



DrumBeat: December 1, 2008

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[A Shore Thing? Why Offshore Wind Power Will Likely Struggle](#)

Offshore wind power is the Holy Grail of renewable energy: It's clean, abundant, and out of sight. Now that energy security is meshing with environmental concerns inside the White House, is offshore wind power ready to come of age?

Probably not as fast as wind-power boosters would hope. If the economics of onshore wind are tricky enough to give T. Boone Pickens pause, the challenges facing offshore wind are even greater.

Take the new proposal for the world's biggest wind farm by another Texas oil man, peak oil prophet Matt Simmons. His Ocean Energy Institute proposes building a 5,000 megawatt deepwater wind farm in the Gulf of Maine, blessed with some of the world's strongest sustained winds.

The problem is that, as envisioned, the Maine offshore wind farm would be very expensive—and that vision includes some very optimistic assumptions.

[Global Trends 2025](#)

One hopes that the churches take up and address the agenda of thinking proposed by Global Trends 2005. It will demand a kind of moral fortitude and unflinching long look at the real to sustain the kind of long-term planning needed to address the issues of justice, poverty, war, terrorism, global warming and environmental responsibility the trend data seems to cry out for. It will also entail a needed infusion of hope. Sorry, Tip O' Neil, all politics is no longer local! Sorry, American exceptionalists, the United States is no longer the exception! Sorry, determinists, human agency and leadership can still make a profound difference!

[Factors close to home dictate 'fair' oil price](#)

For the first time in almost a decade, Saudi Arabia, the world's oil superpower, has named its price.

In an interview in a Kuwaiti newspaper published on the day of Opec's emergency

meeting last Saturday, King Abdullah said \$75 a barrel was a “fair price” for oil.

Set against this summer’s high of \$147 a barrel, the target might seem modest.

But compared with the current price of \$55, not to mention a historical average closer to \$40, it begins to look rather optimistic from the king’s point of view.

[Oilpatch spending plans soften](#)

CALGARY – Oilpatch players are expected to ring in the new year with more modest budgets, as they grapple with plunging commodity prices and a credit crunch that has made it harder and pricier to finance projects.

[Chevron Postpones Budget Announcement Until January](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chevron Corp., the world’s fourth- largest oil company, postponed its 2009 capital-spending announcement by a month, until January, after crude lost two-thirds of its value and recessions in the world’s biggest economies crimped fuel demand.

[Chevron cleared of Nigeria abuses](#)

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- A federal jury has cleared Chevron Corp. of responsibility for any human rights abuses during a violent protest on a company oil platform in Nigeria a decade ago.

[Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan up 16.3 pct](#)

TOKYO (KUNA) -- Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan rose 16.3 percent in October from a year earlier to 9.65 million barrels, or 311,000 barrels per day, up for the third straight month, according to the latest report released by the government agency.

Japan is Kuwait's largest oil buyer, taking around 20 percent of its shipments annually.

[Putin clears new Baltic pipeline to cut oil transit](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed on Monday a decree ordering the construction of a new oil pipeline to the Baltic Sea, designed to further cut exports of Russian crude via Ukraine, Belarus and Poland.

The government said on its website Putin ordered a one million barrels-per-day pipeline be built to the Baltic port of Ust Luga, near Russia's largest oil port of Primorsk, with the

first stage to ship 600,000 bpd from the third quarter of 2012.

[Russia's oil wealth funds rise to \\$206.2 bln](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia's two oil wealth funds totalled 5.76 billion roubles (\$206.2 million) up from \$197.4 billion a month ago, Finance Ministry data showed on Monday.

The Reserve Fund, which serves as a safety cushion for the budget and is set to stay at around 10 percent of Russia's GDP, totalled \$132.6 billion, down from \$134.60 billion on Nov 1.

[Hard times here to stay](#): *With peak oil past, our civilisation could be in for a long, slow decline - and that we should plan for a permanent recession*

French President Nicolas Sarkozy calls for a new Bretton Woods, and rightly so, for without doubt one is needed.

