



DrumBeat: May 1, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 1, 2007 - 9:12am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Venezuela pulls control from Big Oil](#)



President Hugo Chavez's government took over Venezuela's last remaining privately run oil fields today, intensifying a decisive struggle with big oil over one of the world's most lucrative deposits. The companies giving up control include BP, ConocoPhillips, Exxon Mobil and Chevron.

[Fight Fire With Fire?](#)

Will climate change doom humanity to an existence mimicking Dante's Inferno? Will nuclear proliferation threaten humanity with annihilation as depicted in Dr. Strangelove? An increasing number of pundits, policymakers and even environmentalists believe that nuclear energy can save us from massive death by climate change and will not lead to massive destruction by nuclear war. (Nuclear fuel making technologies can also be used to produce explosive material for nuclear weapons.) But as I wrote in a new Council on Foreign Relations report, Nuclear Energy: Balancing Benefits and Risks, this view oversells the contribution nuclear energy can make to strengthen energy security and reduce global warming while downplaying the dangers associated with this energy source.

[CEO at BP steps down](#)

John Browne resigns position after judge allows newspaper to publish details of his private life; Tony Hayward takes over.

[Getting containers off road and up river](#)

The U.S. Maritime Administration sees merit in the proposal, which would help reduce traffic and pollution and boost a U.S. Department of Transportation initiative to move more cargo via the nation's waterways. Only 2 percent of the nation's freight now moves that way, with the rest moving on highways and railroads.

[More pain at the pump](#)

It was a monster fill for Marc Fischer's Ford Excursion.

When the pump came to a halt yesterday at a Columbia Exxon gas station, the bill was a whopper: \$91.61. And it might continue to grow.

[Chavez: China Okays US\\$6bn Oil E&P Fund](#)

China has agreed with Venezuela to support a fund that would finance US\$6bn in extra-heavy and heavy crude oil E&P projects, Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez said in a report from state news agency ABN.

[Iran oil, gas production on the rise](#)

Iran's oil production is expected to exceed 5.316 Mln barrels per day by the end of the country's 5th Development Plan (early 2015).

[Gearing Up for Gulf Hurricanes: Offshore Technology Conference](#)

In recent years, Gulf Coast hurricanes reminded oil companies and offshore drillers they are little match for Mother Nature.

But improvements in everything from weather forecasting to rig tie-downs may give the energy industry more of a fighting chance this hurricane season.

[Kurds will vote against oil law](#)

While Baghdad warns regional governments not to sign oil and gas contracts, the Kurds say they will vote against the draft oil law.

[Philippines: Pimentel says coal import could bankroll TU campaign](#)

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr expressed fear that the alleged artificial shortage in coal supply could be used in raising funds for administration candidates in the May 14 elections.

[Germany in losing battle to save glacier](#)

The winds are cold at any time of the year on Germany's highest mountain but the country's last glacier is melting away despite Herculean efforts to counter the effects of climate change.

[Seeing the trees for the forest: WHRC scientists creating national biomass and carbon dataset](#)

After completing a two-year pilot phase, scientists at the Woods Hole Research Center are expanding the scope of the "National Biomass and Carbon Dataset" for the year 2000 (NBCD2000), the first ever inventory of its kind, by moving into the production phase. Through a combination of NASA satellite datasets, topographic survey data, land use/land cover data, and extensive forest inventory data collected by the U.S. Forest Service – Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (FIA), NBCD2000 will be an invaluable baseline data set for the assessment of the carbon stock in U.S. forest vegetation and will improve current methods of determining carbon flux between vegetation and the atmosphere.

[India: RIL plans to start production of coal bed methane by 2009](#)

In a move that could have some bearing on the future of the energy sector in India, Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) plans to start commercial production of six million metric standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) of gas from its coal bed methane (CBM) block in Madhya Pradesh by 2009, said an executive of the company who did not wish to be identified. The Mukesh Ambani-controlled company will be among the country's first to commercially extract CBM, a fuel that is akin to natural gas, only less polluting.

