



DrumBeat: March 5, 2009

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[The Peak Oil Crisis: Oil in the Great Recession](#)

Currently world oil consumption is only down by a few million b/d from the all-time high levels of 2007-8. If this level of consumption holds, then the current OPEC production cuts of 3-4 million b/d seem to be on track to reduce stockpiles and force prices higher. The other side of the coin, however, is that the global economic situation is deteriorating far faster than most expected. It is possible that world oil consumption could quickly fall from a high of 86 million b/d in 2007 to 80 or even 70 million b/d simply because consumers can no longer afford and industries no longer need oil products in such volume.

In this situation, a new set of forces would come into play. While OPEC seems to be able to cut oil production by 3 or 4 million b/d, deliberately cutting production by 10 or 15 million b/d seems out of the question. The economies of the exporting nations that are already in financial trouble would simply collapse if oil exports were reduced by 50 percent. The consequences would be political turmoil and likely changes of government. The over-supply of oil would force prices lower. Analysts are already predicting that if oil goes to \$20 a barrel there will be widespread reductions in oil production around the world as many fields can no longer produce oil this cheaply.

[Oil prices fall with global energy demand sketchy](#)

Oil prices shot up Wednesday when the government reported inventories tightened unexpectedly, but another round of disappointing economic news Thursday ate away some of that 9 percent rise.

"People are taking a second look and realizing the fundamentals are still weak. Demand is contracting," Halff said.

[Oil to Refineries, Ports Cut Off](#)

Oil supplies to three refineries and the Black Sea ports of Tuapse and Novorossiisk were cut off by a fire and leak on a central Russian pipeline this week, Transneft said Thursday.

[Venezuela delays Orinoco bids](#)

Venezuela has postponed its biggest offer of proved reserves to private companies by two to three weeks, according to the Norwegian embassy in Caracas, whose largest oil company is one of the bidders.

[Sinopec sales and cash flow reduced by crisis](#)

China Petroleum & Chemical Corp (Sinopec), Asia's biggest refiner, said the global financial crisis and a slowing economy had reduced sales and cash flow.

Daily fuel sales in December reached a record low of 280,000 tonnes, chairman Su Shulin said at the sidelines of the legislature's annual meeting.

[Cuba's influence in Venezuela is growing](#)

Cuban influence in Venezuela is growing beyond politics in a broad range of areas, from agriculture and commerce to energy and education - and even presidential security.

Some 40,000 Cubans are now working in Venezuela, and the island has received millions of dollars in petroleum subsidies that sway between 90,000 and 130,000 barrels a day, according to some estimates.

[Oil Funds Can't Buy Fannie Bonds](#)

Russia banned on Thursday investment of its \$220 billion oil wealth funds in bonds of quasi-sovereign agencies such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, citing needs of its own budget and pension system.

[China to plough extra 20% into agricultural production amid fears that climate change will spark food crisis](#)

China will increase spending on agricultural production by 20% this year amid warnings that climate change could spark a future food crisis .

Prime minister Wen Jiabao's announcement of an extra 121 billion yuan (£13bn) to boost farm yields and raise rural incomes was a central part of his annual budget speech at the Great Hall of the People.

The government's spending pledge also included extra money for renewable energy and improved power efficiency, but these environmental benefits were outweighed by

moves to boost overall domestic consumption and a likely emphasis on intensive agriculture.

[Arctic summer ice could vanish by 2013, expert says](#)

OTTAWA, March 5 (Reuters) - The Arctic is warming up so quickly that the region's sea ice cover in summer could vanish as early as 2013, decades earlier than some had predicted, a leading polar expert said on Thursday.

Warwick Vincent, director of the Centre for Northern Studies at Laval University in Quebec, said recent data on the ice cover "appear to be tracking the most pessimistic of the models", which call for an ice free summer in 2013.

The year "2013 is starting to look as though it is a lot more reasonable as a prediction. But each year we've been wrong -- each year we're finding that it's a little bit faster than expected," he told Reuters.

[Amazon's 2005 drought created huge CO2 emissions](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - A 2005 drought in the Amazon rainforest killed trees and released more greenhouse gas than the annual emissions of Europe and Japan, an international study showed on Thursday.

The report said rainforests from Africa to Latin America may speed up global warming if the climate becomes drier this century. Plants soak up heat-trapping carbon dioxide as they grow and release it when they die and rot.