In the same breath though, he calls for renewed growth, and in doing so epitomises the endemic dissonance which may be the downfall of our current civilisation.

If he had bothered to work out why the current system failed (extended leverage is a symptom, not a cause) he would not be making the second call.

Make no bones about it, every past civilisation has decayed into the dry leaves of history - why should this one be different?

[Energy Tribune Speaks with Charley Maxwell](#)

It's an example of where Exxon has, in effect, lost vision. And I think they've lost vision in a number of areas – in environmental they've lost vision, in pricing they've lost vision, [and they don't care about] Hubbert's peak.

Someone asked him about Hubbert's Peak at a press conference in 2006 or 2005, and he said, "Hubbert who?" Now he knew perfectly well what the question was. But he was just saying, I don't recognize this fellow.

I'm not particularly upset that I'm a believer and he is not, that this is a moral issue. But I'm using that as an example that he didn't seem to see anything that was happening around him. And that's the case that the relatives of John Rockefeller made when they went to the meeting – that Exxon was in an insular field.

[U.S. Energy Department to Resume Oil-Reserve Fill in January](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The U.S. Energy Department will resume filling the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve next month, once Congressional restrictions expire, a spokeswoman said.

"The return of SPR emergency exchange oil as a result of damages caused by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike is scheduled to start in January 2009," Healy Baumgardner, spokeswoman for the department, said in an e-mail today.

[Oil falls after OPEC doesn't cut output](#)

Crude oil fell below \$50 a barrel after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries deferred a decision to reduce output until its next meeting on Dec. 17.

[Peak oil keeps on peaking](#)

WELL, so-called 'peak oil' hasn't filtered Down Under quite just yet.

Australian oil production has remained pretty constant around 30 million barrels a quarter since mid-2006.

The reason is basic. As individual old fields, like Bass Strait, do peak and decline, new ones come on.

And we'd have a lot more coming on if we actually directed some of the hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on useless wind 'energy' to promoting real carbon energy.

[Revving up the race for better fuel efficiency](#)

One car of the not-so-distant future is powered in part by a battery weighing more than two fully grown men. Another lacks side doors in the interest of reducing drag. And dozens of teams from around the world — both amateur and professional — are racing to build sleek, ultra-fuel efficient cars powered by alternative energy and attractive to cash-conscious consumers.

But what about the cars we already own?

Amid the push toward plug-in electric hybrids, hydrogen fuel cells and biodiesel-friendly roadsters, new research suggests that impressive increases in fuel economy could be obtained by integrating innovative devices into the nation's fleet of gas-guzzling vehicles.

[And Then There Was One: Distilling the Big Three into a single player could save Detroit](#)

So this is how it ends for Detroit? After more than a century of putting the world on wheels, the American auto industry collapses amid squabbling over clueless CEOs and their private jets? Not necessarily. There is another way forward: the Big Three could become the Big One.

[Kurt Cobb: The overoptimized society](#)

What all this tell us is that the pabulum we've been fed about the merits of globalization has masked its dreadful vulnerabilities. We have created a system that nobody understands and nobody can fix when it falters. We were told that the global marketplace could heal itself and correct imbalances. Well, obviously it can't, not without mowing down an awful lot of people who did nothing to cause the current financial meltdown.

That's the problem with a complex, tightly interconnected network. When it spirals out of control, it tends to create a cascade of problems everywhere. Nassim Taleb says he used to get up in the morning and worry about what will happen to our out-of-control financial system. Now, he wakes up in the middle of the night and wonders how bad it could get.

[Oil drops 6% after OPEC keeps output unchanged](#)

NEW YORK (MarketWatch) -- Oil futures tumbled 6% early Monday, coming under pressure after the OPEC oil cartel decided to keep output unchanged at a weekend meeting.

Crude oil for January delivery fell \$3.15, or 6%, to \$51.34 a barrel in electronic trading on Globex.

