of the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation Act to the U.S. Senate. The bill is a "landmark effort to establish the same type of strategic partnership between the U.S. and Israel to help solve the energy crisis as has been so successful in addressing military matters," AJCongress Senior Vice President Jack Halpern said in a statement Wednesday.

[Senate Bill Would Expand Drilling Off Florida's Shores](#)

Florida's two senators expressed alarm Tuesday over a proposal they said would put oil rigs just 45 miles from the Florida coast -- and skirt the embargo against Cuba by allowing U.S. firms to explore for oil and gas in Cuban waters.

[Troubles overblown in growing economy](#)

“This is not our parents’ economy,” he said, referring to the energy crisis in the 1970s. “Only about 2 percent of all wages go to gasoline and oil costs.”

[ConocoPhillips: Working with Oil Ministry on Iraq Field Plan](#)

ConocoPhillips (COP) is working with the Iraq Oil Ministry and Russia's OAO Lukoil Holdings (LKOH.RS) on a development plan for the West Qurna field, a ConocoPhillips executive said Wednesday.

[Special Report from Colombia](#)

My friends, you will tell your children about the week when George W. Bush became the most ardent champion of clean fuel in the Western Hemisphere. This represents a shift in social, foreign and economic policy that cannot be ignored.

[Scientists need to confront economists about peak oil](#) - a letter to *Nature*

SIR — Your News Feature “That’s oil, folks” (*Nature* 445, 14–17; 2007) highlights the debate over depletion of the world’s oil reserves. I would like to make some additional points.

First, the proponents of the peak-oil theory are predominantly Nature’s constituency — scientists — whereas the vocal opposition are, to a significant extent, economists.

[Monthly Review](#)

Faced with immense and growing environmental, economic, and social problems, capitalism, as Panitch and Leys rightly suggest, is showing signs of shifting towards increased authoritarianism. However, the advent of a more barbaric system is no longer the worst of our worries. It is the threat to the planet itself that constitutes our most dire challenge.

[EcoManor: The first certifiably green mansion](#)

From the outside, the Seydel family's new home looks like any old Tudor manse. Well, it's too tall for its quiet block. (Neighbors have complained.) But who would guess that this is the largest eco-friendly house in America? With its 27 photovoltaic panels on the roof, solar tubes that snake into interior rooms, geothermal heat pumps, and rainwater-collecting cisterns, this is, in fact, the first home over 5,000 square feet ever to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council - and evidence of a new wave of eco-building that doesn't look like eco-building.

Tom Whipple - [The Peak Oil Crisis: The Portland Report](#)

As someone who is familiar with the literature and follows the peak oil story on a daily basis, I can report that the folks on the Portland Peak Oil Task Force have produced a succinct, outstanding report that should be read by every local official everywhere. While there will naturally be many local variations, Portland's approach to the problem contains much that seems universally applicable.

[BP says oil and gas recovery crucial](#)

Maximising recovery from existing oil and gas fields will be crucial to meeting the world's growing energy needs as the number of undiscovered fields diminishes and the cost of new exploration increases, according to a BP representative speaking at the 15th Middle East Oil and Gas Show held in Bahrain from March 11-14.

"Demand for energy is expected to increase 50% to 60% by 2030, much of it from newly emerging markets," explained Peter Roberts, Subsurface Manager, BP Abu Dhabi. "At BP, we believe the industry needs to look to increasing recovery from existing fields to meet this rising demand."

[Russia clinches Balkan oil deal](#)

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a deal in Athens to ship Russian oil to the EU via a pipeline bypassing the busy Bosphorus.

[Study: Coal industry faces bleak future](#)

The coal industry faces a bleak future unless ways are developed on a commercial scale to capture and store carbon dioxide in the campaign against global warming, according to a study released Wednesday.

[Energy giants target ethanol unit](#)

China plans to double fuel ethanol consumption to 10 million metric tons in the 10 years to 2020, China Agri-Industries Holdings Ltd, the nation's largest rice producer, said in February. The government is promoting the use of ethanol gasoline to cut emissions and fuel imports as car demand rises.

[Energy to burn: fossil fuels](#)

Oil is not running out. You heard it from Mark Jaccard first. In his new book, *Sustainable Fossil Fuels*, Jaccard, a professor in the school of resource and environmental management at Simon Fraser University, explains why there's no need to worry about our dependency on non-renewable energy. He believes oil, natural gas and coal will fuel the global energy system for decades to come--and in ways that don't pollute.

[OPEC ministers to keep output steady](#)

OPEC oil ministers agree that their organization should maintain production levels, a senior Libyan oil official said Thursday, signaling they will opt for the status quo in their formal decision later in the day.

[OPEC revises upwards world oil demand forecast](#)

OPEC on Thursday raised slightly its forecast for world oil demand growth, although it voiced concern about possible economic weakness that could erode oil demand.

[2 Italian oil workers freed in Nigeria](#)

Militants on Thursday released two Italian oil worker hostages who were seized more than three months ago in Nigeria's restive southern region, militants and officials said.

[Auto execs, lawmakers focus on climate](#)

U.S. automakers and a top union official pledged Wednesday to work with Congress to find new ways of dealing with global warming but declared their industry could not bear the burden alone.

[World may get greener, then wilt, due warming](#)

Global warming is expected to turn the planet a bit greener by spurring plant growth but crops and forests may wilt beyond mid-century if temperatures keep rising, according to a draft U.N. report.

[New Hampshire towns press Washington on warming](#)

Nearly 90 New Hampshire towns have passed resolutions urging Washington to act on climate change, hoping to use the state's powerful role in the presidential race to bring attention to global warming.

[Climate change has parched Aussie farmers looking north](#)

Two-thirds of Australia's freshwater flows down the great tropical rivers of the north, compared with less than five percent in the depleted waterways of the south.

It is hardly surprising, then, that a government task force this week will begin studying the prospects of encouraging Australia's farmers to bow to the harsh realities of drought and climate change, and head north. Critics, however, warn that the north's own climate peculiarities, lack of infrastructure, and indigenous land claims could make industrial-scale farming a risky venture.



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