[Carbon Trading Will Delay Greenhouse-Gas Reductions, Exxon Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- A U.S. carbon-trading program would slow reductions in industrial greenhouse gases as volatile carbon prices discourage anti-pollution investments, said Exxon Mobil Corp. Chief Executive Officer Rex Tillerson.

Since December, Tillerson has been publicly telling lawmakers that adoption of a carbon-trading system akin to that used in the European Union would be ruinous to the U.S. economy. A carbon tax would work better because it would eliminate most of the volatility inherent in buying and selling emission credits, he said today.

[Exxon Targets Nine New Projects in 2009 Spending Plan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Exxon Mobil Corp., the world's largest company, plans to start nine new

projects this year that will pump the equivalent of 485,000 barrels of oil a day, enough to supply one-third of U.S. East Coast refineries.

[Calgary-based energy firm seeks bankruptcy protection](#)

Canadian Superior Energy Inc., a financially troubled Calgary-based oil and natural gas explorer and producer, says it has filed an application for protection from creditors.

The company said it has filed the application under the federal Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act with the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta, which was to consider the measure Thursday.

[U.S. looking at interim options for nuclear waste](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu said on Thursday that his department is now considering short-term options for storage of nuclear waste since President Obama does not support moving forward with the planned nuclear waste dump at Yucca Mountain.

The department will consider solidifying liquid radioactive waste that is currently held at 121 locations across the nation, as the government works to develop a permanent solution for safe nuclear waste disposal. Chu said the department could solidify waste at current sites without environmental risk.

"The interim storage of waste with solidification is something we can do today," Chu told lawmakers at a hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

[Ukraine Pays Gazprom in Full as Putin Warns of Cuts](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OAO Gazprom, Russia's gas exporter, said it received full payment from Ukrainian state energy company NAK Naftogaz Ukrainy for February supplies, after Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin warned of a possible cut in deliveries.

Hours after Gazprom said it was missing \$50 million from a \$360 million payment for February from Kiev-based Naftogaz, the two companies said in separate statements that all accounts for last month have been settled. Naftogaz had until March 7 to pay the rest under a contract signed in January.

[Reliant shares plunge on commodity price worries](#)

Shares of Reliant Energy Inc. on Thursday plunged after an analyst cut his 2009 earnings estimate to reflect the company's sale of its Texas retail business to NRG

Energy Inc., and expressed concern that depressed commodity prices and economic weakness will hurt the energy provider.

Reliant shares slid to \$2.24 per share, a new 52-week low and its lowest point since 2002. By midday the shares had dropped 38 cents, or 14 percent, to \$2.38.

[Nigeria Bonny oil output back up near 200,000 bpd](#)

ABUJA (Reuters) - Output at Nigeria's Bonny Light crude terminal, operated by Royal Dutch Shell, has ramped up to around 200,000 barrels per day, a senior official with state-run NNPC said on Thursday.

[Builder kidnapped in Nigeria](#)

ARMED militants have kidnapped a Lebanese man working on a road construction project in Nigeria's southwestern oil-producing state of Bayelsa, the military said overnight.

The military spokesman for a special patrol unit in the restive oil Niger Delta, Colonel Rabe Abubakar, said that the Lebanese man was seized yesterday by "fully armed" individuals.

[BP Delays Plan to Close \\$2 Billion Refining Gap With Rivals](#)

(Bloomberg) -- BP Plc, Europe's second-largest oil company, delayed a plan to close a \$2 billion earnings gap with competitors in refining and marketing after cutting 2009 investment in that business by 20 percent.

[Alberta to spend \\$40M to reclaim abandoned well sites](#)

The Alberta government is putting an additional \$30 million towards reclaiming abandoned well sites, Energy Minister Mel Knight said Wednesday.

Knight said he and his cabinet colleagues believe this idea will achieve two goals: keep people working in the oilpatch and reclaim old well sites.

[Bloom fades for agrofuels](#)

Although Brazil's development of sugar-based ethanol and biodiesel from soy beans, as fuels for export as well as domestic consumption, has been hailed as a success by many,

it is clearly not the solution to peak oil or, on the other hand, the path to energy independence or reduced carbon emissions. It is also proving to be an environmental, economic and human rights nightmare.

[Energy-gobbling city home to biggest solar roof](#)

(CNN) -- With its energy-gobbling casinos, Atlantic City, New Jersey, isn't exactly known as a city that conserves electricity. Its motto: "Always turned on."

