



## DrumBeat: April 19, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 19, 2007 - 9:11am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [The war on oil](#)

Coming soon to a test tube near you: America's new war.

This war won't be fought with tanks and machine guns and improvised explosive devices, though. Instead, the generals in the War on Oil will employ techniques such as enzymatic hydrolysis and dry milling.

Rather than the conventional bullets and bombs, combatants' weapons of choice will be switchgrass, wheat straw, corn and other material from the biomass.

The battle lines have been drawn and the objective is clear: Get the world's biggest oil consumers weaned from their generations-old addiction to oil and establish the United States as self-sufficient producer of energy from alternative sources.

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### [No Problem? Shell's Patent Application for Oil Shale Extraction](#)

Alfred Donovan, a patent lawyer whose blog covers Royal Dutch Shell, takes a look at the largest patent filing in history. Shell thinks they have a sound method for getting top quality oil out of oil shale rock, which would remain profitable as long as oil stayed above \$30/barrel. If it works, it would also be better for the environment than conventional drilling.

### [Egypt weighs domestic energy needs as export demands grow](#)

The cement industry's environmental impact is worrying and energy-intensive industries are eating up crucial resources - causing the government to rethink how best to allocate its natural gas reserves.

The growth of these industries has coincided with rising domestic demand for gas, putting a huge burden on the treasury as energy subsidies have swelled from E£1.2bn (\$220m, €162.8m, £110.8m) in 1999 to E£42bn, according to figures on a government website.

## [DOE to Issue Second Solicitation for Purchase of Crude Oil for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced that it has issued the second of several solicitations planned to purchase up to four million barrels of crude oil for the United States' crude oil reserve. The first solicitation, issued March 16, 2007, resulted in no awards because the Office of Fossil Energy determined that the bids were too high and not a reasonable value for taxpayers.

## [Innovation a must for oil and gas growth](#)

Major Gulf producers have announced plans to increase capacity by more than 50 per cent by 2020, equivalent to an unprecedented average of 1 million barrels/day of net productive capacity per year. These plans take on new significance in light of increasing global energy demand and worldwide economic growth.

## [Iran seeks to make breakthrough in oil industry](#)

"Implementation of such projects, which is in line with Iran's long-term strategy on energy, will create a giant market of dlrs 250 billion for the next 20 years.

"This will prepare an appropriate ground for activities of reputable domestic and foreign companies."

## [Russia's Gazprom formally takes control of Sakhalin-2 oil-and-gas project](#)

Company representatives put their signatures on the agreement that sees Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Mitsui & Co. and Mitsubishi Corp. halve their stakes in the development on the Pacific island of Sakhalin.

## [Sinopec mulls 60b yuan refinery for East China](#)

The Lianyungang plant would increase Sinopec's ability to tap demand in a province whose economy expanded 18.8 percent last year, faster than the national rate of 10.7 percent.

## [Turkey to Inaugurate Oil Pipeline](#)

At an estimated cost of \$1.5 billion, the 550-kilometer-long pipeline, to be completed in 2009, will carry Kazakh and Azeri oil from the Black Sea port of Samsun to Ceyhan on the Mediterranean, bypassing the congested Turkish straits.

### [The relocation of sport](#)

Hundreds of pro and college teams criss-cross the continent by plane, play in huge stadiums lit at enormous energy expense, in front of fans most of whom have driven miles to the game.

I'm a jock and a fan; I live and die with my beloved Canucks (we're just starting the playoffs). I empathize with Man U fans, Cowboy fans and Sonic fans. But the dangers from climate change and peak oil are so serious that we must reduce our use of fossil fuels radically and immediately.

### [The Greening of Wal-Mart Shoppers](#)

How green are Wal-Mart (WMT) shoppers? We're about to find out. The world's largest retailer is launching a Live Better Index to track customers' purchases of five eco-friendly products: compact fluorescent light bulbs, organic milk, concentrated/reduced-packaging liquid laundry detergents, extended-life paper products and organic baby food.

### [Petroleum Institute Reaches Out](#)

Red Cavaney, the president of the American Petroleum Institute had a conference call with bloggers and newspaper reporters today. The API is also doing a press tour across the country to educate the media on energy issues.

### [NM Senators Introduce Measure to use Energy More Efficiently](#)

U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici today introduced legislation to reduce our nation's use of fossil fuels by improving efficiency in vehicles, buildings, home appliances and industrial equipment - saving consumers more than \$12 billion annually.

### Ghana: [Can \\$600M get us 400 megawatts from nuclear 8 years?](#)

As Ghana discusses nuclear energy, we must look to the example and success of the energy form elsewhere to inform our decisions. Despite public ignorance and government reluctance to embrace nuclear energy in past decades, it is now being heralded as the solution to energy problems the world over - economically, environmentally it seems to make sense, and *The Statesman* supports calls for its rapid, although cautious, implementation.

