



## DrumBeat: June 28, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on June 28, 2007 - 9:12am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Lester R. Brown: Losing Soil](#)

In 1938, Walter Lowdermilk, a senior official in the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, traveled abroad to look at lands that had been cultivated for thousands of years, seeking to learn how these older civilizations had coped with soil erosion. He found that some had managed their land well, maintaining its fertility over long stretches of history, and were thriving. Others had failed to do so and left only remnants of their illustrious pasts.

In a section of his report entitled "The Hundred Dead Cities," he described a site in northern Syria, near Aleppo, where ancient buildings were still standing in stark isolated relief, but they were on bare rock. During the seventh century, the thriving region had been invaded, initially by a Persian army and later by nomads out of the Arabian Desert. In the process, soil and water conservation practices used for centuries were abandoned. Lowdermilk noted, "Here erosion had done its worst....if the soils had remained, even though the cities were destroyed and the populations dispersed, the area might be re-peopled again and the cities rebuilt, but now that the soils are gone, all is gone."

### [John Tjepkema: Oil prices may spiral even higher](#)

Warning! In spite of the jump in the price of gas and heating oil over the past few years, prices may go much higher. Demand is increasing, while new supplies are limited and becoming more expensive to produce. After the energy crisis of the '70s, new oil supplies were developed and we enjoyed 30 years of low-cost energy. This is not likely to happen again, and it is very possible that prices will increase, perhaps even sharply, rather than decrease.

### [This planet ain't big enough for the 6,500,000,000](#)

Behind the climate crisis lies a global issue that no one wants to tackle: do we need radical plans to reduce the world's population?

### [Nigeria - Crude oil: Not a renewable resource](#)

Other resources have been completely abandoned for crude oil which incidentally is today the mainstay of the nation's economy. One is more disturbed by the ugly fact that the technical expertise required for exploration and exploitation of these resources largely depends on foreigners. What is also certain is that this resource will not last forever; it is not perennial, it surely will get dried up someday.

### [US Energy Secretary: Co Litigation Over Venezuela Projects Likely](#)

ConocoPhillips and Exxon Mobil Corp. likely will sue after abandoning their Orinoco oil projects under pressure from Venezuela, U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman said Wednesday.

Bodman also reiterated concerns that Venezuelan crude-oil shipments to the U.S. will be limited following the U.S. companies' pullout.

### [Chavez: Venezuela, Russia remain strategic partners](#)

"Russia and Venezuela remain strategic partners in the energy sector, and this visit should serve to strengthen this cooperation," Chavez said at the opening ceremony of the Simon Bolivar Cultural Center in Moscow on Thursday.

"Lukoil is already in Venezuela, and Mr. Bush doesn't like it," Chavez said.

As a case in point, Chavez recalled the drop in oil prices several years ago. "However, thanks to cooperation between OPEC, Russia and Norway, which is not an OPEC member, we prevented sales of oil at ridiculous prices," Chavez said.

### [It's not too late to change world](#)

Here we are, fully aware that the civilization we have created is wildly unsustainable, and yet we refuse to adapt. Though the appetite for change is growing, governments and business would have us believe we simply can't afford to be smart.

But as Gregory Greene's new movie, *Escape From Suburbia*, makes clear, we can't afford not to change.

### [Practical responses to peak oil](#)

For those who came in late, it is increasingly clear that global oil reserves are reaching the point where half has been used up, called "peak oil". After this point supply will no longer meet demand, and prices will rise increasingly steeply until oil becomes inaccessible.

## [India's Emissions May be Higher Due to Dams - Study](#)

India's greenhouse gas emissions could be 40 percent higher than official estimates if methane released from dams is taken into account, according to a new study.

## [Earth, wind, solar fire fuel India future](#)

Last week, a report released by the United Nations Environment Program said global investment in renewable energy, especially solar, wind and biofuel, rose from US\$80 billion in 2005 to \$100 billion last year, with an especially high rate of growth in developing countries such as India, China and Brazil. Renewable-energy investments in developing countries accounted for 21% of the total.

## [Life After Oil Is Coming...But Will We Be Ready?](#)

The year is 2040. Symbolic of Edmonton's rust-belt economy, electric cars whiz by an abandoned, derelict Refinery Row, although there are plans to turn part of the old complex into a petroleum heritage site. In a nearby run-down cafe, Chad and John talk about the boom years of their youth. They recall the time before Alberta got left behind, as governments and consumers worldwide turned away from dwindling oil and coal energy sources in a mass response to global warming and other environmental concerns. They discuss the time before downtown Calgary became an abandoned shell of empty buildings, before Fort McMurray turned into a ghost town, before so many of Alberta's youth moved to Atlantic Canada to take plentiful jobs in the red-hot tidal-power industry. "We never thought Alberta's boom would end," says John. "Yeah," replies Chad, looking philosophical. "But the Stone Age didn't end because we ran out of stones."