This oceanside gambling mecca seems an unlikely place for a pioneering solar energy project. But at a ceremony scheduled for Thursday, city and state officials were to commemorate the city's convention center, newly powered in part by the largest single-roof solar-panel array in the United States.

[The upside of moving back into your parents' basement](#)

(CNN) -- Jeffrey Root was running out of money working a fast-food job when he decided to seek a last-resort remedy to his financial woes:

He quit the job and moved into his parents' basement with his wife.

Root, a 26-year-old from Springville, Utah, says that was one of the best decisions he could have made. He sees his story as proof the economic crisis has an upside: It can help people ratchet down on needless spending and focus attention on things money can't buy.

[Pemex to lower its natural gas production in 2009](#)

Mexican state oil company Pemex is forecasting that its natural gas production in 2009 will fall for the first time since 2002.

Output is expected to slip on lower associated gas production at the prolific Cantarell field, which is in its stage of natural decline, Pemex spokesperson Carlos Ramírez said, citing PEP authorities.

The company projects 6.45Bf3/d (183Mm3/d) natural gas production in 2009, down 6.76% from the 6.92Bf3/d average in 2008, Pemex E&P subsidiary PEP's deputy director of planning and evaluation, Vinicio Suro, said in a webcast.

[The coming liquid fuels crisis: the natural gas \(partial\) solution](#)

Recently, Dr. Robert Hirsch wrote an article titled "Peak oil - what do we do now?". This

brief but content-laden article opined that Peak Oil was essentially past tense, and it correctly implied that little mitigation has taken place, to date. The last paragraph included some mitigation action ideas, but notably missing was any mention of natural gas. Perhaps it was simply an oversight; but with a future liquid fuels/transportation fuels crisis in the works due to Peak Oil, citizens of the United States of America - and their leaders - need clarification.

The truth is, current natural gas prices confirm that there is a substantial surplus of natural gas deliverability in the United States. This surplus is largely due to a rapid development of several huge gas fields which were only discovered in the last several years. These new fields are often referred to as "resource plays", or "shale gas", or "unconventional gas". They are termed "unconventional" because they produce from rock that was formerly not believed capable of being a reservoir, and also due to the fact that this rock forms both the source and the trap for the natural gas.

[From shortage to glut, oil markets struggle to stabilize](#)

A tightening oil supply in conjunction with a surplus in gasoline reserves is an indication that the slowing demand for oil and gasoline, a consequence of the global recession, is resulting in simply a shift in where the glut in American fossil fuel markets is being stored. Eight months ago, however, we were frantically searching the globe for places to tap for more oil; ANWR, the OCS, oil shale, tar sands, anywhere we could find it, no matter how difficult it was to extract. The prices in the commodities markets justified the exploration into new, more difficult areas of extraction. Today, it is a different story, the world cannot shut off the spigot and is running out of places to store the glut.

[The 2008 oil price spike and the airline industry](#)

The most significant conclusion of the foregoing is that there is a real possibility that global oil production and supply might indeed reach an untimely peak. Such a peak would be devastating, especially for aviation. Timely mitigation measures, namely reducing consumption and shifting to other sources of energy, could reduce the impact. However, initiatives proposed so far have not been implemented, and the current economic slowdown coupled with the fall of the price of oil has shifted the focus away to currently more pressing challenges.

[Infighting ties up EU billions for energy security](#)

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - A plan to spend billions of euros on overhauling the European Union's energy infrastructure has become mired in internal squabbling that could deprive the region's struggling economy of a timely stimulus.

In January, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso proposed spending 3.75 billion euros (3.3 billion pounds) of "spare" EU funds to shore up infrastructure after this winter's gas crisis left thousands of East European households shivering.

[Iranians consume 2.5 times average world energy consumption](#)

Zahedan - Energy Planning managing director of Iran's Petroleum Ministry said here Wednesday consumption of energy in Iran at all sectors is 2.5 times average world usage. Mohammad Reza Khattatie who was speaking at Energy Conference held at Sistan-o-Balouchestan University added, "Last year, due to energy crisis, the energy consumption had a declining rate globally."

He added, "All the same, in Iran from the year from the year 1996 till the year 2008 the average energy consumption increased from 2.88 to 3.27 percent, that is 2.5 times average global consumption rate."

