



DrumBeat: April 1, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 1, 2007 - 9:27am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[RBS chief economist on peak oil](#)

After the peak, according to this theory, there will be a steep decline in production; crude oil prices will rise sharply, and there will be a shortfall of oil, which will wreak havoc on the global economy.

But this theory, like many Mel Gibson movies, is pretty implausible stuff - to an economist, at least. That's because it neglects to take into account the importance of technological progress and the adaptability of the market.

[Food, Climate Change and the Coming Energy Crises](#)

Across the water, the easy complacency which surrounds the supply of food was severely tested in September of 2000 when after just a few days of a nation-wide truckers' strike, many parts of the UK found themselves facing what has become unthinkable in modern times: a shortage of food. Once the deliveries stopped arriving, it was only a matter of days before the shelves were emptied. Since little food was produced locally, it quickly became apparent that there really was no other source of food available. Modern farming and globalised systems of trade have created a situation in which we are perilously vulnerable to political and environmental factors quite beyond our control. Unless we start taking this issue seriously and make dramatic changes to the way we think about and produce food, we are facing the increasing likelihood of food shortages and yes, famines, even in the most developed and 'modern' parts of the world.

[Marseille oil port workers vote to end 18-day strike](#)

Workers at France's Fos-Lavera oil hub in Marseille voted yesterday to end their strike on its 18th day as it threatened to shut down refineries and cause a regional fuel shortage, a trade union official said.

[April Uranium Price Outlook: US\\$110/Pound](#)

Nuclear energy provides about 16 percent of global electricity needs and about 20 percent of electricity needs in the United States. The scarcity of available uranium

inventory has caused prices to soar over the past six years by more than 1100 percent. The spot uranium price has more than doubled over the past year and continues to rise strongly in 2007. According to industry watchers, the uranium supply shortage could soon reach a 'crisis' stage.

[Ethanol makers slam report](#)

A group representing biofuel manufacturers disputes a report that suggests the federal government's massive investments in ethanol won't dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[Energy-South-Africa: Fuel in the Car at the Expense of Food on the Table?](#)

...Sugrue wrote in a paper titled 'Towards A Southern African NGO Position On Biofuels': "In Southern Africa maize could be a major feedstock for biofuels, yet it is the staple diet of more than 80 percent of the population and all of the poorest citizens."

[Climate change 'could create 200m refugees'](#)

EQUATORIAL lands that are home to hundreds of millions of people will become uninhabitable as food and water run out due to climate change, scientists will warn this week.

[Firms fail to adapt to climate change](#)

Companies and public bodies in Britain face expensive repair bills, penalties and even litigation because they are not adapting infrastructure and business plans to the threat of climate change, the government's UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) has warned.

[Poor Nations to Bear Brunt as World Warms](#)

The world's richest countries, which have contributed by far the most to the atmospheric changes linked to global warming, are already spending billions of dollars to limit their own risks from its worst consequences, like drought and rising seas.

But despite longstanding treaty commitments to help poor countries deal with warming, these industrial powers are spending just tens of millions of dollars on ways to limit climate and coastal hazards in the world's most vulnerable regions — most of them close to the equator and overwhelmingly poor.

[U.S. Churches Go 'Green' for Palm Sunday](#)

Slightly more expensive than the average palm, eco-palms are the rage in churches across the United States because of the social and environmental benefits they represent. They are collected in a way that helps preserve the forest, and more of the sale price ends up in the pockets of the people who cut them.

[Soaring costs threaten TransNet](#)

Soaring construction costs already are threatening the completion of San Diego County's \$14 billion, 40-year road-building program one year before it starts receiving cash from a countywide sales tax, transportation officials say.

Since 2002, construction costs have nearly doubled and they are rising three times as fast as sales tax revenues, said Richard Chavez, principal transportation engineer for the San Diego Association of Governments, a regional planning agency, last week.

Jack Boda, the association's director of mobility management, said in the same interview that the escalation reflects fast-rising prices worldwide for steel, asphalt and cement - the main building blocks of freeways, railroads and bridges.

[Americana in Montreal](#)

For instance, two delegates from Saudi Arabia gave a presentation about "sustainable development" in their country. They spoke of the explosive growth rates of 3-6% a year in their cities. And they spoke of the huge economic opportunities available to foreign investors to meet the demands of this growth. At the end of their talk I asked where all the water would come from to feed these cities, and they admitted to the audience that Saudi Arabia is facing extreme challenges due to their underground aquifers emptying at alarming rates. They said this is not a problem though, because water will be supplied by desalination plants, plants that do not exist yet and that would be fuelled by natural gas. This is in no way "sustainable development," not by my definition (which is "capable of continuing indefinitely").

[Farmers market or super-mega-grocer? Your decision could change our world](#)

To say it plainly: *Deep Economy* should be required reading for every economist and economics student in the developed world; for every elected official on the local, state and federal levels; and for everyone else as well. The book articulates the profound environmental and human costs caused by dominant and rutted economic behaviors while counterbalancing these sober realities with real-world examples of sane and successful "economies that are more local in scale."

[Judge advances global warming lawsuit](#)

A federal judge has advanced a lawsuit against the government over its funding of overseas projects that environmental groups claim contribute to climate change.

The lawsuit, filed by environmental groups and four U.S. cities, claims that the overseas projects will harm the U.S. environment because the effects of global warming will be felt at home, and seeks to require the same environmental reviews that are required for domestic projects.

[Climate draft charts extinctions](#)

A key element of the second major report on climate change being released Friday in Belgium is a chart that maps out the effects of global warming, most of them bad, with every degree of temperature rise.

[Exxon: 12-yr wait on China energy project to pay off](#)

ExxonMobil said a 12-year wait to start a \$5bn refining and chemicals venture in China will pay off because the Communist government will free the world's fastest-growing gasoline market and ensure profits.

[Russian company to build Saudi pipeline](#)

A subsidiary of Russia's national energy company has signed a \$100 million contract for construction of an oil pipeline in Saudi Arabia.

[Campaigns save energy with hybrid cars](#)

This year's presidential candidates are trying to get good mileage out of getting good mileage. The candidates, who do a lot of talking about the need for greater energy efficiency, are not just asking who walks the walk but also, who drives the hybrid?

[Global warming could bring hunger, melt Himalayas](#)

Global warming could cause more hunger in Africa and melt most Himalayan glaciers by the 2030s, according to a draft U.N. report due on Friday which also warns that the poorest nations are likely to suffer most.

[Sydney's blackout hailed a success](#)

Organisers behind a campaign that saw Sydney impose a one-hour blackout to focus attention to global warming hailed it as a success for taking the equivalent of nearly 50,000 cars off the road.

[Malaysia's Petronas to search for oil off Myanmar](#)

Malaysia's state energy firm Petronas will launch an oil exploration survey off the southern coast of Myanmar, state media said Saturday, amid growing foreign demand for the country's vast resources.

[Brazil's Lula Doesn't Get What He Wanted from Bush: End to Subsidies and Tariffs](#)

The Camp David meeting, this Saturday, March 31, between American President George W. Bush and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva produced optimistic statements and vague promises, but no concrete results for Brazil, which wanted an end to the tariff charged Brazilian ethanol in the US market. Neither there was any hint that the United States will reduce soon its farm subsidies.

[Worries over global warming to boost 'shift to renewables'](#)

Three decades after former US President Jimmy Carter experimented with solar panels on the White House roof, grim UN warnings about climate change may kick-start wider global use of renewable energy.



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