The contract hit an intraday low of \$51.20 a barrel.

[Asphalt prices put damper on road work](#)

The recent energy crisis sent asphalt prices into the stratosphere. It also helped bring about an innovation that could well keep them there.

As it is with motor fuels, petroleum is a key ingredient of asphalt. The paving material is a mixture of rock, sand and the sludge left over from oil refining.

Rodney Carmical, executive director of the Tennessee County Highways Officials Association, said asphalt prices probably won't go down any time soon. While gasoline prices are at a five-year low, asphalt prices have dropped only slightly.

That's because when oil prices shot up, refineries installed new equipment to increase the fuel output. The consequence for the asphalt industry was that less of the by-

product it needs is available.

Carmical said the cost to surface a mile of road had gone from about \$50,000 to \$100,000 in a year.

[Air Canada, Out in Cold, Learns Fuel Self-Reliance](#)

The ACE Aviation Holdings Inc. unit is building fuel-storage depots, pipelines and docks and leasing rail cars, trucks and barges. It is also scouring the globe for vessel shipments of refined jet fuel and buying the precious liquid with its own credit from as far away as Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Venezuela. In March, Air Canada and the rest of the airlines that serve Toronto Pearson International Airport will open a satellite tank farm, pipeline and rail siding to bolster supplies at the nation's busiest airport.

"We want to own it, control it," says Paul Whitty, the carrier's director of fuel purchasing and supply, who recalls a time a few years ago when the shortage was so dire that the Toronto airport storage-depot operator used manual pumps to get every last drop of fuel from the tanks. "The only thing we're not doing is buying the crude and processing it" into jet fuel, he says.

[Somali pirates 'to free Saudi tanker within 48 hours'](#)

CAIRO (RIA Novosti) - The Saudi supertanker the Sirius Star, seized by Somali pirates on November 15, will be released within the next two days, the Saudi Arabian ambassador to Kenya said on Monday.

[Price drop surprises farmers](#)

Last summer farmers like Schoenherr were enjoying record-high prices for their crops, a result of a greater worldwide demand for grains and meats and fears about a shortage of supplies because of spring flooding in the Midwest. But food commodities prices have been spiraling downward the past several weeks, a result of global financial woes, a plentiful harvest and investment banks and hedge funds -- desperate to liquidate -- pulling out of the grain market.

"It's the perfect storm," said Bob Boehm, manager of commodity and marketing at the Michigan Farm Bureau. "What we have is a whole lot of volatility (in the grain market) and no one likes that."

[Visiting environmentalist delivers grim message](#)

Global warming is the biggest problem facing the world today, and time is running out to

find a remedy. That was the grim message delivered by environmental author and activist Bill McKibben — whose 1989 work "The End of Nature" addressed the issue — to a small audience at the New Bedford Whaling Museum last week.

"The best guess now is that there may be no sea ice in the Arctic by 2015. You burn fossil fuels, melt the ice and 80 percent of the sun's radiation, which used to be reflected back into the atmosphere, is now absorbed by blue water. Once you set these processes in motion it is very difficult to get them back under control," Mr. McKibben said.

[Bill McKibben: Multiplication Saves the Day](#)

Let's assume, generously, that 5 percent of Americans are deeply concerned about climate change— concerned enough that they will change all their light bulbs, scrimp and save to put a solar thermal hot water system on the roof (or really scrimp and save to put some photovoltaic electricity up there), unplug all their vampire appliances when not in use, cut the number of car trips that they make in half and use a hybrid for the remaining journeys, buy only local food in season, use a clothesline to dry their clothes whenever the temperature tops fifty degrees (1,016 pounds of carbon saved right there), cut their air travel by two-thirds and learn to enjoy the pleasure of "staycations," take showers with an egg timer so they don't stay under too long (350 pounds of carbon), and do all the other things that every website recommends for reducing your carbon footprint. And then let's assume that they go buy offsets for the rest from a company like NativeEnergy, which will use the money to build windmills on Indian reservations.