[John Michael Greer: The End of Retirement](#)

People nowadays invest for many reasons, but one of the most common is retirement. Ever since the American pension system and its government equivalent, Social Security, began to shed their reputation for stability and adequate funding, a growing number of Americans – pushed that way by large and lavishly funded ad campaigns – have placed their hopes for a comfortable old age on investments. The result is a huge fraction of Americans who are emotionally as well as financially invested in the hope that a big payoff from their assets will enable them to have the retirement of their dreams.

If you are among the people who cling to that belief, I'm sorry to say I have bad news. Over the next decade or so, the huge overhang of paper wealth that now floods the world economy is going to lose nearly all its value. As it goes, it will take your retirement funds with it.

[Wal-Mart gets a sales surge](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Wal-Mart Stores reported a strong surge in February sales Thursday that trounced analysts' expectations, citing falling gas prices for helping boost its discount customers' shopping budgets.

[Oil may touch \\$75 as China hedges US Treasury risk](#)

MUMBAI: After falling from \$147 to \$35 per barrel towards the end of last year, crude oil has once again gained and touched \$45 per barrel on increased speculation that China's stimulus plan may spur demand for the commodity near term. However, some experts are of the view that this is not just speculation but real purchases driving the prices up.

China is said to be considering buying crude oil as part of its strategy to diversify

holdings from US Treasuries. This is to hedge against the risk of US Treasury prices dropping and dollar depreciation in the long run, with the Obama government issuing government bonds worth dollar trillions to finance economic stimulus measures.

The Asian giant, which has been building a national oil stockpile since 2004, is planning to stock 100 million barrels by next year, Japanese business daily Nikkei reported last week.

[\\$40 oil 'a boost for global economy'](#)

The world economy will effectively receive a \$1 trillion stimulus if oil prices stay around \$40 a barrel for the rest of this year, the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said today.

The IEA's director Nobuo Tanaka made the claim in an interview with the Reuters news agency.

Lower fuel bills were now supporting an ailing world economy, and Tanaka urged the club of oil exporters, Opec, to be cautious before cutting oil supplies at a meeting on 15 March.

[Ruble Devaluation Has Run Its Course, Rosneft Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The ruble's devaluation has "run its course" as the currency has weakened in line with the price of oil, said Peter O'Brien, vice president for finance and investment at OAO Rosneft, Russia's largest crude producer.

"If you look at how it's done versus the oil price over the past seven to 10 years, they seem to be now in line," O'Brien said in an interview with Bloomberg Television. "A month or two ago it still looked like the ruble had a ways to go."

[Russian Reserves Have Smallest Monthly Drop Since Georgian War](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia's international reserves had the smallest monthly drop since the war against Georgia in August after oil prices advanced and the central bank refrained from spending foreign currency to support the ruble.

The world's third-largest reserves stockpile fell 1 percent in February to \$384.3 billion. They advanced \$2.4 billion, or 0.6 percent, in the week ending Feb. 27, Bank Rossii said in an e-mailed statement today. Reserves fell \$4.7 billion in the week to Feb. 20, the central bank said.

[Norway trims outlook for E&P spend](#)

Norway's statistics agency cut its forecast for 2009 investment in the country's oil and gas sector by 5.5% to Nkr137.4 billion (\$19.46 billion) and also lowered its 2008 estimates.

The forecast, based on input from oil and gas companies, followed months of falling oil prices which have strained the industry, forcing project delays.

"The decrease is mainly due to lower estimates for on-stream fields," Statistics Norway said in a statement.

This signals that oil and gas companies have prioritised cuts in investment aimed at prolonging or expanding production at fields in operation instead of curbing exploration spending.

[Norway increases state ownership in StatoilHydro](#)

Norway's government has reached its goal of increasing its ownership in national oil company StatoilHydro ASA to 67 percent by slowly buying 19.3 billion kroner (\$2.7 billion) worth of shares, the oil minister announced Thursday.

The government saw its share in the company diluted to 62.5 percent after state-controlled Statoil ASA took over the oil division of domestic rival Norsk Hydro ASA in October 2007 to form StatoilHydro.

[Talisman Energy Net Income Rises 83% on Derivatives](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Talisman Energy Inc., the Canadian explorer with reserves in North America, the North Sea and Southeast Asia, said fourth-quarter profit rose 83 percent as derivative contracts shielded the company from falling prices.