## [When John Carlson is wrong](#)

Hey, John, I have news for you: there is a finite supply of oil on Earth and we are going to run out of it! If the demand for oil continues at the present rate, the world will need 140 million barrels a day by 2035.

A decline in oil production is on the horizon, and when it does get here (as it undeniably will), there will be very little time for us to react.

## [Norsk Hydro Dismisses Reports of Ormen Lange Phase 2 Overruns](#)

Norsk Hydro (NHY) Wednesday shrugged off press reports that the cost of the second phase of its Ormen Lange gas project had overrun by as much as \$2.9 billion, saying a final development plan wasn't ever decided.

..."Contractor costs over the last year-and-a-half have increased, which is a worldwide thing," said Hydro spokesman Halvor Molland.

### [New Delhi hosts IPI talks on Iran gas pipeline](#)

Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri has said that his country urgently requires natural gas to overcome the current energy crisis, and could not understand public objections to the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline, which would go a long way in ameliorating the shortfall.

### [Climate and energy major threats to European agriculture, conference finds](#)

The starting point of the event was the outcome of a foresight process carried out by the EU's Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR). A Foresight Expert Group, set up in June 2006, developed scenarios based on the factors most likely to disrupt European agriculture over the next 20 years.

### [Iran's Black Market Bull Takes Off](#)

As petrol station managers tried to institute what was literally an eleventh-hour recalibration of their pumps, rigging them to shut off after a certain amount is pumped (though I wonder, how would each pump tally a monthly aggregate for each driver?), panicked queues formed.

Some pictures are visible on reform journalist's Ruzbeh Mir-Ebrahimi's website, here: <http://www.shabnameha.net/spip.php?article394>. Twenty-seven-year-old blogger Mehdi Mohseni wrote that the "last minute announcement of the start of the rationing caused a predictable psychological shock in society." "However," he adds, "one must admit that an important step has been taken toward the efficient use of energy."

### [House Votes to Maintain Offshore Drilling Limits](#)

The House rejected two attempts to lift sections of the moratorium on oil and gas drilling on the outer continental shelf.

### [Rejecting the Real Snake Oil](#)

It seems Learys thinks small non-profit groups like ours -- the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas/USA -- are in cahoots with the oil companies, joined at the hip in a conspiracy to hype the "fabricated drama of peak oil" in order to drive up oil prices and profits. This is a delusional notion with zero substance that deserves no further

comment.

### [No Short Supply of Freaking Doom!](#)

He reveals the problem so elegantly, almost Newtonian, when he explains, "Free money with which to buy energy equals free energy, and free energy does not occur in nature."

And how to explain that it IS occurring right now? He easily brushes me off, like he would some pesky fly buzzing around his head, by saying, "This must therefore be a transient condition. When the flow of energy snaps back toward equilibrium, much of the U.S. economy will be forced to shut down."

### [Innovation Keeps Prudhoe Bay Going Beyond Expectations](#)

If Rip van Winkle had been an oil worker who dozed off at Prudhoe Bay in June 1977 and awoke the same day 30 years later, he would be flabbergasted.

When Rip and his buddies turned the valve three decades ago, on June 20, 1977, starting the first flow of oil into the newly completed Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, most Alaskans and even many oil workers were of the opinion that the North Slope oil fields would be depleted and shut down by now.

### [Fun with Density and Transit Statistics](#)

Conventional wisdom holds that the U.S. is too spread out for workable mass transportation except in a few high-density cities. ...Is that accurate?

### [Iran's oil restrictions 'a warning for Australia'](#)



Dr Bezdek says the events in Iran provide a warning for Australians.

"Even though they're probably temporary and are indeed self-induced, they may just be

a tiny precursor of what's in store for the world as we approach peak oil and petrol shortages occur and prices increase and people are not able to get the petrol they require," he said.

### [Oil Workers in 6 Brazilian States Approve Strike in July](#)

Oil workers in six states for state-run oil firm Petroleo Brasileiro SA (PBR), or Petrobras, have voted to go on strike in July, Brazil's main Oil Workers' Federation said Wednesday.

### [Ireland: Stuck at crossroads . . . without fuel](#)

IRELAND will be one of the most exposed European economies to future carbon fuel shortages with a staggering 70pc of Irish electricity generation set to be derived from natural gas supplies.

The warning came as the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas (ASPO) previewed their landmark carbon fuel conference next September.

### [NYC power outage jams six subway lines](#)

A power outage on Wednesday briefly brought some of New York's busiest subway trains to a halt, forced the Metropolitan Museum of Art to close and left tens of thousands in the dark on a sweltering afternoon.

### [After Venezuela, ConocoPhillips May Redouble Canada Efforts](#)

Venezuela's intransigence on its challenging crude-oil projects may send ConocoPhillips' into the arms of Canada's oil sands.

