



Drumbeat: May 8, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 8, 2009 - 9:37am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Many gains and a big constraint for wind industry](#)

CHICAGO – A nagging issue wound its way through the chatter at what was an otherwise celebratory event for the nation's wind industry in Chicago.

The U.S. has become the world's biggest wind-power generator and of the electricity production added in the country last year, 42 percent came from wind turbines. But as more megawatts come on line, the problem of getting power from wind-swept plains to places where people actually live becomes more urgent.

"In some ways we're reaching the glass ceiling," said Rob Gramlich, vice president of policy at the American Wind Energy Association. It was the organization's biggest annual conference to date, drawing 1,200 exhibitors and more than 20,000 people.

The country's grid is aging, often overloaded and, in the case of wide-open states like Wyoming and North Dakota – some of the best places to erect wind turbines – not nearly extensive enough to move electricity to major markets where customers wait.

[Gov't sticks with Bush-era polar bear rule](#)

WASHINGTON – The Obama administration on Friday let stand a Bush-era regulation that limits protection of the polar bear from global warming, saying that a law protecting endangered species shouldn't be used to take on the broader issue of climate change.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said that he will not rescind the Bush rule, although Congress gave him authority to do so. The bear was declared threatened under the Endangered Species Act a little over a year ago, because global warming is harming its habitat.

[Acolytes of neo-Malthusian Apocalypticism](#)

The key to understanding this graph, and indeed the entire *Limits To Growth* mindset, is that they assume there is a fixed amount of something we can't do without, and then predict that if we continue to consume it, we must necessarily run out. Note, by the way,

that even the “sustainable” prediction runs out too, as it must. It just takes longer.

Perhaps one of the reasons that LtG got such play in the 1970s was that they were actually experiencing what was effectively “peak oil”, as I argue here. But the history since then actually bolsters the substitutability argument more than it does a finite-resources point of view.

First, rising prices spur development and new technologies make recovery of hitherto expensive resources cheap. This effectively increases the supply.

Second, in the case of energy, other ways of getting the same effect are found, such as buying insulation instead of more heating oil. One of the worst effects of apocalypticism is that it often impedes these efforts and thus becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. A classic example is the strangulation of nuclear power in the US contemporaneous with LtG. All our currently-running reactors are designs from the 1970s. Compare today’s computers with 1970s ones and see how different the reactors might be today if the same kind of development had taken place.

[Charlie Munger's Thoughts on Just About Everything](#)

On adapting to peak oil: "The world will adapt to higher oil prices, because it has to. It won't be the end of the world. Even at \$200 a barrel, we'd be fine. People would adapt [mentions smaller cars, electric cars, solar power]. We have an enormous power to adapt."

[Suburbia is changing, but will Long Island follow?](#)

Suburban expansion has been hit hard by the current recession and consumer preferences. Across the country, growth rates in outer suburban areas have dropped to an anemic 1.6 percent, the lowest we have seen. The flip side is that 50 percent of folks want to live near town centers, according to a poll by the National Association of Realtors, the highest in this survey since its inception.

By a two-to-one margin folks would rather have investments in mass transportation than in road building. In addition, not one new indoor mall has been built in the past two years ANYWHERE in the country, whereas during the ‘90s, 19 were built each year. To put an exclamation point on this, the second-largest mall builder in the country just filed for bankruptcy.

The trend is toward folks living in smaller housing, near transit, closer to their jobs and seeking amenities associated with town and village-style living, versus those of traditional suburbia. On Long Island, the drop in building permits for single-family homes and the increase in applications for multifamily apartments, condos and plans for new town centers mirror these trends.

[Venezuela Taking 60 Oilfield Services Companies, Chavez Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos de Venezuela SA, the state oil company, is beginning the process of taking control of assets and operations from 60 oilfield services companies today, President Hugo Chavez said.

[Number of active oil rigs falls by 17](#)

HOUSTON — The number of rigs actively exploring for oil and natural gas in the United States fell by 17 this week to 928, down nearly half from a year ago.

[Natural Gas Rises Toward Biggest Weekly Advance Since 2006](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Natural gas futures surged, heading for the biggest weekly gain in more than two years, amid signs the worst of the recession has passed and demand for the industrial fuel may begin to pick up.

[Duke Energy to Leave Trade Group Over Climate Policy](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Duke Energy Corp., the owner of utilities in the U.S. Southeast and Midwest, won't renew its membership in the National Association of Manufacturers partly because of differences over climate policy.