[Galp to Invest EU5.2 Billion on Tupi Find, Refineries](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Galp Energia SGPS SA, Portugal's biggest oil company, plans to invest 5.2 billion euros (\$6.5 billion) through 2013 as it develops projects including Tupi, the biggest oil discovery in the Americas in three decades.

[U.S. Energy Dept to fund \\$84 million for geothermal energy](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Energy Department on Wednesday said it plans to provide up to \$84 million in funding for geothermal energy projects.

The department said it plans to award as much as \$35 million for 20 or 30 research proposals addressing development of advanced geothermal technology.

[Cheaper solar seen spurring demand, hitting producers](#)

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - A dramatic fall in the price of solar panels has made the clean power source a better deal than ever before, but solar manufacturers' profits have dwindled thanks to that rapid decline and many may not survive to see solar bargains evolve into booming customer demand.

Skyrocketing demand for solar power was a bright spot in the global economy for much of last year until a pullback in solar subsidies in Spain and frozen credit markets dried up access to project financing choked off demand, sending panel supplies soaring and prices into a free fall.

[Ford launches major debt restructuring](#)

DETROIT (Reuters) - Ford Motor Co on Wednesday announced a plan to cut its \$25.8 billion in automotive debt by about 40 percent by offering creditors cash and new shares as it looks to slash financing costs at a time of plunging sales and tight credit.

[Rich nations revise up greenhouse gas problem](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - Industrialized nations have added greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to the annual totals of France or Australia to a 1990 baseline against which cuts required by U.N. climate treaties are measured.

Emissions reported by 34 nations for the 1990 base year that underpins U.N. efforts to rein in global warming have risen 3.5 percent overall to 17.6 billion tons in the most recent annual data from 17.0 billion in the first U.N. compilation in 1996, a Reuters survey showed on Wednesday.

That difference -- adding about 600 million tons of gases emitted mainly by burning fossil fuels to the problem -- is more than the current annual emissions of countries such as Italy, Australia or France.

[Thomas Friedman: It's worse than Gore said](#)

MUNCIE, Ind. -- Global warming is one of the top five problems facing humankind, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman told Ball State University students Wednesday.

"It's more accurate to call global warming 'weather weirdness,' " said Friedman, a best-selling author and three-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize. "The hots get hotter, the droughts get longer, the colds get colder, the wets get wetter, and the most violent storms become more numerous."

"That's what actually happens with climate change," he said.

[Natural Gas as Answer to Oil Decline Could Lead to Catastrophe, Says Leading Expert](#)

Ploughing resources into the use of natural gas as an alternative energy supply could lead to global shortage within 20 years time, according to a leading energy expert.

Professor in Physics at Uppsala University in Sweden, Kjell Aleklett, says reliance on natural gas – believed by many to be a key source of alternative fuel for the future – would be a major mistake.

Whilst it could provide a short term solution to the energy issue, Professor Aleklett believes it is not the long term answer we need to tackle what he predicts will be a continuing decline in global oil production.

[Oil falls to near \\$44 on continuing demand worries](#)

Oil prices slumped to near \$44 a barrel Thursday after large gains in the previous session as investors seemed disappointed with the lack of new stimulus measures by China and fresh data confirmed the contracting economy in the European Union.

[Putin: Russia could cut gas to Ukraine on Saturday](#)

MOSCOW – Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is warning that Russia will cut natural gas to Ukraine if the country doesn't make payments by Saturday.

Much of Russia's gas destined for Europe transits Ukraine. A dispute over payments caused a two-week cutoff of Russian gas to much of Europe this winter before it was resolved.

Ukraine's next payment is due Saturday. Ukraine's ability to pay is undermined by a severe financial crisis.

[Venezuela's Chavez seizes Cargill unit](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) – President Hugo Chavez seized a unit of American food giant Cargill on Wednesday and threatened to take over Venezuela's largest private company,

renewing a nationalization drive as the OPEC nation's oil income plunges.

[Deflationary Depression or Hyperinflation?](#) - *Depression is a far more likely outcome than Hyperinflation*

The ultimate problem is that the engine of the world economy is no longer capable of pulling it. In simple English, the question is: Will there be sufficient industrial activity across the planet to generate the economic wealth required to feed, clothe and house the masses. (And a definition of the masses is difficult to agree, because we now have 2 billion additional people in China and India who form part of the new world economy, and 2 billion people in Europe the USA and Latin America who form part of the old economy).