Venezuela confirmed Tuesday that ConocoPhillips would exit the Orinoco river basin, home to ventures that produce low-quality, or heavy, oil, after the Houston-based energy company refused the terms covering a new ownership structure for its projects. ExxonMobil Corp. also said it wasn't able to reach agreement with Venezuela.

The ramifications for oil markets may be far-reaching. Venezuela's oil output has been in steady decline, and it's unlikely that the state-owned oil company, newly instated as operator of the Orinoco projects, has the access to technology and project-management prowess to turn the trend around.

### [Kremlin lays claim to huge chunk of oil-rich North Pole](#)

It is already the world's biggest country, spanning 11 time zones and stretching from Europe to the far east. But yesterday Russia signalled its intention to get even bigger by announcing an audacious plan to annex a vast 460,000 square mile chunk of the frozen and ice-encrusted Arctic.

According to Russian scientists, there is new evidence backing Russia's claim that its northern Arctic region is directly linked to the North Pole via an underwater shelf.

### [Bolivia: Four Companies Operating Under New Contracts](#)

Four of the 12 hydrocarbons companies that signed contracts with Bolivia's government are operating under the new deals, according to hydrocarbons and energy minister Carlos Villegas.

The government forced foreign companies to sign the contracts - of which 37 are for production and seven for exploration - to give the state a larger take of hydrocarbons assets as part of President Evo Morales' nationalization program.

### [Cannon lashes out at Dems for oil shale delay](#)

Rep. Chris Cannon charged Wednesday that the House had "put the brakes" on oil shale development in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming by passing a measure to prohibit more permits until an in-depth study was completed.

### [Congress wants U.S. coal industry destroyed: exec](#)

A senior coal company executive on Wednesday lambasted U.S. lawmakers for proposing caps on emissions blamed for global warming, saying the Democrats were out to destroy America's coal industry.

### [Pemex Sets Oil Output Goal of 3.1 Mln Barrels a Day](#)

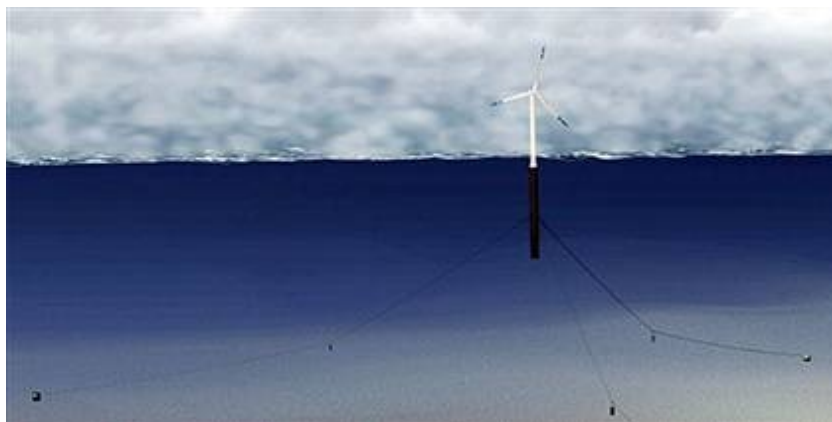
Petroleos Mexicanos, the third- biggest oil supplier to the U.S., set a goal of producing an average of 3.1 million barrels of crude oil per day until 2012, even as output at its largest oil field declines.

Pemex, as Mexico's oil monopoly is known, won't spare any expense to optimize the production of Cantarell, the offshore oil field where output declined by 12 percent last year, to help keep production from slipping under 3.1 million barrels per day, said Chief Executive Officer Jesus Reyes Heróles.

## [Qatari Doubts Concept of Gas Cartel](#)

Qatar will seek cooperation with Russia in the natural gas industry, but the tiny energy-rich Gulf state sees "difficulties" in forming a gas cartel similar to OPEC, Qatar's oil minister said Wednesday.

## [Floating wind turbines? 2009 could see first](#)



Floating wind turbines would represent a technological breakthrough for offshore power generation, which has had to rely on shallow sites for turbines installed on the seabed.

## [Waste Management to tap landfill methane](#)

Waste Management Inc., the nation's largest garbage hauler and landfill operator, plans to spend roughly \$400 million over the next five years building facilities at 60 landfills to convert methane gas to electricity, its most ambitious renewable energy project to date.

## [Desertification threat to global stability: U.N. study](#)

Desertification could drive tens of millions of people from their homes, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and central Asia, a U.N. study warned on Thursday.

People displaced by desertification put new strains on natural resources and on other societies nearby and threaten international instability, the 46-page study by the U.N. University showed.

## [China, ONGC, Pertamina Iraq Contracts to be Amended](#)

Iraq's top oil and gas advisor said Wednesday that oil contracts signed during the Saddam era by China, Vietnam, India and Indonesia would be amended within the



framework of the country's proposed oil law.



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