[Enough Electricity for Five Times World Demand](#)

While the world annually consumes roughly 14,000 terawatt hours (tWh) of electricity, the yearly potential electricity generated from tidal currents has been estimated at

80,000 tWh.

[Willem Middelkoop looks behind the scenes of the economy](#)

Daan de Wit: But the price of oil?

Willem Middelkoop: In my opinion it can only go higher, and that's not including what ends up happening with Iran. I follow the data on worldwide supply and demand, and for the first time we've arrived at a situation in which the demand for oil has exceeded supply for three years running. We've talked often about peak oil and possible problems in the future if the demand is greater than the supply. But the future is now, because in 2006 the demand for oil was 100,000 barrels greater than the supply. We're talking about 100,000 barrels per day. This year the shortage is up to 700,000 barrels per day, and for next year yet another shortfall is predicted. So that's three years in a row with an oil shortage. And then the last thing we'll need is another conflict in the Persian Gulf.

[Dancing with Fairies](#)

In recent months we at SRA have received a growing number of requests to address the question of peaking world oil production from a political point of view. To wit, is not peak oil just another wheeze to create a crisis that would facilitate the creation of global government? Isn't it just a means to discredit global warming activism? Don't the banks and oil companies have a vested interest in promoting the idea of Peak Oil to get prices up? I may be missing some of the questions and comments in this brief synopsis, but basically these three points seem to pretty well encapsulate the sorts of feedback we have been getting.

[Back to the Cold War? Putin's Policies Head in a Dark Direction](#)

It's difficult to avoid the impression that with Russia, we may be gravitating toward a new cold war. Flush with cash as a result of soaring energy prices, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin behaves like a man who is utterly unconstrained by "world opinion" (however defined), or the possibility of incurring Washington's wrath.

[Azerbaijan in the National Energy Policy of the USA](#)

The energy turmoil of 2000-2001 prompted Bush to establish the National Energy Policy Development Group (NEPDG), a task force of senior government representatives charged with developing a long-range plan to meet U.S. energy requirements. To head this group, Bush picked his closest political adviser, Vice President Dick Cheney. A Republican Party stalwart and a former secretary of Defence, Cheney had served as chairman and chief executive officer of the Halliburton Co., an oilfield services firm,

before joining the Bush campaign in 2000. As such, Cheney availed himself of top executives of energy firms, such as Enron Corp., for advice on major issues.

[Hotels in Costa Rica Worried About Energy Rationing](#)

They're afraid their guests will cancel reservations as they learn of Costa Rica's energy crisis, which has been evident since an unplanned massive blackout occurred April 19. Smaller, scheduled blackouts have since become the norm as the Costa Rican Electricity Institute (ICE) rations the country's insufficient energy supply.

[Alternative fuels find home in La.](#)

Within the last year, two companies in the West Monroe area have announced plans to build manufacturing facilities that turn agricultural and wood waste into alternative energy products.

[The Downside of Biofuel](#)

Ethanol may not be the solution the administration is looking for. In fact, production of the additive brings with it a host of challenges. Challenges that could leave environmentalists, farmers and possibly even consumers frustrated and disappointed.

[Ghana: Power crisis no excuse](#)

The Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), Mr. Robert Ahomka-Lindsay has asked Ghanaian industries to stop using the current energy crisis as an excuse, and use other available opportunities for their growth.

[Chile's Hydroelectric Projects: Indispensible](#)

Plans to build at least five massive hydroelectric dams in Chile's Region XI have generated harsh criticism from many sources - national and international, as can be seen in today's lead story. Critics are asking a simple question: Why does Chile have to repeat the energy development mistakes made in Europe, North America, and Asia, when energy efficiency and renewable energy sources are finally coming into their own due to high fossil fuel costs? What about low impact hydro, thermal, wind, tide and solar energy sources – especially now that climate change problems are finally beginning to be recognized around the world?

