



DrumBeat: January 6, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 6, 2009 - 9:47am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[The Costly Compromises of Oil From Sand](#)

OTTAWA — A major source of oil for the United States must now confront another problem: its carbon footprint.

Canada, in large part because of the production capacity of its oil sands, is now the largest oil supplier to the United States. But environmental groups in both countries are pushing for a slowdown or even a halt to further oil sands development, which is concentrated in northern Alberta.

Not all oil is alike when it comes to environmental impact, and many environmentalists single out production from the oil sands as the epitome of “dirty oil.” In a recent study, the RAND Corporation estimated that oil from the oil sands generates about 10 to 30 percent more greenhouse gases than conventional crude.

That may place oil sands exports in a precarious position when Barack Obama becomes president this month and moves forward with a climate change program.

[Green revolution: still possible amid deep recession?](#)

Experts believe that current prices, just below \$50 a barrel, will persist only as long as the downturn. The IEA has for the first time hinted that the era of “peak oil” may be upon us – the highwater mark of production, after which output will start to taper off. As soon as economic growth resumes, it will open a costly gap between supply and demand – unless the world radically transforms the energy model.

“The minute you get recovery, you’ll get a sharp rise in oil, which will stall the recovery,” says Tom Burke, an environmental scientist and former British government adviser. “So you have to use the stimulus to get yourself off oil dependency and that will reduce the climate curve and you’ll start to drive carbon the way you want to go.”

[New cold war in Europe as Russia turns off gas supplies](#)

Fears of a deep chill spread across Europe yesterday after a row between Russia and

Ukraine over gas prices cut supplies to the rest of the continent on a day of plummeting temperatures and heavy snowfalls.

The European Union said the situation was "completely unacceptable" as thousands of businesses were urged to switch fuels, and households struggled to keep warm in sub-zero temperatures. But there was no sign of an end to the standoff between Russia's energy monopoly Gazprom and Ukraine, locked in battle since New Year's Day.

[Dependence on Russian energy places Europe at risk: The EU must ensure that no one can hold it to ransom in future](#)

The angry stand-off between Russia and Ukraine over gas is now seriously disrupting supplies to several European Union countries. Romania has lost 75 per cent of its supply; Bulgaria has only a few days' gas left; Slovakia is on the verge of declaring a state of emergency. The European Commission has waded in with indignant condemnation. But what may look like a replay of what happened three years ago, when Russia drew international condemnation for shutting off gas supplies to Ukraine is in many ways very different; 2009 is not 2006.

[Automakers Fear a New Normal of Low Sales](#)

DETROIT — The historic collapse of the new-car market dragged on in December, raising questions of whether the auto industry will ever again have sales levels that it took for granted just a few years ago.

[The 'McMansion' trend in housing is slowing](#)

In Atlanta's 1920s-era Kirkwood neighborhood, teardown projects in the last year have been cast in the simpler Craftsman style, which have immediately found buyers. Indeed, US builders say their clients increasingly look for quality materials and workmanship rather than sheer size. Some families are even abandoning the one-bedroom-per-child model, builders say, in favor of larger, but fewer, shared rooms.

..."There's an awareness now that some of the homes frankly are too big," says Scott Van Duzor, a home builder in Illinois's Fox River Valley. "The McMansion has almost become embarrassing to some people," he says. "They're listening not just to their wallet but their conscience."

[LA water cops hunt wasteful faucets, sprinklers](#)

Officials estimate that landscaping accounts for as much as 70 percent of household water bills.

Offenders can be cited with a warning or hit with fines that start at \$100 for homeowners and automatically appear on water bills.

The tough tactics began this summer after a voluntary conservation program yielded only a 4 percent drop in water use. Restrictions were expanded and penalties stiffened with the aim of seeing a 10 percent reduction.

[Recipe for Famine](#)

The bag of green peas, stamped "USAID From the American People," took more than six months to reach Haylar Ayako. For seven of his grandchildren, that was a lifetime. They died as the peas journeyed from North Dakota to southern Ethiopia. During that time, the American growers, processors and transporters that profit from aid shipments were fighting off a proposal before Congress to speed deliveries by buying more from foreign producers near trouble spots. As a result of legal mandates to buy US goods, the world's most generous food relief program wasn't fast or flexible enough to feed the starving in Ethiopia's drought-ridden South Omo region last year.

"I am so grieved that I lost those children," said Ayako, a Bena tribesman, speaking in his local Omotic language. "They died of the food shortage."

