



## The Bullroarer - Sunday 13 April 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on April 13, 2008 - 12:30am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

The Rural - [FARMERS ATTACK FERTILISER PRICING](#)

Fertiliser suppliers and farmers made the claims of market distortion in submissions to the senate inquiry headed by Junee Senator Bill Heffernan, which is investigating possible cartel behaviour in the fertiliser and chemical industries. While not wanting to pre-empt the inquiry's conclusion, Mr Heffernan said the submissions showed there was a discrepancy between fertiliser prices and costs.

"I think it'd be fair to say prices have been based on what market can bear rather than on the cost of production," Mr Heffernan said. "We've heard tales of grievance and received a number of submissions of commercial in confidence," he said. "Farmers are sick of being price takers and not price makers." The price of fertiliser products has spiralled in the last year, with the majority going up by 100 to 200 per cent and some products rising as much as 400 per cent.

SMH - [Virgin hit by fuel costs, plans higher levy](#)

Virgin Blue Holdings, Australia's second-biggest airline, expects full-year net profit to more than halve to around \$100 million as it faces higher fuel costs and greater competition. Virgin Blue said high fuel prices meant it was likely to incur an extra fuel charge of \$120 million in 2008/09, and would likely introduce a further fuel levy of about \$10-\$12 per one-way fare from May 1, 2008. The carrier said unrelenting rises in aviation fuel costs continued to be a key concern, with fuel now comprising more than 32 per cent of the company's operating expenses. In recent weeks, jet fuel prices have again escalated to record levels with the current spot price in excess of \$US135 per barrel, the airline said.

The Nelson Mail - [Plugging into 'zero energy'](#)

Imagine monthly power bills so small, you are excited when they arrive. Or better still, no power bills at all. Sally Kidson discovers that it can be done and is being done, in the heart of Nelson, in two very different approaches to the green building challenge. She also looks at some of the ideas, old and new, for reducing your home power bill.

KEVIN Rudd has ended his Beijing visit with a warning to the two global giants of the coal trade, Australia and China, to do more to address climate change or face "alarming" water shortages. At a Beijing coal-fired power plant, which is the first to trial Australian CSIRO technology to capture carbon dioxide emissions, the Prime Minister cited the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, which warns of significant threats to Australia, including an increase in mosquito-borne diseases and dislocation of agriculture in southeast Australia.

Australia is the world's largest coal producer and China the world's largest coal consumer with an accelerating demand to meet its growing energy needs. Mr Rudd said the report brought the threat of climate change and its links with coal-fired power into sharp focus, but the pilot project capturing carbon emissions was an important start.

Courier Mail - [Gold not so glittering](#)

Mr van Kersen also warned against the impact of rising costs – up 24 per cent in the past year as higher fuel, spare parts and labour costs impacted. That theme was taken up by veteran industry analyst, Peter Strachan who said "peak oil" posed a major threat to the industry. Mr Strachan said oil-reliant mechanisation would stem any future growth in gold production volumes. "We have spent the past three to four decades developing technology, science, chemistry, advanced geological models, satellite imagery and the like to drive gold output by increasingly expanding the gold extraction footprint across lower and lower grade mineralisation," he said.

Despite these efforts, gold discovery peaked seven years ago. "Gold's future is now firmly locked into big-ticket issues such as climate change, peak oil, water, fuel prices and security. Oil will be the main weakness in the chain," Mr Strachan said. "What the gold sector has yet to accommodate is that this has huge implications for goldminers."

SMH - [Nuclear dump: family seeks answers on deaths](#)

WHEN both their parents died of cancer in their 30s, within nine months of each other, and with no family history of the disease, Katie and Greg McGrath thought it was a tragic coincidence. Nobody had told them their family home in Nelson Parade, Hunters Hill, was next to an unmarked radioactive waste dump. "But it's just too much of a coincidence," says Ms McGrath, now 36. "I now genuinely believe it was related to what occurred on that site, to what's under the ground there.

The Australian - [Clough wins \\$260m Apache gas project](#)

The Apache Devil Creek Development Project comprises the engineering, procurement and construction of the onshore facilities for the processing and transportation of gas reserves from the Reindeer field, about 80km from the port of Dampier, Clough said.

