



## DrumBeat: September 4, 2008

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 4, 2008 - 10:12am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Gulf Coast Faces Sea Level-Sinkage Double Whammy](#)

Hurricane Gustav has been a harsh reminder that it's only the whim of a hurricane track, a few miles this way or that, which can make the difference between a close call and another Katrina-like catastrophe for New Orleans and other Gulf Coast communities.

With the one-two punch being delivered by sinking land and rising sea levels, and with every hurricane threatening a knock-out blow, it's getting harder to avoid that very unpopular question: How much longer can these coastal communities survive?

To get the answer Discovery News caught up with four Gulf Coast researchers and posed the question to them. Their answers differ, but they agree on one thing: The long-term prospects are not good.

"This is a discussion that should have occurred after Katrina," said Roy Dokka of Louisiana State University. Dokka has been outspoken about the measurable rates of subsidence -- the process by which land slips below sea level -- in New Orleans and other coastal areas. His work indicates that larger geological forces, far beyond the control of humans, are causing parts of New Orleans to sink.

### [Behind Cheney's Tough Talk in Georgia](#)

Speaking in Georgia on Thursday, Cheney slammed Russia's "illegitimate, unilateral attempt" to redraw the country's borders, and promised ongoing support for Georgia's efforts to join NATO. The Vice President's trip was accompanied by a \$1 billion aid package announced in Washington Wednesday, for the purpose of rebuilding Georgia's shattered economy and infrastructure. Still, the Russian campaign in Georgia has dramatically altered the geopolitical equation in the Caucasus, and it may take more than Cheney's signature tough talk to stiffen the spines of allies chastened by the Georgian experience. For many of those leaning Westward among former Soviet satellites, the lesson of Georgia has been the inability of the U.S. to save an ally emboldened to challenge Moscow once Russia sent in the tanks.

### [Political Will, Political Won't](#)

The accepted wisdom of today's environmental reform movement is founded on two core assumptions. The first is that most of the technical solutions we need to address the world's various crises are available, or at least could be swiftly developed by sufficiently intelligent, hard-working people. The second assumption is that all that's lacking for a successful outcome is the political will to put these technical solutions into effect.

Whether the discussion turns to replacing coal-fired power plants with wind turbines and using electric cars instead of gas-driven SUVs, converting industrial agricultural practices to organic permaculture, or reversing the decline of ocean life through international regulations, it is an article of faith in the reform movement that we know what we need to do and all that's lacking is a sufficiently visionary leader to put more planet-friendly solutions in place.

Both those assumptions ignore significant aspects of the situation – aspects that must be addressed for the envisioned reforms to be successful. This article examines those two assumptions with an eye to uncovering the confounding issues.

#### [Entergy to restore most Louisiana power in a week](#)

Entergy officials said transmission service has been restored to 11 of 12 refineries in its territory and enough power should be available to the refineries to allow them to restart operations.

#### [American Airlines may cut 469 jobs at airports](#)

Mark Burdette, American's vice president of employee relations, said in a letter last week to the Transport Workers Union, that fewer people would be needed to operate the airline as the operating schedule is cut due to high oil prices and the softening economy.

#### [Angry Argentine commuters torch train in rush hour](#)

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters) - Furious rail commuters in Argentina set fire to a train on Thursday in anger over delays during the morning rush hour.

Television images showed black smoke and flames engulfing the train at the station of Merlo, in the western suburbs of the capital, Buenos Aires. At nearby Castelar, passengers hurled stones at the ticket office and blocked the rails.

#### ["Robin Hoods" steal at the store, give to the poor?](#)

ATHENS (Reuters) - Greek anarchists stormed a supermarket on Thursday and

handed out food for free in the latest of a wave of raids provoked by soaring consumer prices.

### [Giving Your Hybrid an Extra Charge](#)

Chris Cox of Derry, N.H., got tired of waiting for the electric car of the future. In August, he took matters into his own hands and had his 2008 Toyota Prius converted into a plug-in hybrid, which doubled its gas mileage — Cox now gets up to 100 miles per gallon for 30 to 40 miles at a stretch. Although the Prius is already a hybrid gas-electric model, the additional battery that Cox had installed enables him to travel more than 20 miles on all-electric power (compared to just two miles without it) before the gas engine kicks in.