[Chevron lifts force majeure on Nigeria oil output](#)

LAGOS (Reuters) - U.S. energy giant Chevron (CVX.N) said on Tuesday it had lifted a force majeure on oil output from its Escravos terminal in Nigeria a month and a half after saboteurs forced it to shut in around 90,000 barrels per day.

The company said it had lifted the measure, declared on Nov. 19 and which frees it from contractual obligations, with effect from Jan. 1.

"Production and lifting operations have resumed," it said in a statement.

[Peak oil expert to speak at Western Michigan University](#)

KALAMAZOO--Dr. Kenneth Deffeyes, a famed Princeton geologist who believes world oil production peaked three years ago, will speak at Western Michigan University at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13.

Speaking in the Fetzer Center's Kirsch Auditorium, Deffeyes will be the first to speak as part of WMU's new Gwen Frostic Environmental Studies Seminar Series. The event is open to the public without charge.

[The Powerful Case For \\$1 Gas](#)

If problems in the Middle East are resolved fairly peacefully and other regions which produce oil can avoid significant turmoil, oil should dive back toward \$30.

Oil prices are up 25% over the last two weeks. This rise in oil prices has encouraged some analysts to forecast that gas prices could go up 20 or 30 cents in the near future..

The case for lower gas prices is a simple case. The recession could move unemployment in the US to 11% or more. It could cut corporate earnings for several quarters. Air traffic could drop and with it jet fuel demand. Many companies could cut back on trucking.

Gas will move to \$1 because things will get so bad that it can't stay higher, for better or for worse.

[Gas war may boost alternative routes to Europe](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia's decision to cut gas exports to Europe via Ukraine in mid-winter may shock the continent into backing major new pipelines to bypass Ukraine, cementing Moscow's control over European gas supplies.

[The mystery of Antarctica's speeding glacier](#)

With the possible exception of the ice that covers Greenland, the West Antarctic ice shelf is the most important body of water in the world. If it thaws, the results will be disastrous for millions, raising sea levels and flooding coastal cities such as London, New York, Tokyo and Calcutta. So it is understandable that scientists are alarmed as to why one particular section of it - Pine Island Glacier - is melting so much faster than the rest.

Pine Island, which contains around 30 trillion litres of water, is slipping into the sea at an ever accelerating rate, a development that alone could raise sea levels by as much as 10cm over the next century. Starting at an altitude of 2,500m, the glacier is 95 miles long and 18 miles wide, reaching the sea as an ice wall 750m high. Even before it began to speed up, it was one of the fastest-flowing glaciers in the world, at nine yards a day.

[Utility cutoffs fuel carbon monoxide poisonings](#)

Severe winter weather and a stormy economy could combine to make one of the season's common killers, carbon monoxide poisoning, even worse this year, public health and safety officials say.

Coast-to-coast snowstorms and power outages, paired with spiking rates of utility shutoffs spurred by record unemployment, are likely to increase the accidental exposures that typically send more than 20,000 people to the emergency room and kill nearly 500 each year.

...Deprived of power, people are firing up gas-powered generators and bringing barbecue grills indoors, forgetting the deadly consequences of the colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that can lead to illness, brain damage — and death.

“We see it during power outages and we see it during bad economic times,” said Jim Burns, past president and spokesman for the National Association of State Fire Marshals. “Unfortunately, people in desperate times take all means to stay warm.”

[Iran offers more gas to Turkey](#)

TEHRAN, Iran—Iran is prepared to increase gas exports to Turkey after Ankara's supplies -- along with those of several European nations -- were cut due to a dispute between Russia and the Ukraine, an Iranian diplomat said Tuesday.

[Shell Said to Delay Start of Gasoline Unit at Pernis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Royal Dutch Shell Plc is delaying the start of a gasoline unit at Pernis, Europe's largest refinery, by at least a week after a pipeline fire forced its shutdown last month, two people familiar with the situation said.

[BP names Russia troubleshooter as U.S. boss](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - British oil major BP Plc (BP.L) appointed the man who led negotiations with its oligarch partners in Russian joint venture TNK-BP (TNBPI.RTS) as head of its U.S. unit.

BP said on Tuesday Lamar McKay, formerly leader of the company's Special Projects Team, had been appointed chairman and president of BP America.

[The Fall of Green Travel](#)

Environmentally-conscious vacations are out of fashion. Travelers expect their next getaway to be green — and they're not willing to pay more for it.