[Global wind power capacity up 29 percent in 2008](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Global wind capacity grew by 29 percent in 2008 with the United States surpassing Germany to become the world's leading wind power generator, Worldwatch Institute said.

The Washington-based research organisation said on Thursday that global wind capacity rose by over 27,000 megawatts (MW), or enough to power around 27 million homes, to some 120,798 MW last year.

Wind now provides 1.5 percent of the world's energy demand, up from 0.1 percent in 1997.

U.S. wind capacity increased by 50 percent to 25,170 MW, or 21 percent of world capacity.

In Europe, wind represented the leading source of new power capacity, with 8,877 MW installed last year.

This was 28 percent more than new natural gas capacity and over 10 times more than new coal, Worldwatch said.

[Venezuela's Bonds Tumble as Chavez Moves to Seize Oil Assets](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Venezuela's benchmark bonds fell the most in four months after President Hugo Chavez said he will "immediately" use a new law to start seizing assets from oilfield services companies.

[Petrobras Presalt Oil Growth to Support Valuation, Goldman Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Goldman Sachs Group Inc. boosted its U.S. share-price forecast for Petroleo Brasileiro SA by 25 percent as the Brazilian oil producer's development of the pre-salt region may give support to valuations.

Investors should take a "longer-term view of Petrobras," as the Rio de Janeiro-based oil company is known, because the offshore reserves won't contribute cash flow until "some time next decade," analyst Arjun Murti wrote in a note.

[Kurdistan to Start Tawke, Taq-Taq Oil Exports in June](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil exports from the Tawke and Taq-Taq fields in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq will start next month, according to the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Exports from the Tawke field will commence June 1 at a rate of 60,000 barrels a day, once it has been linked with Iraq's main export pipeline to Turkey, Ashti Hawrami, Kurdistan's minister for natural resources, said in a statement on the KRG's Web site. Exports from Taq-Taq will start at a rate of 40,000 barrels a day, according to the statement.

[China explains details of new oil pricing mechanism](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China's top economic planner Friday announced details of the country's new oil pricing mechanism, for the first time after the new pricing system kicked in at the beginning of this year.

In a statement on its website, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said China would adjust domestic fuel prices when global crude prices reported a daily fluctuation band of more than 4 percent for 22 working days in a row.

[Shell Withdraws Alaska Well Project Amid Opposition](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Royal Dutch Shell Plc, Europe's largest oil company, has formally withdrawn a three-year plan for exploration in Alaska's Beaufort Sea because of environmental issues.

"The 2007-2009 plan of exploration no longer represents Shell's current drilling objectives," The Hague-based Shell said in an e-mailed statement today. "Additionally, Shell will file a 2010 plan of exploration that reflects Shell's current drilling plans for Camden Bay," the company added in the statement.

[Toyota sees losses deepening this year](#)

TOKYO - Toyota Motor Corp. lost \$7.7 billion (765.8 billion yen) in the January-March quarter — a bigger loss than General Motors reported — resulting in its worst fiscal year since the Japanese automaker was founded in 1937.

Toyota also warned Friday that because of the global auto slump its net loss would deepen in the year through March 2010 to \$5.55 billion (550 billion yen) from \$4.4 billion (436.94 billion yen) in the just-ended fiscal year.

[Maximum cash for clunkers](#)

The "cash for clunkers" bill now making its way through Congress won't do much for car owners who want to trade in for a more fuel efficient model. If you own an SUV, though, you could stand to gain a lot.

The reason this rule won't help car buyers is that most cars, even older ones, aren't inefficient enough to qualify as "clunkers." The ones that do, meaning they get less than 18 mpg, are large luxury models that are probably worth more than the \$4,500 credit for scrapping them.

[Sharon Astyk: Barter, Baby, Barter](#)

Which brings me to the marvellous Barbara Ehrenreich's latest essay, which is just a delight - in it she properly takes aim at the idea that the newly unemployed should work full time at job hunting, and argues that this is keeping us artificially passive. She offers a list of useful things one could and should do with their time, now that they are unemployed, to which I'd like to suggest "get as far out of the money economy as possible." Now this is not a magical panacea, and for households with a single earner, or multi-earner households where all earners are unemployed, at some point, someone is going to have to get a job if at all possible, even if it is a crappy one.