### [Dutch Brewers Say Enthusiasm for Biofuels Waning](#)

THE HAGUE - Enthusiasm for biofuels is receding and European legislators have become more sensitive to the needs of the food industry, hit by soaring commodities prices, the head of the Dutch brewers' association (CBK) says.

"I am not as afraid as last year that vast areas will be planted with rape seed, replacing grain crops," Jack Verhoek told Reuters in an interview on Tuesday. "I think wisdom has returned."

### [Bodman Says EIA Data Is 'Reliable,' Unaware of Probe](#)

(Bloomberg) -- U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman today defended the reliability of market data supplied to the Energy Information Administration and said he was unaware of a probe of participants providing false information.

The Wall Street Journal reported today that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission is examining whether certain players provided false data to the EIA, the statistical arm of the Energy Department, to benefit their trading positions. Bodman spoke to reporters after giving a speech in Washington.

The agency would not confirm or deny the investigation. Earlier this year the commission took the unusual step of announcing a nationwide investigation into the trading, purchase, shipping and storage of crude oil.

### [Big Three bailout may be around corner](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney.com) -- Plunging auto sales, high gas prices and election year politics could help convince Congress to approve a \$50 billion loan package to embattled U.S. automakers that Detroit's Big Three claim is key to their future success.

## [As prices plunge, OPEC faces dilemma on oil production](#)

NEW YORK: The decline in oil prices in recent weeks has been a welcome relief for consumers and a rare piece of positive news in an otherwise bleak economic landscape. But for oil producers, increasingly accustomed to rising revenues, falling prices are fast turning into a cause for concern - if not quite panic.

## [OPEC to Pump Record Amounts as \\$109 Oil Stunts Growth](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC, the supplier of 40 percent of the world's oil, will probably keep producing at a record pace as \$109-a-barrel crude squeezes the global economy.

The 13-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries will reject calls from Venezuela and Iran to trim supplies at its Sept. 9 meeting in Vienna, according to 29 of the 32 energy analysts surveyed by Bloomberg.

``They want to prevent a build-up of crude stocks, which rules out an increase, but don't want to send prices skyrocketing by announcing a cut," said Mike Wittner, head of oil research at Societe Generale SA in London. ``OPEC won't take any formal action."

## [Gas guzzling temptation as prices fall](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Although it was a painful summer for most drivers, it could have been worse had Americans not cut back on their gasoline consumption. Now, as summer ends and gasoline prices fall, drivers may be tempted to resume their gas guzzling habits.

## [How Smarter Cars Could Power the Future](#)

Stopping, starting and accelerating your car or SUV can burn unnecessary amounts of fuel while driving. To combat this known challenge, two new technologies have recently come out to provide a greener driving experience.

Nissan's Eco Pedal pushes back on a driver's lead foot, while Audi's Travolution tells a driver how fast to go to make the next green light.

## [Amid bluster over energy, Senate cuts a deal: \*GOP gets some drilling, nuclear, Democrats get wind, solar incentives\*](#)

High energy prices have become a bitterly contested political issue. Republicans are bashing Democrats for standing in the way of drilling for more oil and gas at home, while

Democrats retort that their rivals are misleading the American public by saying that such drilling would significantly lower prices. Yet amid the partisan bomb-throwing over America's future energy policy, Washington is actually making a rare effort to forge a compromise.

Over the summer a group of five GOP and five Democratic senators, dubbed the Gang of 10, hammered out a comprehensive energy proposal. And now, after taking withering heat from both left and right, the idea is gaining support.

### [US diplomat says trans-Caspian pipeline viable](#)

A senior U.S. diplomat says a Western-backed gas pipeline from energy-rich Turkmenistan across the Caspian Sea to the European market remains a viable proposition despite the emergence of rival routes linking the country to Russia and China.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs George Krol said Thursday in a visit to the Turkmen capital that the immediate focus will be on investing in extraction of hydrocarbon resources.

### [Angola, oil-rich but poor, prepares for vote](#)

The paradox of Angola is evident in its crowded capital, where the luxury cars of petro-millionaires lurch along dilapidated roads past piles of garbage and pools of stagnant water.

