



## DrumBeat: April 28, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 28, 2007 - 9:05am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Americans see climate threat, but reluctant to conserve: poll](#)

Despite the huge popularity of gas-guzzling sports, luxury and four-wheel-drive cars in the country, 92 percent said they thought car manufacturers should be required to produce more energy-efficient vehicles.

But only 38 percent said they supported a higher tax on gasoline to discourage energy consumption and to fight global warming.

### [Waiting for no one](#)

If it proceeds, Gorgon will be the most expensive development ever attempted in Australia.

It will produce 10 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas a year -- almost as much as the North West Shelf -- and add more than \$2.5 billion a year to Australia's export earnings.

But in an industry where costs are rising there are no guarantees.

### [Why some experts want higher gas tax](#)

To date, revenue from U.S. gas taxes has been spent primarily on building and maintaining roads. It's a sales tax, but many drivers think of it as a sort of user's fee for the nation's vast network of asphalt.

But what if the main purpose of gas taxes was to deter Americans from driving so frequently or to encourage people to trade in that gas-slurping SUV for a next-generation plug-in hybrid capable of getting 100 miles per gallon?

### [Comparing Alternative Fuels For Cars](#)

Norwegian scientists have drawn up a league table of alternative fuels for cars. Their analysis is based on a well-to-wheel approach that takes into account manufacturing,

energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, and local and regional pollutants.

Bottom of the table, unsurprisingly, are petrol vehicles, but coming in a close second last are hybrid vehicles that can run on compressed natural gas or petrol. Top of their league are fuel cell powered vehicles using hydrogen gas obtained from natural gas methane.

### [Putin signs ordinance on atomic energy industry reform](#)

Russia will become a worthy player on the world atomic energy market through the creation of Atomenergoprom, a source at the Federal Atomic Energy Agency said on Friday.

The new holding "will be a vertically integrated entity and unite the entire atomic technological cycle – from the production of uranium and nuclear fuel to the construction, operation and decommissioning of nuclear power plants," he said.

### [Uganda: World Bank Approves Funding for Hydropower](#)

The World Bank (WB) has agreed to extend to Uganda a US\$360 million loan to build a controversial 250MW hydropower station on the River Nile, according to a Bank statement issued in Kampala on Friday.

The statement said the project, which has been opposed by environmentalists, would help close the country's energy gap, which the Bank said "seriously constrains social and economic development".

"Uganda's workforce is expected to double over the next 15 years, making the creation of jobs through expanded industry, tourism and commercial services critical," Judy O'Connor, the Bank's country director for Uganda, said.

"These sectors are energy intensive and will therefore rely on a consistent, affordable and expanding power supply," she noted.

### [West African Gas Pipeline inaugurated](#)

The 500 million-dollar West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP), the flagship project of the sub-regional body ECOWAS, is set to come on-stream soon with the inauguration on Friday of the Gas Export Terminal at Ikoti in Ogun State, Nigeria.

### [Pakistan seeks US \\$17 billion for construction of dams](#)

Pakistan has sought US \$17 billion funding from international lenders for the

construction of three dams by 2016 saying that they were needed to avert flood, drought and energy crisis.

### [Austria courts Iran, angers U.S.](#)

Washington has protested an Austrian oil and gas firm's investment plans in Iran. However, the Americans won't have much influence on the deal, observers say.

### [Fugro awarded contract to perform geosurveys in Mexico](#)

Dutch engineering services company Fugro, in conjunction with Constructora Subacuatica Diavaz, has been awarded a contract to perform geophysical and geotechnical surveys in the Bay of Campeche, Mexico, by Pemex Exploration and Production, valued at USD 21.9 million (EUR 16 million). The length of the contract is one year and work will begin 30 April.

### [Bed space, workers at a premium on busy North Slope](#)

The uptick in activity has put a premium on the available skilled work force, and equipment as well. Mike O'Connor, president of Peak Oilfield Services, said his company is lucky in being able to retain its core of skilled employees. However, certain specialties, such as crane operators, welders and the highly skilled operators of vehicles that move heavy drill rig units, are greatly in demand.

### [The 'greening' of the Grange](#)

"Based on the connectivity of agriculture the Grange's history and mission, and the interests of Jason (Bradford) in relocalizing, especially in relocalizing agriculture in Willits, and then you throw in Peak Oil into the mix, I recognized that our food situation is so precariously unstable. And the fact that we are so dependent on fossil fuels."

### [Low-energy Lighting Project Is Streets Ahead](#)

Technology that first appeared in digital watches and calculators back in the 1970s is being used to develop durable and community-friendly low energy street lighting. Researchers at The University of Manchester have joined forces with Dialight Lumidrive - founded by a successful former student - to develop powerful low-cost LED lighting modules that can be used in buildings and on roads.

### [Europe Looks Beyond Ethanol](#)

But to develop cleaner-burning cars, most of Europe is going beyond ethanol, experimenting with a variety of biofuels, including biodiesel (diesel made from plants, oils, or fats), biomass, and hydrogen—as well as compressed natural gas and engine technologies that reduce harmful carbon-dioxide emissions. That varied approach, analysts say, could hand Europeans a competitive edge in developing greener cars and fuels.

### [Ethanol expansion remains robust](#)

Once the darling of the heartland, ethanol has acquired a dangerous reputation these days, amid warnings of a "gasohol glut," a "dot-corn bust" and an angry backlash from rural communities once expected to applaud the arrival of jumbo distilleries for turning grain into motor fuel.

Yet for all the ill tidings, the ethanol boom remains surprisingly robust and only moderately sobered by the outpouring of worry aimed at it in recent months. In fact, 2007 promises to be a year of historic expansion, with production soaring as scores of new and enlarged ethanol factories come on line.