Okay, add it up, carry the one, dum de dum, here we go, yes—the impact on the amount of carbon in the atmosphere is, hmm, zero.

[Green army](#)

THE rich world abounds in environmental ideals but lacks biodiversity. The number of animals and plants that thrive in Europe and much of North America is only a fraction of those found in tropical regions. Too often people see environmental problems like climate change, deforestation, wildlife exploitation and loss of biodiversity as things that happen elsewhere—when in fact, developed countries have plenty to worry about: industrial and automotive pollution, the loss of marine life in their over-fished waters, the decline of songbirds in the countryside, and the effects of climate change on everything and everyone.

Could people get as motivated about the beetles down the road as the rainforest in Brazil? That is the hope of a new project in Britain called Open Air Laboratories (OPAL), which aims to mobilise the British population to become more engaged with nature. If the idea works it will create a small green army of ordinary citizens who will create community environmental reports and contribute to national surveys of soil, air, water, biodiversity and climate.

[UK climate body's targets will raise energy bills](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Hundreds of thousands of British households could face big rises in their energy bills under plans to reduce the role of fossil fuels and cut planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions by more than a third by 2020, Britain's chief climate change adviser said on Monday.

[The big green challenge](#)

Community enterprises, with their roots in co-operatives and credit unions, are now emerging as powerful models to combat climate change.

[Liquefied Natural Gas and Fossil Capitalism](#)

The contemporary ecological crisis places a new spin on the notion of the “resource curse,” evoking widespread concerns regarding hydrocarbon dependency. Whether environmental, in the form of global warming, or socio-political, through wars over oil, “fossil capitalism” is now understood as a global problem. The development of a global market in natural gas, heavily dependent on the development of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) industry, offers an example of a corporate-endorsed solution to the simultaneous ecological and economic “crises” associated with fossil capitalism. Yet, since 2004 a cross-continental mobilization against the development of LNG terminals in North America has successfully challenged the installation of some LNG infrastructure on the West Coast. These movements stress that the investment required to build the global gas industry displaces investment in renewables.

[OPEC Failure Foretells Decline 10 Years After \\$10 Oil](#)

(Bloomberg) -- A decade after OPEC failed to prevent oil from collapsing to \$10 a barrel, the world's biggest producers are delaying actions needed to arrest the steepest slide in energy prices.

...“They are riding the economic wave just like the rest of us,” Adam Sieminski, Deutsche Bank AG's chief energy economist, said in a telephone interview in Washington. “In the past when there has been a big economic downturn, OPEC has had to go through a series of cuts to stabilize the oil market.”

They haven't done enough this time around to halt the 67 percent drop. Merrill Lynch & Co., forecasting the first contraction in global demand in a quarter century, sees crude bottoming at an average \$43 a barrel in the first quarter, 21 percent below where it ended last week. In December 1998, crude tumbled 61 percent from its peak to as low as \$10.35 when OPEC failed to eliminate a supply glut.

[OPEC Will Cut Oil Output This Month, El-Badri Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC, supplier of more than 40 percent of the world's oil, will reduce crude production when it meets this month in Algeria and is confident Russia will join OPEC in restraining oil supply, the group's Secretary General Abdalla el-Badri said.

"For sure there will be action" at the OPEC meeting in Oran, Algeria, on Dec. 17, el-Badri told reporters in Tehran today, declining to specify the amount of output that may be reduced. "Everybody is in favor of a cut in the Algeria meeting - we are all gearing toward a cut."

[OPEC to slash December output: secretary general](#)

TEHRAN, (AFP) – The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) will cut its December production by a "good amount," its secretary general Abdalla Salem El-Badri told reporters on Monday.

"We can't say how much the output cut will be in December but for sure there will be an action because we're seeing that stocks are high," he said, adding that the cut would be a "good amount."