### [Cheney colleague admits bribery in Halliburton oil deals](#)

A former colleague of the US Vice-President, Dick Cheney, has pleaded guilty to funnelling millions of dollars in bribes to win lucrative contracts in Nigeria for Halliburton, during the period in the Nineties when Mr Cheney ran the giant oil and gas services company.

### [Germany leads 'clean coal' pilot](#)

Beneath the gargantuan grey boiler towers of Schwarze Pumpe power station which pierce the skies of northern Germany, a Lilliputian puzzle of metal boxes and shining canisters is about to mark a moment of industrial history.

This mini power plant is a pilot project for carbon capture and storage (CCS) - the first coal-fired plant in the world ready to capture and store its own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## [The Second Coming of Biofuels](#)

Plant-based fuels have been a big disappointment to date, but new "green biofuels" might fulfill their promise.

## [Solar power companies face end of Spanish subsidies](#)

VALENCIA, Spain: Growth in solar power installations in Italy may not be enough to offset shrinking global demand, Italian industry experts say.

Part of that reduced demand could come in Spain, where solar power companies face a drastic slowdown next year because the government is preparing to sharply reduce subsidies.

## [Toyota Releases "Sustainability Report 2008", Looks to "Liquid Peak"](#)

Concurrent with the release of its annual financial report, Toyota has published *Sustainability Report 2008: Towards a New Future for People, Society, and the Planet*. The report, which is the third since Toyota switched from environmental to sustainability reports in 2006, is structured around three themes: sustainable mobility (products), sustainable plant initiatives (manufacturing), and contributing to the development of a sustainable society—also referred to as "nurturing society."

## [Why won't the candidates debate science?](#)

Despite encouraging direct references to science and technology within speeches delivered at the Democratic National Convention in Denver, the two leading U.S. Presidential candidates still have not engaged in any head-on debate about science.

Gasoline prices remain painfully high, and 39 states are now bracing for water shortages, yet critical questions vital to human well-being have so far failed to grab much of the national limelight.

## [The Question Wall Street is Ignoring but the World Can't: Is Oil Production Falling Faster Than Demand?](#)

Every Wall Street forecast of where oil prices are headed next – up or down – seems to be based solely on the degree of "demand destruction" that can be expected. But what about "supply destruction?" Whatever the level of demand destruction, if supply destruction is greater, oil prices will rise, not fall.



### [Full recovery of Entergy grid weeks away](#)

HOUSTON (Reuters) - Entergy Corp officials were able to restore two critical transmission lines overnight, allowing the state's largest utility to reconnect New Orleans to the statewide power grid, officials said on Wednesday.

The return of two 230-kilovolt lines knocked out by Hurricane Gustav will allow more power to be restored to homes and businesses in New Orleans and communities along the Mississippi River, full recovery of the state's largest utility grid is weeks away, Randy Helmick, Entergy's vice president of transmission and official "storm boss" told reporters on a call Wednesday.

### [U.S. Wind Power Doubles to More Than 20 Gigawatts in Two Years](#)

The amount of wind power that the United States can generate has doubled to more than 20 gigawatts in the last two years, the American Wind Energy Association said Wednesday.

Renewable-energy policies, such as state mandates that require utilities to get a certain amount of their energy from renewable sources, have helped drive the growth of U.S. wind from 10 gigawatts in 2006.

### [Beyond Carbon: Scientists Worry About Nitrogen's Effects](#)

Public discussion of complicated climate change is largely reduced to carbon: carbon emissions, carbon footprints, carbon trading. But other chemicals have large roles in the planet's health, and the one Dr. Giblin is looking for in Arctic mud, one that a growing number of other researchers are also concentrating on, is nitrogen.

In addition to having a role in climate change, nitrogen has a huge, probably more important biological impact through its presence in fertilizer. Peter Vitousek, a Stanford ecologist whose 1994 essay put nitrogen on the environmental map, co-authored a study this summer in the journal Nature that put greater attention on the nitrogen cycle and warned against ignoring it in favor of carbon benefits.