[Richard Heinberg: Slo-mo Splat](#)

Remember the wall that environmentalists (like the 1972 "Limits to Growth" authors) have long been saying that industrial society would eventually hit? Permit me to make the formal introduction: Industrial society, meet wall; wall, meet industrial society.

It's understandably taking a while for the recognition to seep in. We are not accustomed to seeing every indicator of economic well-being, in virtually every country in the world, slam into reverse over the course of a few short months. I still have random conversations with businesspeople and bankers who say we've hit bottom and recovery is at hand; in their view, this is just another business cycle. I see things a bit differently: to my eyes the world situation looks like a slow-motion film of a train wreck, and the sheet metal at the front of the locomotive has only just begun to crumple.

[Brace for 'Climate Wars'](#)

On how to predict the fall of human civilization:

"Most of [the scenarios] were from military reports. There was a lot of awareness among scientists about the severity of climate change, but scientists don't do strategic scenarios. A lot of that scenario stuff, believe it or not, actually started with Shell Oil back in the '70s. They came up with relatively disciplined rules for these things -- we're not just writing science fiction here. What we want is credible, possible futures. The pentagon's very big on that now.

"The American military has been doing them for a long time -- they're not hard to get at. When Bush didn't want climate change discussed at all, the Pentagon went to the think tanks in Washington and said, 'We need you to do all the research that we've already done, but can't publish. You publish it, and we'll distribute it to our staff.'

"I was in Washington in February -- I met with a lot of senior career people, and there wasn't a denier among them. They had made their plans, and were waiting for the administration to change so they could get some action on these things."

[U.S. In the Midst of a Revolution](#)

Sandwiched around the election of the first African-American President of the United States, we find the debacles associated with the collapse of the international finance sector and the imminent end of the American automotive industry as we've known it for decades -- accompanied by the scurrying of would-be leaders and experts around the world attempting to patch holes in the badly leaking dikes with hastily-applied band-aids.

It's abundantly clear that the world has changed drastically. In my view, we're now in the midst of truly historical sea changes, although the biggest implications of these dramatic changes are very unclear -- and may not become fully apparent for some time to come.

[FACTBOX - Global energy investment hit by financial crisis](#)

(Reuters) - The deepening of the global financial crisis and a deep drop in energy prices have forced companies to scale back spending and delay projects, with expensive ventures in the Canadian oil sands hardest hit.

Below is a list of projects that have been delayed or scaled back in recent months, as well as other related news.

[What's next: Oilsands](#)

The collapse of oil prices has possibly set back Canadian production growth as much as five years.

[Factbox: who gets what from Gazprom](#)

The biggest European customers for Russian gas, whose supplies are likely to be hit by the dispute between the Russian gas export monopoly Gazprom and Ukraine:

[Gazprom's Tactics Harsh But Its Logic Sound](#)

The Russian gas goliath's argument that the price it charges Ukraine must rise is a valid one, based on its own costs.

[Bulgaria president: "We have to reopen the shut reactors of the Kozlodui nuclear plant"](#)

Bulgarian president Gheorghi Parvanov declared on Tuesday that Bulgaria must reopen the closed reactors at the Kozlodui nuclear plant, Novinite informs. The decision comes after Russia decided to cease the natural gas deliveries through the pipelines that cross the Ukrainian territory. On Tuesday morning, the pipelines delivering gas to the Balkans region were shut down.

[Shortage of nuclear fuel hits Indian nuclear power plants](#)

Shillong (IANS) India's nuclear power plants have been working at about half their capacity due to shortage of nuclear fuel despite the efforts of the Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) to tap indigenous uranium deposits. The power plants are facing shortage of uranium supply due to the slow process of opening up of new uranium mines.

[Tom Whipple: The Top 10 Peak-Oil-Related Stories of 2008](#)

1. The Global Recession

The impact that declining world oil production will have during the coming year, and possibly longer, is now inextricably intertwined with the course of the economic recession that is sweeping the world. During 2008 the world's stock markets lost some \$30 trillion in investor equity. Nearly every major government was forced to begin massive bailouts of financial institutions and many have started to support failing businesses. The end is not in sight.

While many peak oil observers long anticipated that faltering world oil production would lead to much higher oil prices and eventually to an associated economic meltdown, the setbacks of the last year have complicated the situation. While it is clear that worldwide demand for oil has stopped growing and has started to decline in the last six months, it is not yet clear just how fast demand is falling. The sudden drop in oil prices has further complicated the situation by setting off a race between falling prices and slowing economic activity.

