



DrumBeat: April 21, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 21, 2007 - 9:24am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Poll: Most Americans feel gas price pain](#) - *But only 1 in 5 says prices causing severe hardships.*

Phil Flynn, senior oil analyst for Aleron, found the number of those suffering hardships surprisingly low, telling CNN that "the low number explains why gas demand is at a record high, despite high prices. Because for the vast majority of people, it isn't a hardship for them."

[Get moving on an energy plan](#)

The national labs have used scientific collaborations to attack a variety of extremely complex problems. Such an organization, tasked with considering the energy situation from the top down, could provide a nonpolitical, realistic plan for dealing with our current energy crisis.

James Hanson: [Why We Can't Wait](#)

The Energy Department says that we're going to continue to put more and more CO₂ in the atmosphere each year--not just additional CO₂ but more than we put in the year before. If we do follow that path, *even for another ten years*, it guarantees that we will have dramatic climate changes that produce what I would call a different planet--one without sea ice in the Arctic; with worldwide, repeated coastal tragedies associated with storms and a continuously rising sea level; and with regional disruptions due to freshwater shortages and shifting climatic zones.

I've arrived at five recommendations for what should be done to address the problem. If Congress were to follow these recommendations, we could solve the problem. Interestingly, this is not a gloom-and-doom story. In fact, the things we need to do have many other benefits in terms of our economy, our national security, our energy independence and preserving the environment--preserving creation.

[Hybrid vehicles will impact industry](#)

The U.S. military burns as much oil in six days as all of Canada does in a year. They're burning more than 400,000 barrels every day, and they're worried. It's no wonder

their planners are developing of hybrid diesel-electric armoured vehicles, and they have enlisted the military in Europe and Scandinavia to work with them.

[Pound by Pound, Dollar for Dollar, The Complicated Equation for Going Green](#)

Going green is the new black in 2007. Advice abounds on how to cut your carbon dioxide output and do your part in the battle against global warming. But how much does a person have to spend to go green--and what kind of environmental impact would that spending actually have?

['Green' energy boom in Germany](#)

Great export numbers and thousands of new jobs -- Germany is expecting a 'green' economic boom sparked by its renewable energy sector.

[Clean car seeks green \(wealthy\) driver](#)

Rules forcing carmakers to build greener vehicles will be of no use unless measures are taken to convince consumers to buy them.

[Italy Energy Demand Seen up 2% in 2007](#)

Italian demand for oil, gas and other primary energy sources is expected to rise some 2 percent this year and will grow at least until 2020, but consumption should become more efficient, Unione Petrolifera (UP) said.

[World's 'largest renewable energy city'](#)

A farm of underwater tidally-driven turbines in New York's East River could make the city the world's largest in the renewable energy stakes.

[Go slow on investing in biofuel companies, conference attendees say](#)

The world is on the cusp of an energy revolution that could bring prosperity across the Americas and beyond. But how the revolution will play out remains unclear, and investors stand to lose plenty by betting on the wrong fuels or technologies, panelists said Thursday at a South Florida conference on Latin America.

[China vs. Earth](#)

The message is clear: Shanghai under water, Tibetan glaciers disappearing, crop yields in precipitous decline, epidemics flaring. These are just some of the dire consequences that Chinese scientists predict for their country this century if current climate change is not addressed. Yet China's leaders pay about as much attention to the issue as does George W. Bush.

[Receding Horizons](#)

[Robert Rapier] refers to this phenomenon as the “Law of Receding Horizons.”

I am grateful to whoever gets the credit for that little coinage, because I’ve been barking up that tree without a good name for the concept for a while now, and it’s an apt description of what I’ve been seeing in the energy press lately: receding horizons.

[Analysis: New markets for carbon dioxide](#)

Developing new markets for carbon will be vital to make coal to liquids and coal gasification economically competitive.

[Fossil fuel feast to deliver us an even drier future](#)

THE Murray-Darling Basin’s water crisis has reignited the debate about whether Australia’s drought is the result of global warming.