### [Oil riches propel Abu Dhabi onto world map](#)

DUBAI (AFP) - Oil-rich Abu Dhabi, which this week boasted of taking over English football club Manchester City, is pumping billions of petrodollars into investments ranging from fine art to films to Formula One.

Riding on windfalls from record high oil prices, the wealthiest of the United Arab Emirates' seven members is starting to rival Dubai, its glamorous neighbour which has

gained global fame through grandiose projects such as the world's tallest tower and palm tree-shaped man-made islands.

### [OPEC exports rise 110,000 bpd to Sept 20 - analyst](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - OPEC oil exports, excluding Angola and Ecuador, will rise by 110,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the four weeks to Sept. 20, an analyst who tracks future flows said on Thursday.

Seaborne crude exports from 11 OPEC members, including Iraq, will rise to 24.50 million bpd from 24.39 million bpd in the four weeks to Aug. 23, British consultancy Oil Movements said in its latest estimate.

While flows are rising, an increase in supplies from Saudi Arabia that boosted shipments in the summer has now been rolled back, the consultancy said. The extra oil is heading east due to poor demand in the west.

### [Why cheaper oil signals trouble](#)

NEW YORK (Fortune) -- The commodities bubble appears to have popped, but keep the champagne on ice.

Food and energy prices are coming down in part because of a global growth slowdown that could also cool the red hot U.S. export sector - the major bright spot in an economy still struggling with a massive housing bust.

### [Sri Lanka port bunker supplies run low](#)

(LBO) - Bunker oil stocks at Colombo are running low with a pending hand-over of a tank farm by the largest supplier to the port, and fresh stocks only due in mid-September, shipping officials said.

### [Indonesia: Fuel Crisis in Timika and Palu](#)

TEMPO Interactive, Timika: For the past week, it has been difficult for Timika residents to obtain diesel and premium fuel. Meanwhile, Palu has run out of coal that is normally used to supply state-owned electricity company, PLN.

### [Eating Disorder](#)



In the west we might have grown resentful over the cost of our weekly shop, but it's nothing compared to the catastrophic food shortages faced by some developing states. Rising farming costs and decreasing crop yields, caused in part by a switch to biofuels, have driven up the prices of basic foodstuffs, in particular wheat, rice and oil.

### [Pawlak: Poland may use nuclear energy](#)

Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy, Waldemar Pawlak, has announced the Ministry's view on Poland's future energy security. Poland's energy policy plan till 2030 discussed by Waldemar Pawlak at a conference yesterday includes cooperation with Ukraine on nuclear energy, the construction of power plants, supervision over pipeline operators and facilitations in oil storage systems.

### [Honda's Prius-fighter](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Honda Motor Co. unveiled a pure-hybrid concept car Thursday that hopes to go head to head with Toyota's wildly popular Prius.

The carmaker showed images of the Insight that will go on the sale in the United States in the spring, it said. The car, which will be sold only as a hybrid, will be a five-seat hatchback and will be priced "significantly below hybrids available today," Honda said in an announcement.

### [Firewood project gives warm feeling to those in need around South Shore](#)

The Tahoe Firewood Project needs your help.

The project - a nonprofit program that gives free cords of wood to low-income seniors and disabled people throughout the South Shore - has plenty of wood from forest-thinning projects.

But it doesn't have enough people to split the wood and deliver it.

### [South Africa gold production falls 10 percent](#)

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Gold production in the world leading supplier South Africa fell more than 10 percent in the second quarter compared to the same period last year, the industry said Thursday, blaming electricity shortages since the beginning of the year.

A dire fuel shortage caused by poor government planning forced rolling power cuts across the country in the first couple of months of the year. Since February, industries have been limited to 90 percent of their normal power usage.

"The key reason was the national electricity emergency," said a statement by the Chamber of Mines, which represents leading miners. It said the industry continues to bear much of the burden of power shortages and insisted other electricity users must urgently do more to cut power use "given the significant export earnings and employment intensity of mining."

### [S Africa plans to stop blackouts](#)

A massive investment in new energy in South Africa is needed to prevent more power cuts, according to a senior government minister.

The Public Enterprises minister, Alec Erwin said that new power stations must be built, some of them nuclear.