Related: [PeakOil.com's most read stories of 2008](#)

[It will take more than goodwill and greenwash to save the biosphere](#)

Monbiot: Shell may boast about tackling climate change, but companies tend always to sacrifice good intentions for hard cash.

[Obama's Chance For a Blue Legacy](#)

Today, President Bush will begin for the ocean what President Theodore Roosevelt did when he created the National Park System. The administration is announcing plans to create a national monument that will protect 195,000 square nautical miles of the Pacific Ocean -- bigger than the size of California and almost 50 percent larger than all U.S. national parks combined. Sweeping areas of the ocean's most pristine treasures, including spectacular corals and the deepest canyon in the world, will be protected by law and given the chance to become stronger.

Yet what is most significant about this move is the opportunity it creates for President-elect Barack Obama.

[China's green investment challenge](#)

China's environmental and renewable energy sectors are poised for another year of strong growth. However, green industries still face a daunting array of challenges.

[Harnessing space energy](#)

The first commercial solar power plant was commissioned in 1985 near the town of Shchelkino in the Crimea in the Soviet Union and had a peak load of 5 mWt, or just as much as the world's first nuclear reactor. But the costly and inefficient power plant had to be shut down in the mid-1990s, as on Earth it could not work to full capacity. Consequently, we must consider building such power plants in outer space.

[Paramedics get muscle cars](#)

EMS District Chief Jeffrey Hammerstein said the department comparison-shopped before settling on the Chargers, which are similar to those recently purchased by the N.C. Highway Patrol.

They are cheaper and more fuel-efficient than the Chevrolet Suburbans and other SUVs issued to EMS supervisors, as well as comparable police interceptors such as Ford's Crown Victoria. Their resale value, he added, should be higher when it comes time to sell them as surplus vehicles.

[Gulf takes wrong currency path](#)

The GCC members produce between them some 16 million barrels of crude oil per day, and possess some 45% of known oil reserves. In addition, members, particularly Qatar, also have immense reserves of natural gas.

The key innovation that will enable a Gulf Clearing Union is the simple expedient of creating - within a suitable legal framework - a "petro" unit redeemable in a constant amount of energy value, let's say the energy released by burning 100ml (measured at 20 Centigrade) of n-octane.

Such a definition of an energy value unit provides a straightforward benchmark for both domestic and international buyers of oil, gas, petroleum products, and even electricity, to use petros - as well as, or instead of, US dollars - in settlement for purchases of GCC production.

[Oil Rises to 5-Week High Above \\$50 on OPEC Cuts, Russia Dispute](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil rose to a five-week high above \$50 as Kuwait and Qatar indicated they will implement supply cuts announced by OPEC last month, and a dispute between Russia and Ukraine reduced natural gas shipments to Europe.

Kuwait and Qatar plan to cut oil shipments to Asia starting in January, refinery officials in the region said today, after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed on a record output reduction on Dec. 17. OAO Gazprom cut gas shipments to Europe through Ukraine to less than one third of normal levels, a NAK Naftogaz Ukrainy spokesman said.

“The focus is shifting from demand to supply again,” said Eugen Weinberg, a Commerzbank AG analyst in Frankfurt. “We know demand is going to be very weak, but cuts from OPEC and the latest geopolitical risk will compensate.”

[Gasoline price up first time in 16 weeks](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – U.S. retail gasoline prices have risen for the first time in 16 weeks as higher crude oil costs were reflected at the pump, the government said on Monday.

The national price for regular unleaded gasoline jumped 7.1 cents over the last week to \$1.68 a gallon, but was still down \$1.43 from a year ago, the federal Energy Information Administration said in its weekly survey of service stations.

[Soybeans Jump to 3-Month High on Crude Oil, Dry Weather Concern](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Soybeans extended gains to a three-month high and corn rallied on speculation higher oil will boost demand for crops as a source of alternative fuel and concern that dry, warm weather will damage crops in Brazil and Argentina.

[UK: Energy bills to drop by more than £100](#)

CONSUMERS were today given hope that their energy bills will fall in the New Year, after Scottish Power cut the cost of one of its tariffs by 10 per cent.

Consumer groups said it was the “shape of things to come”, with reductions of 10-15 per cent expected across the board in the coming months.