### [From Ethanol to Polar Bears: Energy Summit Wraps Up in Venezuela](#)

Hours after the departure of the first president to leave, Argentina's Nestor Kirchner, diplomats were still haggling over the biofuels portion of the summit statement, though accord was reached on rebranding the South American Community of Nations as Unasur and endowing it with a permanent secretariat based in Quito.

### [Venezuela to Only Recognize Book Value in Orinoco Deals](#)

Venezuelan Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez said the country only plans to recognize the book value of four extra-heavy oil projects when compensating foreign firms for the investments they have made.

### [Venezuela's About-Farce](#)

Silva, on the other side of the logical spectrum, seems to have balanced politics and economic logic well. "The truth is that biofuel is a way out for the poor countries of the world," Silva said. "The problem of food in the world now is not lack of production of food. It's a lack of income for people to buy food."

### [Venezuela, Chile boost ties, agree to develop Orinoco fields](#)

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and his Chilean counterpart Michelle Bachelet agreed to boost energy and economic ties between their nations, forming a joint venture to develop Venezuela's oil-rich Orinoco Belt.

### [You are now entering an oil-free zone](#)

Some towns aren't waiting to see whether there will be alternative energy sources when the oil runs out - they're already trying to do without it.

### [South American Ethanol Debate Highlights Alt Fuel Insanity](#)

But one thing is for sure: America's newfound love for ethanol is creating some major political and economic side effects.

### [Marine energy can be forecast](#)

Any wiped-out surfer knows all too well the back-breaking power of the ocean's waves.

Now, a fledgling industry is harnessing the incessant motion of waves, tides and currents to create the world's newest form of renewable energy.

### [Price forecasts red hot for uranium](#)

CIBC World Markets Inc. has raised its price forecasts for uranium oxide by 40 per cent, citing an environmentally driven renaissance in nuclear power and a gap between demand and supply for the metal.

### [A New Biofuel: Propane](#)

MIT researchers say they have developed an efficient chemical process for making propane from corn or sugarcane. They are incorporating a startup this week to commercialize the biopropane process, which they hope will find a place in the existing \$21 billion U.S. market for the fuel.

### [Excrement from elephants excites biofuel engineers](#)

Scientists in the Netherlands have discovered a fungus that exists in elephant dung that will help them break down fibres and wood into biofuel.

### [Carbon tax threatens to ground Asia tourism](#)

Asia's US\$100 billion international tourism industry is being put in jeopardy by a campaign by European environmentalists to limit air travel, with politicians poised to price long-haul destinations out of the market.

### [Shell, Nuon Open First Dutch Offshore Wind Farm](#)

The companies invested over 200 million euros (US\$270 million) in the 108 megawatt wind park on the North Sea, which also serves as a demonstration project to gain technical knowledge and monitor the affects on marine life, they said.

### [High-tech features that will save gas](#)

Buyers who want to maximize fuel economy and reduce tailpipe emission, including CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide), might want to look for these high-tech features designed to increase fuel economy...

### [Dave Cohen: Deconstructing the \*New York Times\*](#)

There is little doubt that the current and future state of the world's oil production is "an important social and political issue." Given the warning signs of a looming crisis and the large associated uncertainties, it is hard to think of an issue more critical to industrial economies than maintaining a reliable oil supply in the coming decade and beyond.

#### Kansas: [Bistate rail idea lives on](#)

"We have economic reasons to see light rail succeed. There is also the energy crisis itself. Even if the world settles down, the global demands (will continue) with countries like China and India requiring huge energy supplies," he said.

#### [Garamendi and Chiang vote against inexpensive power](#)

What if one of the world's premier energy companies was offering to spend billions of their own capital to provide California with the fuel needed to generate inexpensive and almost zero emission electricity for the whole state?

Sounds like a pretty good deal, does it not? In one of the most stupefying votes ever, the state Lands Commission voted last Monday to deny a state land lease to BHP Billiton for establishing a facility for liquefied natural gas 14 miles offshore from Port Hueneme.

#### [WEB 2.0 - Microsoft: Datacenter growth defying Moore's Law](#)

Microsoft, IBM, HP, Sun and others have also formed a consortium called the Green Grid to tackle an impending energy crisis that threatens data center growth.

#### [Udall, Enviros Want Oil Shale Development Slowed Down](#)

Rep. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and environmental groups are on the same page when it comes to curbing the Bureau of Land Management's ability to approve commercial oil shale leases next year: They want to revoke the authority.

#### [Tight supply pushes gas prices higher](#)

West Coast refineries don't produce enough gasoline to meet demand. Because the region is isolated from other sources of supply, imports must be shipped by sea from the Gulf of Mexico or Singapore, and that's expensive.

#### Pakistan: [Women block road to protest power outage](#)

Hundreds of infuriated women and children Wednesday blocked the main Peshawar-Bajaur road to protest against the non-availability of electricity in their area.

...They threatened to throw away all the mobile towers and electricity poles in the area if the government failed to restore the electricity. It would be better to die on the road instead of seeing their children dying of heat inside the houses, they threatened.