But until a job appears, the reality is that there are things one can do to minimize one's dependency on the formal economy - and those things include thrift, subsistence labor (ie, making, scavenging, growing, preserving, fixing the things you would ordinarily pay

for), and barter. Frankly, I think that these are more productive and better things for the world as a whole than many of the things we do as jobs, and to the extent that it is possible for one to spend one's unemployment fighting for justice or even just growing beans (ideally both), I think that most of us do less harm this way, and a great deal more good.

[What If the Economy Never Recovers?](#)

Given the circumstances, it's entirely understandable that President Obama, Congress, the private sector, and advocates across the political spectrum are working hard to "stimulate" the economy, to get the consumer growth-fest back on track (though perhaps at least powered by green energy).

But what if the growth-based economy never comes back? What if we're actually bumping up against the limits that our finite earth has been screaming at us to pay attention to, but which we've assumed we would never reach? We're *above* nature, after all, not subject to its laws. Or are we?

[Ethanol vs. electricity](#)

Suppose you take an acre's worth of switchgrass and turn it into ethanol for your flex-fuel car, while your neighbors take their acre's worth and burn it in a power plant to generate electricity for their plug-in hybrid. Which car would go farther?

If you guessed that your car would, you'd be way off. About 7,000 miles off, in fact.

In a study published online today by the journal Science, researchers say using biomass to generate electricity is more efficient for transportation than making biofuels - and might actually do more to cut CO₂ emissions as well.

[With Easy Oil Gone, Pemex Sobers Up](#)

Cantarell's decline has marked the end of an era of easy oil for Petróleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, as the state oil giant is called. Needless to say, Pemex needs to stabilize production, which today stands at 2.7 million barrels of oil a day, down from 3.3 million at its peak. The company, however, is realizing how soft its hands became by coasting through the late 1980s and 1990s, not investing enough in exploration, particularly in deep waters, where the future growth of Pemex rests.

"That was not the correct strategy," Carlos Morales Gil, Pemex's director of exploration and production, said during a speech here Wednesday at the Offshore Technology Conference. "We cannot stay dependent on one single reservoir anymore, even if it's very good. That is something that we have to keep in mind every day that we wake up."

[China April fuel stocks fall 15 pct - source](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Refined fuel inventories held by China's top two oil firms fell 15 percent to below 12 million tonnes during April, while their fuel sales rose 5.2 percent, an industry official with access to the data told Reuters on Friday.

The fall in fuel stocks at Sinopec O386.HK and CNPC is the second monthly decline in a row, following nearly a year of rising inventories in the world's second biggest oil-consuming nation.

The source said March's stockdraw was 6.1 percent, much less than a figure of 14.7 percent reported last month by the Beijing News, which cited industry figures. The sudden fall was explained by some analysts as evidence of rising demand and by others as an indication of wholesalers stockpiling fuel.

[China Refineries to Have 'Normal' Margin With \\$80 Oil](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chinese refineries, which rely on imports to meet more than half of their crude-oil needs, will have "normal" profits when crude trades below \$80 a barrel, said the nation's top economic planning agency.

The government will consider subsidizing refiners to guarantee fuel supplies when crude oil exceeds \$130 a barrel, the National Development and Reform Commission said on its Web site today. China will likely "freeze" fuel prices should crude surpass that level, the commission said in an outline of its fuel-pricing mechanism introduced in December.

[Alleged fuel shortage another media campaign of the opposition in Venezuela](#)

The alleged fuel shortage in Venezuela is part of a media campaign of the opposition to generate chaos in the country, because local refineries are producing fuel normally, said the oil expert David Paravisini.

[China April Auto Sales Jump 37% on Government Support](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China's passenger-vehicle sales rose 37 percent last month, the most in three years, as government subsidies spurred demand for minivans and small cars.

Local drivers bought 831,000 cars, minivans and other passenger vehicles in April, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said in an e-mailed statement today. Vehicle sales, including buses and trucks, rose 25 percent to 1.15 million.

[Another Case for Making People Pay for Scarce Blacktop](#)

I do think there is an underlying shift in preferences taking place, helped along by demographic changes and economic conditions, but as Nate says, most Americans do not live in places where they can easily reduce the miles they travel. Communities in which most daily tasks can be accomplished on foot or bicycle are fairly rare, and obviously transit infrastructure is underdeveloped in this country.