Clearly, if there is double the number of people who need to be accommodated and we have passed Peak Oil, then the answer to the question of hyperinflation vs depression vs healthy economic growth will depend on one thing and one thing only: Will we find a new energy paradigm that is powerful enough not only to replace oil and coal, but that can provide DOUBLE the energy that oil and coal were able to provide in combination?

[Iraq passes sharply reduced budget for 2009](#)

BAGHDAD – Iraq's parliament has passed a \$58.6 billion budget for this year after agreeing to sharp cuts amid falling oil prices.

Lawmaker Sami al-Atroushi says the budget was approved Thursday after political blocs reached a compromise to break a weeks-long deadlock.

[Granholt: Hike gas tax to fix roads](#)

LANSING (AP) — Noting that state roads are "the pits," Gov. Jennifer Granholm said Wednesday that she supports changing the state gasoline tax to raise more money as gas prices rise.

Granholm told reporters that the state's current 19-cent-per-gallon tax doesn't raise enough money to repair Michigan's aging roads.

"The roads are the pits. We have no long-term funding source to make sure the roads are smooth," she said.

[Mortgage rescue squad arrives -- but this may only be the first emergency response](#)

One of the best resources for understanding what's really going on in the energy

markets is The Oil Drum. I'll call your attention to a report on Saudi oil production -- a closely guarded secret in the kingdom with the world's largest reserves -- but data leak out. They indicate that Saudi production peaked in 2005 and is now headed down. This is Huge, as Donald Trump would say.

[Stelmach fires back against oil sands critics](#)

Smarting from a National Geographic article that described Alberta's oil sands upgraders as "dark satanic mills," Premier Ed Stelmach fired back yesterday at critics of the province's most prized energy assets.

[EPA considers tougher auto emissions rules](#)

A simmering fight over auto emissions flares anew Thursday, and the outcome could boost the price of your next new car.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency begins hearings Thursday to decide whether to reverse its 2007 decision blocking proposed California clean-air regulations that would have the effect of a dramatic rise in fuel economy requirements.

[GM auditors raise the specter of Chapter 11](#)

DETROIT (AP) -- General Motors Corp.'s auditors have raised "substantial doubt" about the troubled automaker's ability to continue operations, and the company said it may have to seek bankruptcy protection if it can't execute a huge restructuring plan.

The automaker revealed the concerns Thursday in an annual report filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

[Transition towns](#)

I'm thinking we're about due for another "British Invasion."

This time, instead of fresh musical influences, look for the entrance of the Transition Towns movement, a set of exciting ideas for creating and organizing social change in response to the challenges of peak oil and global warming.

[Electric cars could be allowed on more Colo. roads](#)

(AP:DENVER) Colorado lawmakers are considering allowing small, slow electric cars on

more roadways to reduce pollution and gasoline dependence.

The Senate gave initial backing Wednesday to a measure (Senate Bill 75) that would allow the cars on state highways with speed limits of 35 mph or less. Currently the cars, which can go up to 25 mph, are allowed on roads that aren't state highways or don't cross one.

[Siemens teams up with Russia for slice of nuclear pie](#)

BERLIN (AFP) – Siemens has become the latest German firm to up its game and tap into the renewed interest in nuclear power being seen all across the world -- but not in the company's own backyard.

['Albatross' gone, India offers hand to US](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – With a landmark nuclear deal removing an "albatross" in relations, India says it is seeking new forms of cooperation with the United States -- and sees climate change as a prime area.

[Brown: US must lead on economy, climate change](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – Prime Minister Gordon Brown urged the United States to harness historic global goodwill to pull the world out of its economic slump and lead the charge against climate change.

"We should seize this moment because never before have I seen a world willing to come together so much, never before has that been more needed," he said in a landmark speech to a rare joint session of the US Congress.

[Climate change bad news for most birds: study](#)

The study, published in the online journal PLoS ONE, analysed data for 122 wild bird species, more than a fifth of the 526 species known to nest in Europe.

"We found that the number being negatively impacted was nearly three times greater than that benefit from climate change," said co-author Frederic Jiguet, a research at France's National Museum of Natural History.

[Washington new center of global warming battle](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – European ministers are flocking to Washington drawn by the new administration's pledge to help lead the fight against climate change, an issue largely put on ice for eight years here.

Ministers from across Europe as well as Canada are taking part in a whirl of meetings here this week to gauge prospects of Congress adopting key climate-change legislation ahead of a major UN climate conference in December.



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