An investment of at least 1 trillion rand (£72bn) was needed to secure a reliable electricity supply, he said.

### [U.S. must increase nuclear power - Energy Minister](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - The United States needs to start generating more of its power from nuclear energy, but will still have to rely on coal and oil for the foreseeable future, the U.S. Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy said on Thursday.

Dennis Spurgeon told a nuclear energy industry conference in London that the era of cheap oil was over and action was needed to tackle an "energy crisis" facing the United States.

### [When is a fundamental a 'fundamental'? Some inconvenient geopolitical truths](#)

But those waiting for NOCs to fill the supply breach by virtue of reserves, could prove to be disappointed. Even in states not running an active 'depletion policy', NOCs will still find it difficult to extract sufficient reserves out of the ground. The point here is not to champion the role of IOCs (who are arguably paying a heavy price for focusing on shareholders rather than exploration for too long). Nor is it to denigrate National Oil Companies whose governance standards often leave much to be desired when operating overseas, and remain politically expedient at home when cutting IOCs in and out of production agreements. But rather, to highlight the fact that without a seismic shift in political capping of developing reserves, we are likely to meet our fourth and final 'inconvenient truth'; namely, that speculation will be the last thing the world needs to worry about as supply-demand fundamentals run headlong into the limits of a 'geopolitical peak'.

### [Pakistan: Power outages again trigger violent protest](#)

PESHAWAR: Peshawarites staged a protest rally and blocked Grand Trunk (GT) Road for traffic Tuesday night against frequent power outages during Iftar and Sehar times.

Experiencing the worst kind of power cuts on first day of the holy month of Ramazan, the angry residents of City Town, Hashtnagri, Chowk Shadi Pir, Ghari Khana and adjacent areas came out on the roads and chanted slogans against the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) and provincial government. They also pelted vehicles with stones, ripped apart signboards and damaged the shutters of several shops to vent anger.

### [Bangladesh: Power-loom workers go on rampage, set ablaze 12 cars](#)

Hundreds of power-loom workers in Narsingdi forced into Chouala Palli Bidyut Samity-2 compound in protest at frequent power cuts, setting 12 vehicles on fire and damaging other valuables yesterday morning.

Around 700 workers rampaged through the power office at about 5:00am as production disruptions due to frequent power outages affected their wages, witnesses said.

The workers had been demanding uninterrupted power supply for the last two months. Earlier on August 24, they laid siege to the power office and put up barricades on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway to press home their demand, sources said.

### [Mexico: Protests in Juchitan against wind companies](#)

For more than seven months, we, communal land owners from Juchitan de Zaragoza, Union Hidalgo and Xadani, have dealt with the irresponsibility of the civil judge of Juchitan de Zaragoza, Oaxaca, in front of whom we've placed more than 120 claims for the nullification of contracts we were deceived into signing with transnational wind energy corporations.

### [In England, solar power makes little sense](#)

OK, so I have tried to counter some of the hype with economics, but the article from England shows another analog problem with the suitability of solar power. If you are at northern latitudes in a country with a lot of cloud cover, then that also changes the economics of solar. Hey, I am all for PV solar, it helps my friend and my town and my industry. But you have to have the intellectual honesty to appreciate the advice of the article that points out that in England, you would be better off putting in insulation with money you would have spent on solar.

## [Cheaper Gas, Calmer Debate](#)

More evidence that American voters have the attention span of a hummingbird: The sudden drop in crude oil prices already appears to be reducing the potency of energy policy as a Presidential campaign issue. However, a somewhat lower profile for oil might not be such a bad thing when it comes to progress on crafting a serious energy policy, given that a free-for-all political campaign is hardly the best venue for hammering out an intelligent compromise.

## [Saudi begins pumping from new 500,000 bpd Khursaniyah field](#)

The world's top oil exporter Saudi Arabia has started pumping crude from the 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) Khursaniyah field, a source at state oil giant Saudi Aramco said on Wednesday. The oilfield is the largest single increment to global oil production capacity for several years. First output was delayed from the scheduled start date in December 2007. "The facility is operational and producing crude," the source said. He was unable to give more details on actual output or when all of Khursaniyah's capacity would be ready to produce. "Its production rates are dependent on our (company's) monthly production targets for each facility," the source said. Khursaniyah will in theory take Saudi Arabia's total production capacity to around 11.8 million bpd from around 11.3 million bpd. Actual sustainable capacity may be slightly lower due to field decline elsewhere.