### [Seeds of discontent](#)

Britain is losing its green fields, as the grass that once fattened cattle is replaced by oilseed rape. The bright yellow tide has upset lovers of traditional country views. But what about the effects we can't see? What is this chemical-hungry crop doing to the environment - and our health?

### [Strong growth rate in China fuels worries](#)

Another problem that fuel worries about the economy is the developing of high energy consuming industries. As electricity shortage is basically alleviated, some of them loosened their control. Electricity consumption increased more than 16 percent in January and February period. China's top planner is urging local authorities to adopt different electricity prices toward eight high energy-consuming industries. The move aims to limit energy consumption and protect environment.

### [Albert Bates, guide for our post-petroleum, globally warmed future](#)

The April issue of *Vanity Fair*-online features The Farm, an intentional community in Tennessee. Albert Bates gets a lot of ink in that article, as he has spent most of his life on The Farm making his mark in both publishing and education. There, his original skill set as a lawyer and horseman in 1972 was expanded to include Permaculture design, and he became an author (*Climate in Crisis*, introduction by Al Gore, 1990). He became a global authority on ecovillages, founding the Global Village Institute for Appropriate Technology. He directs the Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, where he has instructed students from over 50 nations since 1994.

### Tom Whipple - [The Peak Oil Crisis: Have the Troubles Begun?](#)

In recent years, numerous books have been written about life after world oil production peaks. Most depict radical change, as oil-powered transportation, suburban living, and large-scale food production and distribution wither. The truth is nobody really has a good idea about what is going to happen. The world has never been to peak oil before. There are many complicating factors -- rates of oil depletion and production, the state of the world's economy, and the gap between rich and poor nations to name a few. Making a meaningful projection of what life will be like five, ten, or 20 years from now is, as



usual, fraught with uncertainties.

The one thing everybody agrees on is that all sorts of “bad” things are bound to happen as we transition from plentiful oil to scarcity. For the sake of a better term, let’s call these bad things “the troubles.”

### [Kunstler: Oil Futures Bidding To Heat Up As Energy Crisis Looms](#)

Oil ended 2006 roughly where it began, at just over \$60 a barrel. This reassured the public that all talk about Peak Oil was hysterical blather from a lunatic fringe. It was reinforced by the publication of the mendacious Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA) report issued this fall - a tragic document put out by a giant public relations firm representing the oil industry - with the mission of staving off windfall profits taxes and other regulatory moves that a true resource emergency might recommend.

But beyond this debate, in the background, another ominous trend can account for the stalling of oil prices in 2006 - totally unrecognized by the public and ignored by the news media: Prices on the oil futures market leveled off because the Third World has effectively dropped out of bidding for it - and using it. They cannot afford it at \$60 a barrel.

### [Iran Oil Minister: Iran Not Supplying Extra Oil to the Market](#)

Iran's oil minister said Wednesday the country hasn't been increasing oil output to the global market as prices firmed.

Members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries have held back some 1 million barrels a day of crude oil output in recent months in reaction to what they said was an oversupplied market.

But this month tanker trackers expect members to loosen the reigns and leak oil back into the market, as demand and prices firm. Tracker Oil Movements estimated daily exports by OPEC, excluding Iraq, will rise almost 400,000 barrels a day in the four weeks to April 21, compared with the same period to March 24.

### [Ethanol: Energy Panacea or False Promise?](#)

Ethanol, more commonly known as drinking alcohol, is touted by some as a viable alternative fuel for vehicles. Although its energy content is roughly two-thirds that of gasoline by volume, ethanol is increasingly flowing into gas tanks, with some one out of every eight gallons of gas sold in the United States containing 8 to 10 percent ethanol.

Yet there is heated debate among scientists as to whether or not ethanol really is good for the environment.



### [Top Russian minister defends oil, gas decisions](#)

Sergei Ivanov, Russia's powerful first deputy prime minister, has defended the return of oil and gas assets to Russian control, the Financial Times said.

"They are our resources and how to develop them and where to get funds from is our business," Ivanov -- seen as a potential successor to President Vladimir Putin -- told the newspaper in an interview published on Thursday but given on April 12.

### [Nissan senses US market for small, cheap cars](#)

Sensing an untapped market, Japanese automaker Nissan is "seriously" mulling the launch of a small car in the United States priced under 10,000 dollars, top executive Carlos Ghosn said Wednesday.

### [World needs to axe greenhouse gases by 80%: report](#)

The world will have to axe greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050, more deeply than planned, to have an even chance of curbing global warming in line with European Union goals, researchers said on Thursday.

### [Dodd favors corporate tax for emissions](#)

Sen. Chris Dodd, splitting with his Democratic presidential rivals over the best way to cut pollution and curb global warming, wants to tax corporations for their carbon dioxide emissions.

### [Doing right thing isn't easy, even for those who want to](#)

Most Americans believe that dramatic steps are needed to conserve energy and reduce the threat of global warming, but they are willing to go only so far in changing their lifestyles to "go green."



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