[A Pair of Leggy Drillers](#)

It's not a new message from T. Boone Pickens, but it's a difficult one to refute. For a while, Pickens has been circling North America sharing his thoughts about the phenomenon of peak oil. The term refers to the point at which our planet's increasingly voracious appetite for oil begins to exceed the ability of the world's oil companies -- private and government-owned -- to produce it.

[World Without Oil Launches](#)

Last night at midnight, the alternate reality game (ARG for short) World Without Oil launched. In the game, the world has hit peak oil and there are news reports of crises from around the world. The goal of the game is to get real people around the world to start thinking about life without oil. To get them to answer questions like: How will they cope? What will they have to sacrifice? What can they do to help the world?

[Book Review: The Coming Economic Collapse](#)

Author Stephen Leeb makes an argument for why crude will reach \$200 and how an investor can profit from that. He spends about 80 percent of *The Coming Economic Collapse* establishing the argument for peak oil and the rest on how to profit -- as absurd as that may sound.

[Why not make mass transit always free?](#)

In the age of global warming, increasing gasoline prices, and (though I am personally a skeptic) the concerns about "peak oil", the supposedly progressive San Francisco Bay Area is living in the virtual mass transit dark ages. The damage to the MacArthur Maze in west Oakland will only make that more obvious to everyone.

[Is An Alternative Energy Bubble On the Horizon?](#)

With Al Gore's 'An Inconvenient Truth' sweeping Hollywood and monster storms swamping coastlines, global warming is nearly impossible to ignore anymore. Add to this perennial Middle East tensions and peak oil fears and you've got the perfect recipe for a looming energy crisis. How do we save the world and still live our energy-dependent, modern lifestyles? Many corporations, venture capitalists and individual investors believe that cleantech is the answer.

[The Year of Magical Eating: The 100-mile diet and other food stunts](#)

Those who defend the pleasures and economies of modern life against the romanticizers of a zero-impact, local eating, fresh fruits and veggies past often overemphasize the soul-numbing drudgery of rural life. Picking berries and turning them into jam while

chatting with a friend has been one of womankind's great pleasures for centuries. But just because it isn't awful doesn't mean that it isn't time-consuming labor. And in modern times, laying a hand on local berries in the first place can be pricey, U-Pick or not.

[Thanksgiving in the Gas Tank](#)

Are plants the power source of the future? Biomass could be one solution to our dependency on fossil fuels. Though biodiesel from rapeseed and alcohol from grains are uneconomical and hardly less harmful to the environment than gasoline, second-generation production methods are now fueling a new optimism.

George Monbiot - [The rich world's policy on greenhouse gas now seems clear: millions will die](#)

Our governments have set the wrong targets to tackle climate change using outdated science, and they know it.

[Arctic melt faster than forecast](#)

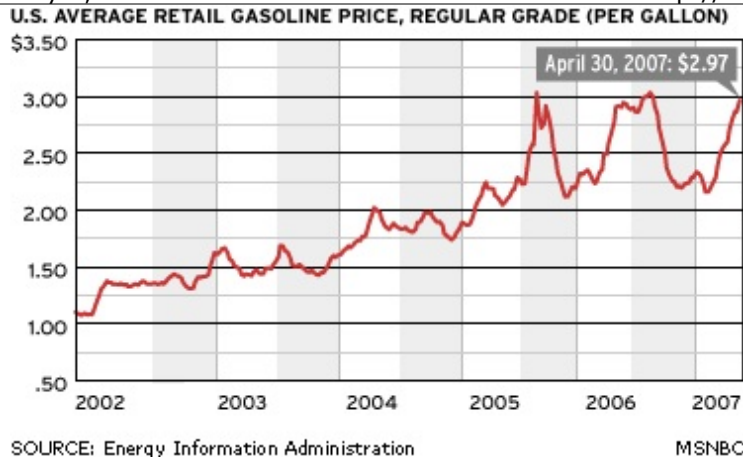
Since 1979, the Arctic has been losing summer ice at about 9% per decade, but models on average produce a melting rate less than half that figure.