## [Oil at \\$80 a Barrel?](#)

In recent years, energy traders plus an active hurricane season have usually meant one thing for oil: higher prices. Yet with the departure of Hurricane Gustav, a rally for the embattled greenback is overshadowing new storm systems churning away in the Atlantic and showing how the prospect of a choppy U.S. economy is scaring traders far more these days than turbulent weather.

## [OPEC consensus building for supply cut - PFC](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Consensus is building within OPEC on the need to reduce oil output to prevent a supply overhang and prop up prices, analyst PFC Energy said in a report.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries meets on Sept. 9 in Vienna. The group is pumping more oil than its official output target, largely due to higher output from Saudi Arabia, according to analyst estimates.

## [Saudi cuts light crude price to customers in US and Asia](#)

SINGAPORE/LONDON: The world's top oil exporter, Saudi Arabia, cut the price of its Arab Light crude oil in October to customers in Asia and the US, state oil firm Aramco said yesterday.

Aramco cut the price of Arab Light to Asia by 70¢ a barrel to parity with the Oman/Dubai average and reduced the price to the US by \$1.40 to WTI minus \$5.05, the company said.

### [Michael T. Klare: The Bush Administration Checkmated in Georgia](#)

The recent fighting in the Caucasus is part of a bigger struggle between Moscow and Washington over the energy riches of the Caspian Sea basin.

### [August Auto Sales Flop](#)

Heavy discounting and promotions have failed to attract buyers. Only Nissan reports positive August sales.

### [Australia: Time running out to put case for light rail](#)

He showed a graphic of Sydney suburbs, indicated in red, which were vulnerable for the same reason, but the good news was green belts among the red indicated rail routes, which fully used could halve dependence on cars.

A new era in sustainability in which peak oil production could see petrol rise to \$8 a litre required serious adjustment in transport.

### [Gold, Silver, Economy + More](#)

And then there are the OPEC nations, who, together with US and UK big oil interests, have conspired to create a "peak oil" crisis, despite the fact that we have two centuries worth of untapped domestic oil and gas resources, while not a single domestic petroleum refinery has been built in over thirty years despite mega-profits that could have easily been invested in such refineries to ensure future supply. Yeah, let's blame the environmentalists, whose organizations and lobby groups were all created and funded by big oil and other Illuminist interests, while our nuclear plants were sabotaged and our inventors of efficient and clean methods of producing energy were bought out, threatened or murdered!

### [Nasa scientist appears in court to fan the flames of coal power station row](#)

The Nasa scientist who first drew attention to global warming 20 years ago appeared in a British court yesterday as a key witness in support of climate change activists charged with damaging a power station.

...Prof Hansen, who has spoken out against the Bush administration's stance on global warming, said Britain had a responsibility to take a lead on limiting climate change because it was responsible – owing to its long industrial past – for much of the CO<sub>2</sub> already in the atmosphere. Phasing out coal-burning power stations was crucial in tackling global warming, he told the court.

### [Regulators probing oil supply data: report](#)

(Reuters) - Commodity market regulators are probing whether energy market players are injecting false crude oil supply data into the marketplace, the Wall Street Journal said.

Regulators are concerned that companies may be reporting inventory levels that benefit their own trading positions but may not be accurate, the paper said, citing people familiar with the probe.

### [Deal ends feud over BP's Russia venture](#)

MOSCOW (AFP) - British and Russian shareholders on Thursday announced an end to a months-long feud for control of joint oil venture TNK-BP, in a move hailed by the Kremlin as a positive signal to foreign investors.

The agreement, which envisages the departure of British chief executive Robert Dudley but no shift in the balance of ownership, is "a sensible means of resolving a situation that could not continue without causing serious damage" to TNK-BP, BP chief executive Tony Hayward said in a statement.

### [Opec invites Brazil to join group](#)

Iran has invited Brazil to join oil producers' cartel Opec, Brazil's energy and mines minister has said.