[Ukraine: Russia cut gas to Europe by two-thirds](#)

KIEV, Ukraine – Ukraine's gas company Naftogaz said Tuesday that Russia cut natural gas supplies to Europe by about two-thirds, raising the stakes in a spiraling dispute between the two neighbors that bodes ill for European consumers.

Naftogaz spokesman Valentyn Zemlyansky said Gazprom sent only 92 million cubic meters of gas for European consumers, down from 221 Monday and about 300 during previous days.

"That is all they are sending, in several hours Europe will feel it," Zemlyansky told The Associated Press.

[Slovakia to call state of emergency over gas-agency](#)

PRAGUE (Reuters) - Slovakia will declare a state of emergency over a drop in gas supplies from Russia, Czech news agency CTK reported on Tuesday, citing Slovak Economy Minister Lubomir Jahnatek.

[Europe begins to feel gas pipeline pinch](#)

Moscow – Thermometers are plunging across Europe, and so is the pressure in the natural-gas pipelines connecting the continent with its key supplier, Russia.

But no one is pushing the panic button yet. The five-day-old gas war between Moscow and Kiev appears worse than in past years, aggravated by Ukraine's deepening financial and political crises and Russia's urgent need to refloat its floundering state budget by raising gas prices. Europe, watching closely, has sufficient gas reserves to see it through any short-term crisis and has officially declined to take sides.

[It's time to see through Gazprom](#)

The bust-up between Russia and Ukraine that threatens to gum up the gas supplies of much of southern and Eastern Europe hardly comes as a surprise. It is almost part of the New Year ritual and somehow – perhaps Kremlin meteorologists are in on the plot – always seems to strike during a cold spell. Across the continent, radiators run cold.

So why hasn't the European Union devised some kind of strategy by now to deal with the threat? Years of talk about energy security have generated nothing but hot air.

[Mexico's Pemex pushes ahead with Chicontepec field](#)

MEXICO CITY, Jan 5 (Reuters) - Mexico's state oil company Pemex has awarded over 2 billion pesos (\$148 million) in construction contracts at its Chicontepec project aimed at boosting crude output, the firm said on Monday.

The contracts call for the construction of access roads and site preparation work at 344 well pads, where Pemex plans to drill thousands of horizontal oil wells to tap the difficult-to-produce oil of Chicontepec.

[Dow to Take Action Against Kuwait on Halted Venture](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Dow Chemical Co., the largest U.S. chemical maker, plans to pursue legal options against Kuwait for canceling a joint venture agreement and will seek a new

partner to invest in its basic-plastics business.

[U.S. Refiners Don't Look Cheap \(Unless We're Going Back to '06-'07 Environment\)](#)

In regards to U.S. refiners still being priced for good times, in my view as per EV /Capacity analysis. If you have a bullish near term view on their industry, think we're going back to 2006-2007, then fine. The point I make is that if you think we're going back to a 1999-2002 environment, then U.S. refiners such as Valero Energy (VLO), Tesoro (TSO), Holly Corp. (HOC), and Frontier Oil (FTO) still look a bit overvalued despite their massive declines this year.

[Toyota to suspend production for 11 days in Japan](#)

TOKYO — Toyota is suspending production at all 12 of its Japan plants for 11 days over February and March, a stoppage of unprecedented scale for the nation's top automaker as it grapples with shrinking global demand.

[Cars outsell trucks in rough year](#)

DETROIT — The final numbers are in, and it's official: 2008 was a crummy year to sell cars.

Not only did sales fall off a cliff, but consumer preferences changed faster than automakers could predict or react to. Gas prices skyrocketed, causing consumers to flee SUVs and trucks for smaller cars. Then the financial crisis hit, ruining nearly everyone's appetite for any vehicle.

[Australians buying more bikes than cars](#)

Australians continue to buy more bicycles than cars with the economic downturn, health issues and climate change driving sales, the Cycling Promotion Fund (CPF) says.

Figures released on Tuesday put total vehicle sales for 2008 at 1,012,64 while bike sales were 38 per cent higher at 1,401,675.

[Australia: Ethanol demands may consume grain crops: farmers](#)

Farmers say one fifth of New South Wales' grain crop could be eaten up by changes to the proportion of ethanol in unleaded fuel.

The State Government announced last month it would quadruple the ethanol mandate

within three years.

[Severn barrage: Row breaks out over UK's biggest renewables project](#)

Government consultants have been accused of miscalculating the costs of a project to generate vast amounts of green electricity in the Severn estuary, promoting a 10 mile-long tidal barrier strongly backed by ministers in preference to a scheme that engineers and environmentalists say is far less damaging.