The Australian - [Chile crisis powers copper's rise](#)

THE copper price is predicted to continue rising after breaking through the \$US4/lb mark for the first time as the Chile power crisis deepens. Chile's domestic users are bracing for possible cuts to their supply because a drought has caused dams feeding hydro-electric generators to run critically low and Argentina continues to deny the country gas supplies. Chile produces about 40 per cent of the world's copper and the power crisis is threatening production of the base metal at a time of insatiable demand, from China in particular.

SMH - [Fuel scheme to go national](#)

The Federal Government may be on the verge of introducing a national FuelWatch scheme, which Petrol Commissioner Pat Walker says could save motorists up to five cents a litre. News Ltd newspapers have reported that sources within the NRMA and the Australian Automobile Association say the FuelWatch scheme could be announced as early as next week, to coincide with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's return from overseas. Mr Walker has argued for a national scheme based on the one he developed in Western Australia, saying that system saved WA motorists two cents a litre at the bowser.

SMH - [Turnbull backs tax cuts from surpluses](#)

FUTURE budget surpluses and any windfalls from the auction of emissions trading permits should be returned to the public through tax cuts, shadow treasurer Malcolm Turnbull said yesterday. Mr Turnbull has hired respected economist Henry Ergas to review the tax system, arguing that the sale of permits from an emissions trading scheme - expected to be fully operational by 2010 - will provide a rare opportunity for tax reform for the first time since the introduction of the GST. "If you assume two-thirds of our emissions are covered and if you assume a per-tonne cost of \$25 ... that's \$10 billion there, straight up," Mr Turnbull said. "A significant part of that revenue should be used to reduce other taxes."

Sunshine Coast Daily - [Dammed if we do'](#)

Global warming campaigner Steve Posselt shakes his head at the stupidity. A civil engineer who has devoted his working life to the water industry and wrote his thesis on dam design, Steve is simply staggered by the government's plans to flood the Mary Valley. The Traveston dam is an abomination, he said. Economically and environmentally, it defies logic.

Cleantech.com - [UK waste wood going to waste](#)

A recent report from New Zealand said biomass could be the answer to a bulk of that country's future energy needs. The New Zealand study said purpose-grown energy

forests, if planted today, could meet all of the country's future transport fuel and heat energy needs, without threatening the country's important agricultural industry.

frogblog - [The end of Petrodollars](#)

I wrote a huge post yesterday trying to tie up a whole lot of interconnected issues, so I'll try not to go on so long again today. Luckily Celsias has already done it for me with a very full article that covers the links between the traditional trade of oil in US dollars (also known as petrodollars), the arrival of peak oil, and the impending crunch that is about to hit both the US and global economies.

In a nutshell the story goes something like this. The US dollar is the world's default currency. Most US dollars no longer reside in the US, but in other countries as part of the US's international debt. But the US dollar is not tied to anything - it stopped linking to gold reserves 40 years ago. Now it floats along on the shared assumption that it is worth something. Part of that assumption draws from the fact that most of the world's economy is based on oil and oil is traded in US dollars. But possibly not for much longer.

As the US dollar falls many oil mining nations (as Celsias says 'people talk about oil 'production', but it's not produced, any more than gold is produced. It is mined.') are trying to transition towards trading in much healthier euros. The danger for the US economy if this happens is that the US dollar could collapse like a New Zealand cricket team middle order.

frogblog - [A saga about bees, biosecurity and GE](#)

There was an article in the Gisborne Herald over the weekend where Gisborne beekeepers argued that the Government is sacrificing New Zealand's environment and biosecurity in order to promote free trade. Beekeepers were protesting about the Biosecurity and Hazardous Substances Legislation Amendment Bill, which passed last week despite opposition from the Greens and the Maori Party.

frogblog - [So you think climate change won't affect you?](#)

Then it's probably time you read the Herald's story Climate change could see pubs run dry - Niwa. First up a pessimistic quote from one of those pesky, killjoy scientists, who probably drinks wine anyway.

Peak Energy - [Post Peak Transport ?](#)

Peak Energy - [The Bakken Oil Formation: Big Or Boondoggle ?](#)

Peak Energy - [More On The Bakken Oil Formation](#)

Peak Energy - [Bakken Boomtown ?](#)



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