[OPEC braces for tough times as global recession bites](#)

CAIRO, (AFP) – The OPEC oil exporting cartel, suffering from plummeting oil prices, faces further pain next year as a worldwide recession dampens demand for crude even more, analysts believe.

"OPEC is dealing with tough circumstances, the toughest in 10 if not 30 years," Raad AlKadiri of PFC Energy told AFP on the sidelines of OPEC's informal gathering in the Egyptian capital.

Although OPEC ministers decided on Saturday to keep output unchanged, they also vowed to cut production next month in the face of flagging demand and despite the global financial crisis.

"We took note of the serious deterioration in the world economy and its serious consequence on the oil price," OPEC President Chakib Khelil said, adding that "negative growth in (oil) demand is possible" next year.

[Iranian state TV: OPEC cut of 1.5M barrels likely](#)

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) -- Iranian state TV is reporting that OPEC's Secretary-General says a daily oil production cut of between 1 million and 1.5 million barrels is likely in

December.

Secretary-General Abdullah El-Badri was quoted Monday on the station's Web site saying that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is facing a very difficult situation and plans to "restore oil prices to \$90 per barrel."

[Minister: Kuwait is reviewing 5-year development plan because of oil price drop, global crisis](#)

KUWAIT CITY (AP) _ A Kuwaiti Cabinet minister says the government is reviewing a 35-billion dinar — about \$128 billion — development plan because of lower oil prices and the effects of the global financial crisis.

[Petrobras May Delay Upgrade of Japan Refinery on Oil](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Nansei Sekiyu K.K., a Japanese refiner majority owned by Brazil's state oil company, Petroleo Brasileiro SA, may delay a proposed expansion of its Okinawa refinery because of the drop in oil prices and the global credit crisis.

[Kuwait eyes \\$2 bln cut in Dow petchem deal - source](#)

KUWAIT (Reuters) - Kuwait is looking to reduce its portion of the cost of a planned petrochemical joint venture with Dow Chemical by as much as \$2 billion, a Kuwaiti oil official said on Monday.

"Kuwait is looking to pay about \$7.5 billion for the JV," said the official, who declined to be identified.

[Russia slashes oil export duty by 33%](#)

MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) - The Russian government lowered oil export duty by 33% as of Monday, from \$287.3 per metric ton to \$192.1, to take into account the lower global oil price.

Export duty on light petroleum products is down from \$205.9 to \$141.8, while duty on dark oil products is down to \$76.4 from \$110.9 per ton.

As of December 1, the government has decided to reset the oil duty rate each month, rather than every two months as previously. A corresponding bill has been approved by both houses of parliament, and is pending presidential approval.

[Despite drop in oil, Americans seal up for winter](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) – When crude oil prices climbed to a record \$147.27 a barrel this summer, many Americans -- their thoughts turning to winter heating bills -- rushed to line their homes with insulation and replace drafty windows.

Now, with the U.S. economy in tatters, many figure they still cannot afford to let money escape through the cracks in their homes, even though oil has fallen to \$50 a barrel.

Across the northern United States, contractors, home improvement retailers and nonprofit groups report that such weatherization efforts continue apace, as Americans prepare for a frigid winter.

[Price swings in heating oil lash New England](#)

Heating oil dealers are for the most part mom-and-pop operations in the Northeast and a bad decision in the current environment could be crippling.

"This is the most extraordinary circumstance I've seen in 30 years," said Chris Keyser, owner of Services in central Vermont that sells fuel products to about 5,000 customers.

In these conditions where oil prices swing wildly from one day to the next, one bad choice could put dealers out of business, said Shane Sweet, president and chief executive of the New England Fuel Institute, which represents about 1,100 dealers.

"If you bet wrong in this environment, there is no room for error," Sweet said.