[SAfrica to start wind power project: official](#)

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) – South Africa's state-run power utility Eskom plans to start operating wind turbines this year to boost the supply of electricity, a company spokesman said on Monday.

"We are looking at building 50 wind turbines with two megawatts each before the end of this year across the country," Fani Zulu said on public broadcaster SA FM.

[LDK shares slide after issues revenue warning](#)

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) – Solar wafer maker LDK Solar Co Ltd warned on Monday of lower-than-expected fourth quarter and 2009 revenue, saying the global economic crisis and tight credit markets have weakened demand for solar power, sending its shares down nearly 14 percent.

The Chinese company also said it experienced a delay ramping up production at its new polysilicon plant. Polysilicon is the solar industry's key raw material.

[The staggering cost of new nuclear power](#)

A new study puts the generation costs for power from new nuclear plants at from 25 to 30 cents per kilowatt-hour — triple current U.S. electricity rates!

This staggering price is far higher than the cost of a variety of carbon-free renewable power sources available today — and ten times the cost of energy efficiency.

[Group sues to force EPA to clean up Chesapeake Bay](#)

WASHINGTON – A conservation group filed a federal lawsuit Monday to force the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to enforce the law and clean up the polluted

Chesapeake Bay, citing 25 years of failure to restore the nation's largest estuary.

[Timber company drops road deal with Forest Service](#)

HELENA, Mont. – The nation's largest owner of timberland disclosed Monday that it will no longer pursue changes in agreements governing its use of U.S. Forest Service roads — changes that critics complained could transform forests into housing subdivisions.

[Pope: Pollution could destroy world's future](#)

VATICAN CITY – Pope Benedict XVI is warning that pollution in the world could destroy our present and our future.

[Contraceptive pill is polluting environment: Vatican newspaper](#)

VATICAN CITY (AFP) – The contraceptive pill is polluting the environment and is in part responsible for male infertility, a report in the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano said Saturday.

The pill "has for some years had devastating effects on the environment by releasing tonnes of hormones into nature" through female urine, said Pedro Jose Maria Simon Castellvi, president of the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, in the report.

"We have sufficient evidence to state that a non-negligible cause of male infertility in the West is the environmental pollution caused by the pill," he said, without elaborating further.

[1 in 5 considering leaving Hong Kong due to pollution: survey](#)

HONG KONG (AFP) – One in five Hong Kong residents is considering leaving the city because of its dire air quality, a survey released Monday has found, raising fears over the financial hub's competitiveness.

The findings equate to 1.4 million residents thinking about moving away, including 500,000 who are "seriously considering or already planning to move," according to the survey by the think tank Civic Exchange.

[Russia suspended from UN carbon trading scheme](#)

The immaturity of one of the UN's flagship carbon trading scheme was underlined yesterday after Russia was suspended from trading carbon credits as a result of unpaid fees.

[NEW FORECAST: 4ft Sea Level Rise by 2100 – threatened destinations include Manhattan, Maldives](#)

The report, commissioned by the U.S. Climate Change Science Program, found that in light of recent ice sheet melting, global sea levels could rise as much as 4 feet (1.2 metres) by 2100.

The IPCC had projected a rise of no more than 1.5 feet by that time, but satellite data over the last two years show the world's major ice sheets are melting much more rapidly than previously thought. The Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets are losing an average of 48 cubic miles of ice a year, equivalent to twice the amount of ice in the Alps. The models used by the IPCC did not factor in the dynamic where warmer ocean water under coastal ice sheets accelerates melting. (About 600 million people currently live in low lying coastal areas.)

According to the Worldwatch Institute, of the 33 cities predicted to have at least eight million residents by 2015, some 21 coastal cities will certainly have to contend with sea rise impacts, however severe they may be. So it may not just be bye-bye to parts of Bangkok, but adieu to bits of Boston, many of Malibu's glamour spots and even sections of lower Manhattan.

[Australia: Defence warns of climate conflict](#)

RISING sea levels could lead to failed states across the Pacific and require extra naval deployments to deal with increases in illegal migration and fishing, a Defence Force analysis says.

"Environmental stress" has increased the risk of conflicts over resources and food and may demand greater involvement by the military in stabilisation, reconstruction and disaster relief, the analysis, prepared by Defence's strategic policy division, says.

It warns there is a risk of a serious global conflict over the Arctic as melting icecaps allow easier access to undersea oil and gas deposits.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](#).