So it seems really, really odd that we'd use federal money, stimulus or otherwise, on new road miles. It doesn't help congestion, and it diverts resources from alternative investments that would make it cheaper and easier for people to substitute away from driving. The best way to address that is to make people pay for use of scarce blacktop. Keep in mind, because transit-accessible and walkable neighborhoods are rare, they tend to be expensive, which means that those who can least afford to handle increases in driving costs are the ones with the least access to alternatives (or good alternatives, anyway).

[Oil Workers Stay Put in a Downturn](#)

The downturn has helped management with one of its biggest headaches during the rapid growth: employee turnover. When oil prices were high a year ago, Diamond and rivals Transocean (RIG) and Noble (NE) couldn't build new rigs quickly enough to meet demand. There were many opportunities for low-level rig workers, known as "roustabouts" and "roughnecks," to work at other drill contracting companies and for senior management to find positions at oil companies. People jumped ship when another company dangled a wage increase.

[Oil Glut Takes Temporary Back Seat in Setting Crude Prices](#)

Analysts with Goldman Sachs Group Inc. (GS) on Tuesday described the market as in a "tight race," with the direction of oil prices hinging on whether demand can recover before storage space runs out. If the economy wins, oil prices could reach \$65 a barrel in the second half of the year; if terminals hit full capacity, prices could be pushed down to \$45 a barrel by July.

[Obama Omits New Gulf of Mexico Drilling Tax, for Now](#)

The Obama administration left a plan to raise \$5 billion through a new excise tax on oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico out of its proposed fiscal 2010 budget - but may revive those plans when it provides more detail next week.

[Next Gen Biofuel: Verenium's Riva on Cellulosic Ethanol's Challenges](#)

The Obama administration's new road map for biofuels, announced this week, was seen as a broad endorsement of next-generation biofuels, relegating corn-based ethanol to a fading role.

[The Usefulness of Fear](#)

Our sense of entitlement and hopefulness has created a blinding spell of optimism and trust that has been difficult to dislodge. This attitudinal barrier has been the unspoken obstacle that environmentalists and health-care professions have struggled against for decades. People who are neither fearful nor doubtful are unable to anticipate the sorry consequences of careless behaviour. So we still insist on incontrovertible proof to counteract our faith that whatever we make is good. The deleterious health effects of smoking have finally been established. But do we still need more evidence about trans fats, pesticides, asbestos, mercury, arsenic or a plethora of complex concoctions produced by the ingenuity of our chemical industries? How many more statistics do we need to establish that oil tankers will inevitably spill their toxic cargo? How many more studies do we need to establish that open-net salmon farms are environmentally unsound? The unquestioned trust and boundless optimism of a society without fear has made a mockery of the Precautionary Principle's sensible carefulness.

[Food Miles: Do They Really Matter?](#)

Despite significant recent public concern and media attention to the environmental impacts of food, few studies in the United States have systematically compared the life-cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with food production against long-distance distribution, aka "food-miles." We find that although food is transported long distances in general (1640 km delivery and 6760 km life-cycle supply chain on average) the GHG emissions associated with food are dominated by the production phase, contributing 83% of the average U.S. household's 8.1 t CO₂e/yr footprint for food consumption. Transportation as a whole represents only 11% of life-cycle GHG emissions, and final delivery from producer to retail contributes only 4%. Different food groups exhibit a large range in GHG-intensity; on average, red meat is around 150% more GHG-intensive than chicken or fish. Thus, we suggest that dietary shift can be a more effective means of lowering an average household's food-related climate footprint than "buying local." Shifting less than one day per week's worth of calories from red meat and dairy products to chicken, fish, eggs, or a vegetable-based diet achieves more GHG reduction than buying all locally sourced food.

[Eastern Cape mall powers up with solar and wind](#)

Local alternative energy company SolarCon has supplied IBC photovoltaic (PV) solar panels to the Equinox Mall in Jeffrey's Bay on the Eastern Cape coastline. The eight 260 W panels will provide 40% of the total alternative energy requirement daily at the mall, with the balance of what is a 3kW wind turbine providing the other 60% of renewable-energy.

[How much oil have we used?](#)

Estimates of how much crude oil we have extracted from the planet vary wildly. Now, UK researchers have published a new estimate in the International Journal of Oil, Gas and Coal Technology that suggests we may have used more than we think.

The idea that we are running out of oil is not a new one, but do we even know how much oil we have extracted from since the first commercial oil wells were sunk in the middle of the nineteenth century? In 2008, chemists Istvan Lakatos and Julianna Lakatos-Szabo of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences theorised that less than 100 billion tonne of crude oil has been produced since 1850 and that the average annual production rate is less than 700 million barrels per year.