[My Overview of a Special Year 2008](#)

When I wrote "My Ten Predictions for 2008", crude oil was traded around \$90. I only gave out a target of \$100 since oil had been doubled in 2007 from \$50 to almost \$100 and I expected that there should be a correction in 2008. But oil had a good run in late December and at the 1st trading day of 2008, it already hit \$100. I knew then that I set the target too low, and I should've predicted \$125. Well, even so, it was still too low since oil went all the way to \$147.

However, I don't think the current collapse of crude to \$50 has anything to do with demand and supply, nor did the \$147 oil. The high was purely greed out of speculation and now the low is purely fear that people will go back and live in caves again to stop using energy. The reality is demand will grow more slowly than previously anticipated, but it will still remain at least flat, if not up, especially with the larger population from emerging market countries demanding more energy. In addition, peak oil is a fact, and it is always a big question whether fast economic growth and higher living standards, especially in emerging market, will be able to accommodate the fast growing population on mother earth.

[Options Traders Bet June Crude Oil Will Rise Above \\$75 a Barrel](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Oil traders placed bets that crude oil for June delivery will rise above \$75 a barrel, a day before OPEC ministers meet in Cairo to discuss production levels.

June \$75 calls, the fourth-most actively traded option, rose 18 cents to \$3.95 a barrel, or \$3,950 a contract, at 2:01 p.m. on the New York Mercantile Exchange. A total of 100 lots traded, down from 1,125 on Nov. 26. The Nymex was closed yesterday for the U.S. Thanksgiving Holiday.

[Australia: Oil drops, but demand keeps diesel prices high](#)

More pressure on diesel prices will come from developing countries, with BP estimating there will be greater demand for the product in the coming decades.

But while dismissing concerns about peak oil as "unfounded", Langford says demand may force refineries to use spare capacity, of which Saudi Arabia is the only country with significant amounts.

[Pipelines race out of the mountains, into yards](#)

DENVER (AP) — In the push toward more energy independence, massive infrastructure projects that will help to deliver it have clashed with cherished rights of land ownership.

[Talisman Energy Considers Floating LNG Plant for PNG Gas Field](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Talisman Energy Inc., the Canadian oil and gas producer with interests in Papua New Guinea, said it's studying the use of a floating liquefied natural gas plant for its Pandora discovery in the Gulf of Papua.

The company believes the technology, which has yet to be used in a commercial project, may be suitable for developing the field, which is estimated to hold at least 1.5 trillion cubic feet of gas, Terry Buchy, manager of engineering business development at Talisman, said today in Sydney.

[Ukraine stops electric power imports from Russia](#)

Ukraine began to import Russia's electric power in mid-September. However, the world economic crisis led to the reduction in consumption of energy resources in Ukraine, including of coal, gas and electric power. As a result, Ukraine even temporarily shut down one of the six reactors of the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant.

[Head of British-Russian oil firm resigns](#)

MOSCOW (AFP) – The chief of Russian-British oil joint venture TNK-BP resigned on Monday, in line with an accord which ended months of wrangling between its shareholders over control of the firm, the company said.

"TNK-BP received the resignation of its CEO Robert Dudley in accordance with the memorandum of understanding between Alfa Access-Renova (AAR) and BP in early September," the firm said in a statement.

"Mr Dudley's resignation is effective from today, December 1."

[Big Oil is a Big Cheapskate to Charity](#)

Strip away these choreographed, self-aggrandizing messages and you will find a corporation that needs to cut back on spin and instead pump up its charitable giving. ExxonMobil is in fact out-and-out chintzy when it comes to charitable giving—but then so are the other two largest U.S. oil producers, Chevron (CVX) and ConocoPhillips (COP).

Annual donations by the Big Three oil companies as measured by a percent of pretax net income (the standard yardstick for gauging corporate philanthropy) are consistently below half the national average for businesses that make tax-deductible charitable contributions.

[Detroit's auto bubble pain](#)

Automakers are suffering because sales were artificially boosted by cheap credit and the Big Three thought this could last forever.

