



DrumBeat: May 6, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 6, 2007 - 9:03am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Renewable is not a synonym for sustainable](#)

One of my dad's maxims was "never buy or sell hay." Buying hay might bring in the seeds of weeds we had spent years trying to control; selling hay removed tons of nutrients without replacing it with commensurate manure. Thousands of years of unharvested prairie had built the rich silt loam. The first 75 years of diversified, value-added farming saw mainly livestock and livestock products leave a nearly-level farm, using no commercial fertilizer, yet with ever-increasing yields.

[Kuwait oil reserves secret for national security](#)

Kuwait will never disclose the size of its oil reserves for reasons of national security, Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah was quoted as saying after Kuwait announced a new oil find. "Kuwait has not and will not disclose the size of its oil reserves," he told Al-Arabiya Television late on Monday. "The Kuwait people are not concerned with numbers. This is related to national security."

Industry newsletter Petroleum Intelligence Weekly (PIW) said in January 2006 it had seen internal Kuwaiti records showing reserves were about 48 billion barrels — half the officially stated 99 billion, or some 10 percent of global oil reserves. Kuwait's former oil minister, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahd Al-Sabah, has said that PIW's report only paints a partial picture while other oil officials said the report was inaccurate. PIW said official public figures do not distinguish between proven, probable and possible reserves. Sheikh Ali told Arabiya that just because some fields were not proven it did not mean there was no oil there but that they were not being used.

[Is U.S. Natural Gas Headed Toward Excess Supply?](#)

Several recent analytical studies, sponsored by EPRI, indicate that there is a plausible scenario that gas supplies will increase and that excess gas supplies could emerge over the intermediate-term, perhaps within two years.

[Wind Farms May Not Lower Air Pollution, Study Suggests](#)

Making good decisions about wind energy may be difficult, said David J. Policansky, the study director, because negative effects occur locally while benefits are probably regional or national.

[Facing Western Diplomatic Pressure, Iran Looks East](#)

When Iran looks west, it faces trade sanctions, political hostility and military threats. So now the vilified government is turning to the east, where energy-hungry Asia is embracing it as a regional partner.

[The \(Not So\) Eagerly Modern Saudi](#)

SAUDI ARABIA, home of Islam's holiest sites, flush with oil revenue, and increasingly the most influential player among Arab countries, has long resisted changing its ultratraditional ways. Now the intrusions of global economics and technology have begun to challenge some traditions in ways that the country's idealists could not. And the strain that this is causing is showing in the form of surprisingly open debate about how much Saudis really want to modernize.

Dave Cohen: [The Call on OPEC?](#)

An earlier column, [Decline Rates and Non-OPEC Supply](#), investigated a likely peak (or plateau) in oil supplied by nations outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) by 2010. The "call on OPEC" to satisfy growing world oil demand must inevitably increase thereafter. Will OPEC answer the call? The people running OPEC are businessmen. They will answer the call only if there is a financial incentive to do so.

[Big Oil in Tiny Cambodia: The Burden of New Wealth](#)

Still clawing its way out of the ruins of its brutal past, Cambodia has come face to face with an extraordinary new future: It seems to have struck oil.

[Accidental Sustainability and Why We Can't Sustain It](#)

For those of you who haven't heard yet, a portion of a highly trafficked freeway interchange in the San Francisco Bay Area collapsed early yesterday morning when a gasoline tanker lost control and exploded. The flames apparently reached temperatures nearing 3000F degrees, and a structure we ordinarily trust to be quite stable turned from an overpass into an asphalt waterslide.

[Iran gas oil price hike rejected](#)

Iran's parliament on Sunday voted against a government proposal of gas oil used as diesel fuel for trucks and for heating homes, official media reported on Sunday.

Refined oil and gas products are heavily-subsidised in resource-rich Iran, encouraging consumption as well as draining state coffers, but raising prices is politically sensitive as the country struggles with high inflation and unemployment.

[Birth of a New Wedge](#)

Agrichar is the term not for the biomass fuel, but for what is left over after the energy is removed: a charcoal-based soil amendment. In simple terms, the agrichar process takes dry biomass of any kind and bakes it in a kiln to produce charcoal. The process is called pyrolysis. Various gases and bio-oils are driven off the material and collected to use in heat or power generation. The charcoal is buried in the ground, sequestering the carbon that the growing plants had pulled out of the atmosphere. The end result is increased soil fertility and an energy source with negative carbon emissions.

[Ethanol: Converting Agricultural Crops into Oil](#)

Is this the optimal economic and social way to produce fuel? It is known that the prices of corn, and consequently bread and fodders for chickens and other animals, have risen as a result of using corn to produce fuel instead of food. Also well-known is the fact that corn and sugar cane fields use large amounts of water.

[A green light for General Motors, AAA](#)

Sedans that run on a combination of ethanol and gasoline were parked next to trucks powered by high-efficiency engines.

Hybrid sport utility vehicles powered by gas and batteries were flanked by a futuristic car that runs on liquid nitrogen.

[Staunching the energy crisis](#)

This problem can be readily addressed by literally putting the power in the hands of the people by encouraging householders to produce renewable energy.

[Move to hybrid](#)

Many people say their conscience is driving them to seek alternative fuels.

[Pump pain palliatives](#)

Another spring, another jump in gasoline prices and another round of ineptitude from Washington.