For John Howard and his Government, the jury is still out.

[New Nationalization Contracts to Boost Bolivia's Coffers by \\$300M](#)

The Bolivian Congress on Thursday unanimously approved 44 contracts that the government signed with 12 foreign oil companies in the framework of the country's energy nationalization policy, according to reports from La Paz.

[The Ultimate System: Free Mass Transit and Congestion Pricing](#)

WABC's John Gambling spoke with Michael Bloomberg this morning. In anticipation of the Mayor's Earth Day speech, they discussed everything from congestion charging to light bulbs. Below are some highlights from their conversation; you can download to the entire show [here](#).

[Tram backers approach Troutdale](#)

With gasoline prices currently stuck above \$3 a gallon, global warming concerns generating headlines and the Portland-metro area gripped in gridlock that only gets worse, alternative transportation methods continue to inch toward the mainstream.

But car-pooling, driving a hybrid and taking the bus all pale in comparison to Ben Missler's 20-year renewable energy vision of building an \$800 billion network of trams powered by wind and the sun across America.

[More Where That Came From](#)

Consulting group IHS confirmed as much Wednesday, when it announced that Iraq potentially holds another 100 billion barrels of oil in its western desert. That region, IHS explains, has been "substantially underexplored" because Iraq has been swimming in an oil surplus.

How many more regions are there across the globe that have been underexplored for the same reason? Peak-oil theorists have some explaining to do.

[Peak Oil Passnotes: Can Oil Go to \\$80 Again? Why Not?](#)

There was a 4.4 million barrel draw in gasoline inventories on the eastern seaboard and in the U.S. as a whole – the only place that really matters – gasoline rose on average by 7.4 cents per gallon, to reach a tidy \$2.87 per gallon.

That means that gasoline is up over 70 cents since the start of the year and year on year we are looking at around an 11.5 per cent rise.

['Increasing natural gas consumption, Iran crisis'](#)

The managing director of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) Reza Kassaeizadeh warned that if the current trend in the natural gas consumption continues, the country will certainly face a crisis in the future, MNA reported.

[Schlumberger profit soars 63%](#)

Schlumberger, the world's largest oil-field-services provider, said its first-quarter profit rose 63 percent to a record as oil and natural gas producers ramped up spending on exploration.

[Shell clings to China refinery investment hope](#)

Oil major Royal Dutch Shell is working hard to gain a foothold in China's refining sector after hopes for taking a share in a new CNOOC refinery was dashed, a top company executive said on Friday.

[Oh, That Crisis](#)

I find it odd that the two most popular groups of gloom-and-doomers are diametrically opposed about the cause: the GW-ers say things are about to get very bad because we have too much oil to burn -- while the PO-ers say things are going to get very, *very* bad because we don't have enough.

[Environment advocates urge action on climate change](#)

Kunstler said that the first order of business should be the restoration of the passenger rail system. "No other action would have such an immediate effect on our oil crisis."

[This island Earth](#) - *As ecological anxiety increases, the search for radical solutions begins*

On a freezing night last November, a crush of concerned citizens packed into the General Store Café in Pittsboro for a special screening by Chatham County documentarians Tim Bennett and Sally Erickson. *What a Way to Go: Life at the End of Empire*, a bleak, relentless, ecological horror film, played to a rapt house. While most Americans shrug off global warming as somebody else's problem, at this film's conclusion the viewers sat in a circle to discuss the inconvenient truths it raised. If Bennett and Erickson were recruiting fellow foot soldiers in the battle for our planet's future, we were a Coalition of the Willing. But after the show the practical obstacles to saving the planet were all too clear: We all strapped ourselves to thousands of pounds of steel, fired up noxious internal combustion engines, and drove off into the night.

[The Economic Impact of Renewable Energy](#)

LaidLaw Energy Group, a New York-based developer of independent renewable power plants, has proposed turning the Fraser Paper Mill into a 50 megawatt (MW) capacity biomass electrical generation facility that will utilize woodchips. Because the mill's infrastructure is well suited for developing a power plant, it will be easier and cheaper for the company to construct the facility.