### [Nigeria loses 600,000 bpd to Niger Delta crisis](#)

Nigeria is currently losing 600,000 barrels of oil per day in the oil rich Niger Delta as a result of the activities of militants in the region, oil officials said here.

### [Employers undecided on Belgian refinery strike threat](#)

Employers involved in a dispute with Belgian oil workers haven't reached a decision over a potential strike which could paralyze operations at the country's oil refineries, said a spokesman Friday.

...Any strike would disrupt Belgium's three major plants in Antwerp, which have a capacity of around 745,000 barrels a day.

### [Olmert: Missile Raid Would Hit Iran Nuclear Plans](#)

Iran's disputed nuclear programme could be severely hit by firing 1,000 cruise missiles in a 10-day attack, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was quoted as saying on Saturday.

[The peak oil problem](#) - Interesting, because the source of the article is EnergyBulletin.net.

### [Climate report to warn time running out in greenhouse gas battle](#)

Time is running out to cut the greenhouse-gas emissions that drive climate change, but much can be done at a modest cost to attack the looming crisis, according to experts gathering for new talks.

### [No silver bullet to combat climate change: IEA chief](#)

Mandil set a target of an early cut of a billion tonnes of emissions per year and said a full range of measures -- which he said included renewable energy, carbon storage, nuclear power and energy efficiency -- should be harnessed.

"All that is not to tell you it's impossible. It's to say there's no silver bullet, not one technology alone," Mandil told a UN meeting on energy efficiency here.

### [The Empire Strikes Back](#)

Even as its support in the hinterlands rapidly dwindles, the empire of big carbon is still on the offensive in Washington, DC. In a key test of how much pressure the coal and nuclear lobbies can muster, the House of Representatives voted, 264-154, to make the two worst available energy options (coal-to-liquids and nuclear reprocessing) the top priorities for federal research. Seventy-five Democrats joined the Republicans to override their own leadership and cave in to the energy special-interests that have always run energy policy in DC.

### [Hydrogen's Second Coming: On the Road, Hope for a Zero-Pollution Car](#)

As hydrogen gains favor, hydrocarbons seem to be taking over the role of villain. Peak oil theorists, especially Matthew Simmons, chairman of the Simmons & Company investment bank and the author of "Twilight in the Desert: The Coming Saudi Oil Shock and the World Economy" contend that increased demand will outpace the ability to increase production. And the Supreme Court's April 2 ruling that the E.P.A. has authority to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant, as it does tailpipe emissions, was a powerful vote against fossil fuels.

### [Ecuador: pay us not to develop oil reserves in the Amazon](#)

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa says that if the country is compensated with half of the forecasted lost revenues, it will not exploit oil in Yasuni National Park, setting aside the area for wildlife and indigenous people. Correa said the cost would be about \$350 million per year.

### [Saudis Round Up 172, Citing Plot Against Oil Rigs](#)

The announcement of the plot was made Friday, the day of prayer and rest, when all offices are closed. What was most unnerving to some was the government's description of one of the cells: Officials said it was made up of 61 men, mostly Saudis, who had traveled with their leader to Islam's holiest site, in Mecca, where they promised "to listen, obey and execute all his orders."

"Al Qaeda is no longer an organized structure," said Mr. Qassim, the retired judge. "It became an ideology and a system of work. This is Al Qaeda now."

### [Saudis Say They Broke Up Suicide Plots](#)

Saudi Arabia said Friday that it had arrested 172 suspected terrorists over the past several months from a network that was planning suicide attacks -- including the use of airplanes -- on the kingdom's oil industry, military installations and other targets.

Saudi officials said some of the suspects had trained next door in Iraq and had returned to the kingdom to plot the attacks.

### [Icebergs threaten vast Russian gas project](#)

Russia's giant Shtokman gas field, one of the world's most challenging offshore projects, will face even greater problems as global warming unleashes vast icebergs into the Arctic, a senior scientist says.

Even if icebergs are unlikely to halt the world's largest single energy development, as the global hunger for resources grows, they would make the \$30 billion-plus project by Russia's gas monopoly Gazprom yet more expensive.

### [Peak Oil Passnotes: Refinery Bottleneck Redux](#)

We are getting to the point, when the national average gets high enough when people are going to start complaining. It will be interesting to see the reaction. Will President Bush blame it on his weird mantra, "dependence on foreign oil?" As if American can ever not be dependent on foreign oil, just like it is dependent on foreign workers and currencies. What will the excuses be? After all the price of crude oil, though fairly high around \$65 per barrel, has not hit its \$78 peak again. What reasons will be given?

### [All uranium restrictions removed](#)

PRIME Minister John Howard today promised to remove all excessive restrictions on

mining, processing and exporting of Australian uranium as a possible step to embarking on domestic nuclear power generation.

### [Behind the scenes at Shell Oil](#)

Think of it as a mission to the dark side of the moon. A voyage into black, only rather than going up Shell Oil is going down. Six miles down.

"It can cost upwards of a million dollars a day to drill," said Shell's Dan Malouta.

That is when the things are going well.

### [Statoil to invest billions in oil sands](#)

Statoil ASA and North American Oil Sands Corporation (NAOSC) on Friday announced that they have entered into an acquisition agreement whereby Statoil will make an all-cash offer to acquire all shares of NAOSC at a price of CAD 20 per share.

### [Wynnewood inferno: Fire scorches refinery](#) - *Massive fire started by lightning strike*

Wynnewood Refinery officials had to deal with two massive tank fires just hours after believing the first fire was under control.

The fire caused a huge explosion at around 8:30 Friday night, causing many residents in the area to flee their homes in fear of the fire spreading after highly flammable liquid spilled out of a tank.



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