The move comes after Brazil recently announced finding major sources of offshore oil, prompting significant international attention.

Brazil is considering the invite. Its National Energy Policy Council has the final word on whether it wants to join.



[Oil to weaken until OPEC gives policy signal: Barclays](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Oil prices are likely to remain under pressure until OPEC gives a clear signal on pricing/production policy, Barclays Capital said on Thursday.

"We suspect that prices will continue to test the downside until key oil producers provide more of an indication as to what will drive their policy, in terms of stating what is a fair and defensible price," the bank said in research note.

[Oil Producers May Compel Opec to Cut Supply](#)

There are indications that major oil producers may compel Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to cut supply when the group meets on September 9, in Vienna, Austria.

[Kazakh Kashagan might start oil production in 2014](#)

ASTANA (Reuters) - Commercial production at Kazakhstan's giant Kashagan oil field is expected to start later than the agreed 2013 launch date, a Kazakh oil industry official said on Thursday.

Tumir Kulibayev, head of the influential KazEnergy association whose members include major Kazakh oil companies including state-owned KazMunaiGas, said the delay would be technical and would not mean a breach of the contract.

"They are talking about October 2013, but it would be impossible to launch (the production) during the winter so it will be 2014," Kulibayev told an energy conference.

[Huge power outages; some production](#)

GOOD NEWS: A limited amount of oil and gas production has been restarted in the Gulf of Mexico with growing evidence that the nation's energy complex avoided a disaster in Hurricane Gustav. Damage also appeared limited at the crucial Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, which handles about 12 percent of the nation's crude imports.

BAD NEWS: More than a million customers in the region are without power, including some refineries that process oil into gasoline and diesel. In Louisiana, New Orleans and Baton Rouge were particularly hard hit.

[Helicopter strikes oil rig off Dubai coast; 7 dead](#)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - Oil companies say a helicopter carrying contractors has

crashed into an oil-drilling platform off the coast of Dubai, killing seven people.

Petrofac and Dubai Petroleum say the helicopter operated by Dubai-based Aerogulf Services struck the deck of the Maersk rig during takeoff at about 8:20 p.m. Wednesday. A fire then broke out aboard the rig, which is located in the Rashid field about 40 miles (70 kilometers) offshore.

### [Poverty fears over wind power](#)

Half a million people could be pushed into fuel poverty by the UK's drive for wind power, the government's former chief scientific adviser has said.

Sir David King said: "If we overdo wind we are going to put up the price of electricity and that means more people will fall into the fuel poverty trap."

### [Gas prices confine sick people](#)

Sick Americans who travel far or frequently to get medical treatment are skipping or delaying appointments, leaving support groups and applying for grants to defray high gasoline prices.

People who visit the doctor multiple times each week or month, such as cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy and people needing dialysis, have been hardest hit.

At the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, some skin cancer patients are delaying appointments because they can't afford gasoline, patient service representative Nicole Vliet says.

"It could be just a follow-up appointment, or it could affect their treatment," she says. "I really started to notice it in April when prices started to go up."

### [British Car Market Runs Out Of Gas](#)

New car registrations in Britain fell 18.6% in the year to August, signalling the weakest market since 1966.

### [British military reacting to climate change](#)

LONDON - Climate change is forcing the British military to tailor its strategy and equipment for more extreme weather, a junior defense minister said Wednesday.

Under-Secretary of State for Defense Derek Twigg said the British military was working on heat-resistant medical supplies and ways to reduce the weight carried by its soldiers

in anticipation of hotter battlefields.

"We've moved beyond merely theorizing whether climate change has ramifications for defense. We know it will," Twigg told a conference on climate change and security at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

### [World's strongest hurricanes could be getting stronger](#)

The strongest hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean have become more intense due to global warming over the past 25 years, according to a new study in Wednesday's edition of the British journal *Nature*. The findings add fuel to the simmering argument in the meteorological community about the Earth's changing climate, and its relationship to the power of tropical systems worldwide.

Scientists from Florida State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison analyzed satellite data from nearly 2,000 tropical cyclones around the world from 1981 to 2006, and found that the strongest storms are getting stronger, especially over the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.



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