[In search of fuel's holy grail](#)

Biochemist Kendall Pye has devoted his long career to the modern equivalent of the

alchemist's dream: a commercially viable process for transforming forest wastes into cellulosic ethanol that could replace gasoline.

[Fischler not optimistic on biofuel opportunities](#)

FORMER EU Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler was less than optimistic about opportunities for the biofuel industry in Europe.

Not only was Europe less than competitive in raw material price terms with soya from South America or palm oil from South East Asia, but the land requirement for alternatives in Europe was too high, he suggested at the Agricultural Engineers' Association annual conference this week.

[Sands are shifting for oil supply](#)

Expert says we should be ready for big jump in price

Oil production worldwide peaked months ago, but figures and prices don't reflect that yet because the production of liquids stripped from natural gas has been filling the gap, [Henry Groppe] said.

But that potential is peaking, too, which means that "in several years" the world will enter a new era of higher prices.

"The only question is how high will prices have to go before there is a decline in usage?" he said.

[London oil exchange to sell Middle East heavy crude](#)

London's Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) oil market said Thursday it would launch a new crude oil contract next month for sour crude from the Middle East.

The new heavy crude contract will be priced in US dollars and sold alongside London's Brent North Sea crude and New York's main oil futures contract, light sweet crude, the exchange said in a statement.

[Growing Unrest Posing a Threat to Nigerian Oil](#)

There are few safe places left for oil companies in the Niger Delta, the epicenter of this country's petroleum industry.

Armed rebel gangs have blown up pipelines, disabled pumping stations, and kidnapped over 150 foreign oil workers in the last year. Companies now confine employees to

heavily fortified compounds, allowing them to travel only by armored car or helicopter.

One company has fitted bathrooms with steel bolts to turn them into “panic” rooms, if needed. Another has coated the pylons of a giant oil-production platform 80 miles offshore with waterproof grease to prevent attackers from climbing the rig.

[Tanker fails to explode near Nigerian election HQ](#)

A petrol tanker laden with gas detonators heading towards Nigeria's electoral headquarters stopped short of its target and failed to explode on Saturday, hours before voting was due to start in presidential elections.

[Bolivia retakes natural gas pipeline](#)

The military retook control of a natural gas pipeline to Argentina after days of violent protests at gas installations in southern Bolivia, the government said late Friday.

[Fueling the Debate: Ethanol vs. Biodiesel](#)

This past week offered a perfect synopsis of the continuing debate over whether ethanol or biodiesel is the preferred biofuel of the future. Determining which fuel is *better*, though, is about as helpful as determining whether running or swimming is the healthier exercise option -- since both, of course, are beneficial. Both ethanol and biodiesel will reduce our reliance on traditional fossil fuels and will help cut down on harmful emissions. So how do they differ, and what really are the benefits of each?

[Biobutanol Performance Similar to Unleaded Gasoline, According to New Fuel Testing](#)

New fuel testing results shared today by DuPont and BP indicate that biobutanol has proven to perform similarly to unleaded gasoline on key parameters, based on ongoing laboratory-based engine testing and limited fleet testing.

[Annan: Climate change threat to humanity](#)

The greatest threat facing humanity is climate change, former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Friday, and praised a Norwegian initiative to reduce the country's net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050.

[Warming and Global Security](#)

People who give short shrift to environmental matters pay attention when national security becomes part of the conversation. So the debate over global warming took a useful turn this week as diplomats and retired military officers drew persuasive connections between climate change and the very real potential for regional upheavals.

[Powerful policy group toughens U.S. emissions plan](#)

The National Commission on Energy Policy -- a nonpartisan organization that includes representatives from industry, government, labor, environmental activism and academia -- revised a plan first issued in 2004 that was used as the model for some climate change proposals in Congress.

"The truth is that the urgency has increased, not just on climate change but on oil security," said panel communications director Paul Bledsoe, explaining the need for updating.



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