There is never a good time of year to see gas above \$2.80 per gallon, but it's particularly worrisome to reach this level now. That's because pump prices tend to go up from here as we head into the high-demand summer vacation season.

[Good works usually come at the expense of something else](#)

On the up-side, higher oil prices increase the viability of ethanol. And, theoretically, at least, decrease the number of illegal immigrants entering the United States.

[Gas price anxiety returns](#)

Increasing gas prices are causing some to reconsider that long summer car trip in favor of a closer vacation destination, but others say high fuel costs will not affect their upcoming travel plans.

[Sky's the limit?](#)

"Like a baseball player with a hamstring injury, the refineries will get off the disabled list in time for peak season."

Carolyn Baker: [The Spirituality of Collapse](#)

The first edition of this article was written in February, 2006, but I have recently revised and updated it. Since the first writing, the theme of collapse seems to have reverberated around the world, now manifesting its symptoms in the scientific community's latest dramatic reports on global warming, the issue of Peak Oil coming further out of the closet--being discussed openly in mainstream media, and the bursting of the U.S. housing bubble that now finds 1 out of every 264 homes in the nation facing foreclosure as each day the value of the dollar decreases and the value of precious metals soars.

[Peak Oil and U.S. Representative Vernon Ehlers](#)

This morning, I brought up Peak Oil in a town hall meeting with U.S. Representative Vernon Ehlers of Michigan.

Representative Ehlers was formerly a nuclear physicist, is one of only three scientists in Congress, and is extremely well versed on both energy and Peak Oil.

[It sucks the energy right out of you](#)

A Modest Proposal: For Tomorrow's Energy Crisis, Today, imagines the world in 2039, 19 years after the oil crash of 2020. In it, a cyclical process finds humans modifying their bodies monthly by eating foods that raise their body mass index, or BMI – like Borks, a cross between beef and pork – to gain weight before having the fat extracted and turned into fuel.

The film can be viewed online [here](#).

[The Uranium Juniors and Majors: A Symbiotic Relationship](#)

Fears about peak oil and the concept of uranium as a cleaner energy source have coupled in the industry's collective imagination and forced the price of uranium to triple in the last year. On the supply side experts are alerting the public of shortages and many are saying that the uranium price will continue to climb as a result. With bio-energy solutions seen as being far-off in the future, uranium is being touted as nothing less than the solution to world's energy and greenhouse gas problems.

[Pipeline delivers huge benefit and international research goldmine](#)

In Weyburn, the oil buzz would be at a much lower pitch if it weren't for a pipeline that comes all the way from Beulah, about 200 miles southeast as a strong crow would fly.

Minister demands staff electricity metre figures The pipeline carries carbon dioxide, one of the most common molecule bonds on earth.

Ghana: [Minister demands staff electricity metre figures](#)

The Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment has directed all directors and members of staff of the Ministry to read electricity meters in their offices and official residence every Monday morning and submit the figures to his office.

The exercise, which takes off on Monday, is intended to show the percentage savings the ministry, its departments and agencies, are making as their contribution towards efforts at solving the country's energy problems.

[The Silver Lining to Impending Doom](#)

A curious feature of capitalism is that threats, or more precisely, the human response to them, are economically and technologically stimulating. Or, to put it another way, "Necessity is the mother of invention."

...There are good reasons to believe that crying wolf is exactly what the brightest innovators ought to be doing, and not only in response to the challenge of climate change. As a general matter, high anxiety will lead to more intense pursuit of innovation.

[The Production Crunch](#)

The implications for the world economy are potentially catastrophic. The world is not running out of oil, but it will run out of production capacity if the national companies, the new rule makers in this business, don't invest. Already, the petroleum industry is far more fragmented than it was a few years ago. Countries with large resources have an obligation to the world economy to develop their oil, not just cash checks. If they don't, the world will be unable to meet surging Asian demand. Oil-based kleptocracies will be strengthened, making these countries even less stable. The recent elections in Nigeria are an egregious example.

[U.S. nuclear revival begins with restart of TVA's oldest reactor](#)

Closed since 1985, TVA's oldest reactor was the scene of a major fire sparked by a candle three decades ago. It has been reborn as a modern 1,200-megawatt atomic generator capable of lighting 650,000 homes.

[It isn't over yet for Lord Browne](#)

His bullish refusal to accept that oil is in terminal decline may prove still more haunting than his lies to a judge.

[Nigerian gunmen seize British oil worker](#)

Gunmen seized a British oil worker from a rig operating off the Nigerian coast in a dawn attack Saturday, a company spokesman said.

Work was suspended on the rig and 23 people left on board unharmed were safely taken to shore, said Guy Cantwell, a spokesman for Houston-based Transocean Inc. He said the worker was a subcontractor on the rig, which was drilling on behalf of the Nigerian oil company ConOil.

[Japan gives \\$2.1B to stem climate change](#)

Japan pledged up to \$2.1 billion in aid Sunday to the Asian Development Bank to combat global climate change and promote greener investment in the region.

[Mediterranean nations face up to threat of climate change](#)

Global warming threatens to wreak economic havoc across the Mediterranean basin, warned scientists from 62 research institutes who have banded together to study the regional consequences of climate change and propose ways to adapt.

Mark **June 9** on your calendars: The [World Naked Bike Ride](#) to protest oil dependency hits the northern hemisphere. *"Less gas, more ass."*



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