The scientists suggest forecasts from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) may be too cautious.

[Canada climate change plan is questioned](#)

The head of the international body that oversees the Kyoto treaty said Monday that Canada's new climate change plan does not guarantee that greenhouse gas emissions will decrease.

[Annual pump price rise is fast, furious this year](#)



With prices in many parts of the country, especially on the West Coast, already well above \$3 a gallon, some of the most pessimistic forecasts calling for peaks above \$4 a gallon in some locations.

"I think it's probably one of the worst-looking years we've seen," said Antoine Halff, head of energy research at futures broker Fimat. "And that's probably why you're seeing more apocalyptic forecasts than is typically the case."

[Oil Companies Created 'Shortage' That Is Driving Record Pump Prices, Says Group](#)

Even as crude oil prices fell slightly today, gasoline prices continued a rocket trajectory upward due to "supply shortages" resulting from a combination of ineptness and greed on the part of oil companies, said the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights.

[Many methods, one basic idea shape new oil-shale technology](#)

If you're not going to mine it, you've got to heat it in the ground before you pump it out.

That's the general plan for Royal Dutch Shell, EGL Resources, Chevron and possibly ExxonMobil. Each company hopes to relieve Colorado's Green River Formation of its hydrocarbon-rich marlstone, or carbonate mud.

[Japan follows Korea's path to Middle East oil security](#)

Japan's plan to lease out some of its oil storage facilities to Saudi Arabia and secure longer-term supply deals show Tokyo taking a page out of Seoul's book on how to cut costs in its quest for energy security.

After decades of attempting to protect itself from oil supply disruptions by buying overseas fields or spending billions on government and industry stockpiles, Tokyo appears to be taking a new, more commercial tack in an increasingly competitive world.

[6 oil workers kidnapped in Nigeria](#)

Gunmen armed with dynamite seized six foreign workers and killed a Nigerian sailor in an attack on a Chevron Corp. ship in Nigeria's southern oil-producing region, a navy spokesman said.

Capt. Obiora Medani said the ship was attacked off Bayelsa state where it was serving as a container for crude oil.

[Saudi says oil security main topic at Riyadh meeting](#)

Security of oil supplies will be a core topic at a meeting of Asian oil exporters and consumers in OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia this week, the Saudi oil minister said in remarks broadcast on Monday.

[Rich Oilfield Discovered in Northern Kuwait](#)

Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah announced Monday that a rich oil field was discovered in northern Kuwait, the official KUNA news agency reported.

In a statement, Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah said that initial examination of the site proved it contained a huge amount of light oil and affiliate gas, but he did not release the reserves of the new field.

[Nations urged to reduce greenhouse gases](#)

The European Union called on developing countries Tuesday to take immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gases, saying they must stop blaming richer nations for their own failure to act.

[Poor countries demand a voice on climate change](#)

As climate change experts meet in Bangkok, poor nations suffering the brunt of global warming's worst effects are determined their voices will not be drowned out by bickering world powers.

[Climate change threatens Indonesian rice farmers: study](#)

Indonesian rice farmers in Java and Bali must invest in hardier crops and better water storage methods if they hope to maintain harvests in the face of manmade climate change and weather systems such as El Nino, according to a new study.

[Chinese puzzle bamboozles U.N. climate talks](#)

U.N. talks on climate change are at risk of bogging down under the weight of hundreds of amendments from governments and China's objections to a proposed blueprint for battling global warming, a senior delegate said on Tuesday.

[A Black History of Our Oil Addiction](#)

MP3 audio interview with Edwin Black, author of Internal Combustion on the electric car conspiracy.



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