[Chavez seeks reelection, eyes presidency through 2021](#)

CARACAS, Venezuela (AFP) – Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Sunday announced he was seeking a constitutional amendment to allow himself to seek reelection again, saying he hoped to lead the OPEC nation until 2021.

[China, India Drop Inflation Controls as Economic Growth Slows](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China and India lifted controls targeting prices of products from vegetable oil to natural rubber after inflation eased in the world's fastest-growing major economies.

China today stopped requiring companies to seek approval for some food-price increases, the government said. India dropped a ban on futures trading in natural rubber, soybean oil, potatoes and chickpeas, the consumer affairs ministry said.

[Finding fuels of the future](#)

As the population of the Earth grows and demand for energy increases, more effort is put into the research of alternative fuels - and more fuel is added to a broader debate.

The National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center on the campus of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has been open for five years and is leading the charge in ethanol research and workforce development and training in the field.

[US ethanol sector to shrink](#)

Speaking at the American Bankers Assn.'s Agricultural Bankers Conference in November, Mark Laker of Agribusiness & Food Associates said as many as 40 ethanol plants could be bankrupt by early next year of the roughly 175 plants currently under construction or on line.

[Mandates driving surge to the river for hydropower](#)

HAMILTON, Ohio (AP) — Many decades ago, cost-conscious Henry Ford turned to hydroelectric plants to power his car factories like the one by the Great Miami River, near this Cincinnati suburb. That assembly plant is long gone, but the power plant and the technology behind it isn't.

Far from it. The push to get electricity from moving water is only picking up steam.

[Higher power](#)

What if some nuns in Wrentham decided to put up a wind turbine? And then high school officials in Worcester? And a Canton bank chairman? And pretty soon, the question wasn't where do wind farms belong, but how many windmills can we squeeze in to every last available space? That day is coming.

[Avista puts wind farm on hold](#)

Avista will delay building a wind farm south of Reardan, Lincoln County, by at least two

years, citing the high cost of wind turbines.

[The Economic Crisis as a Window of Opportunity](#)

Although some people are currently being lulled into complacency, by the “temporary” low per barrel price of oil (just under \$50.00 per barrel at the time of this writing as opposed to \$140.00 per barrel last summer). The price of oil will resume it's upward trajectory, soon after current contract hedging abates. During this lull in high oil prices, we can begin a major conversion of our automobile manufacturers into public transportation manufacturers.

After all is there any written law that dictates that the only legitimate form of transportation is the private automobile? What will happen, sometime down the road, when perhaps a renewed upward price spiral in oil prices places the automobile out of the price range of all but the wealthiest individuals. Some people will respond, "well we'll just utilize biodiesel or some other alternate form of energy for automobiles". Without even investigating this unproven possibility, why not consider transportation in a broader context, one that is not only tethered to “moving people from point A to point B”, but in a much broader context that takes into serious consideration the important role of land use in transportation and energy expenditure.

[From Poverty to Power](#)

To spend or not to spend. Is that the question? With a financial crisis well and truly upon us, should we be doing all we can to get back in the old game or should we look to change the rules altogether? Duncan Green, Head of Research at Oxfam, suggests that, from the current financial turmoil must emerge a new and fairer global economic and environmental order

IF THE 1930s are any guide, the seismic shock hitting the global economy has a long way to go.

[UN climate conf. concerned about financial crisis](#)

POZNAN, Poland – A U.N. climate conference has opened with warnings that the global financial crisis must not divert efforts to reach a new treaty on controlling greenhouse gas emissions.

The prime ministers of Poland and Denmark have told some 10,000 delegates that the financial crisis will pass, but global warming will only get worse.

[Climate change juggernaut on the horizon, UN talks told](#)

POZNAN, Poland (AFP) – War, hunger, poverty and sickness will stalk humanity if the world fails to tackle climate change, a 12-day UN conference on global warming heard on Monday.

A volley of grim warnings sounded out at the start of the marathon talks, a step to a new worldwide treaty to reduce greenhouse gases and help countries exposed to the wrath of an altered climate.



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