They compared proven reserves and estimates of yet-to-find (YTF) resources and echoed the sentiment that we will soon face oil shortages even though a substantial part of those reserves remain in the ground untapped.

Now, John Jones in the School of Engineering, at the University of Aberdeen, UK, suggests that the figures cited by Istvan Lakatos and Julianna Lakatos-Szabo for which they give no references grossly underestimates how much oil we have used already. Jones says that we have used at least 135 billion barrels of oil since 1870, the period during which J.D. Rockefeller established The Standard Oil Company and began drilling in earnest.

[Jeremy Rifkin: Leading the Way to the Third Industrial Revolution](#)

While oil, coal, and natural gas will continue to provide a substantial portion of the world's and the European Union's energy well into the 21st century, there is a growing consensus that we are entering a twilight period where the full costs of our fossil fuel addiction is beginning to act as a drag on the world economy.

[Ship Owners Forced to Pay to Carry Middle East Oil](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Ship owners are being forced to pay to carry oil from the Middle East to the U.S. for the first time in at least a decade after demand collapsed and the fleet expanded.

Supertanker owners make no rental income from the voyages and are paying \$3,445 a day toward fuel costs, data from the Baltic Exchange in London show. Rental rates normally cover fuel costs. The journey to the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port from Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia's largest export facility, earned owners as much as \$104,663 a day in July.

Some owners may be prepared to subsidize voyages as they relocate vessels to the Atlantic, Anders Karlsen, a shipping analyst at Nordea Markets in Oslo, said by phone today. The alternative would be paying all the fuel costs themselves and sailing empty.

Owners could also mothball ships, Karlsen said.

[North Sea Brent Crude Oil Daily Shipments to Drop 11% in June](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Daily shipments of North Sea Brent crude, part of the price benchmark for almost two-thirds of the world's oil, will drop 11 percent in June.

Tankers are set to load 122,267 barrels a day of Brent crude next month, compared with 136,774 barrels a day scheduled for May, according to two traders with knowledge of the loading schedule.

[Venezuela to nationalize oil service companies](#)

CARACAS (AFP) – Venezuela will Friday begin to expropriate some oil service providers, after the congress passed a law extending the state's control to all activities related to the oil industry.

"We will start to recover assets that will now belong to the state, as they always should have," President Hugo Chavez said.

The law approved Thursday by a majority of the National Assembly "reserves for the state, the goods and services connected to primary hydrocarbon activities."

[PDVSA Takes Wood Group Contract, Squeezes Companies](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos de Venezuela SA took over the contract of energy services company John Wood Group Plc, as the Venezuelan state oil company moved to seize greater control of the petroleum industry.

[Obama budget rescinds energy industry tax breaks](#)

WASHINGTON – President Barack Obama outlined a budget plan Thursday that would end \$26 billion in oil and gas industry tax breaks, point to a new direction for dealing with nuclear waste and shift government aggressively toward helping to develop renewable energy sources.

Obama called the tax break to the oil and gas industry "unjustifiable loopholes" in the tax system that in most cases other companies do not get.

[First comprehensive atlas maps riches of Arctic](#)

OTTAWA — Canada has published the first comprehensive atlas of Arctic geology — everything from continental plates to rock types that signal where to hunt for gold, diamonds, gas and oil.

[China Oil-Product Demand to Grow at 0.6-0.7 of GDP](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China Petroleum & Chemical Corp., Asia's biggest refiner, expects the nation's oil-product demand to grow at 0.6 to 0.7 times that of the gain in gross domestic product, said Zheng Baomin, director of investor relations.

The government has forecast GDP to expand 8 percent in 2009, Zheng said at a conference today in Singapore. This equates to China's oil-product demand growing between 4.8 percent and 5.6 percent this year, according to Bloomberg calculations based on Zheng's speech.

[Oil Set to Break Resistance Point, PVM Says: Technical Analysis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil is set to reach \$62.65 a barrel "in the near future" and rally to \$78 within six months as prices retrace the surge that started in 1998, according to technical analysis by PVM Oil Associates Ltd.

[Russia's Ruble Extends Record Rally as Oil, Stocks Advance](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia's ruble climbed against its target currency basket, extending a record run of weekly gains, as surging oil prices and rising stocks spurred policy makers to let it strengthen.

[Porter Stansberry Discusses Sea Change in U.S. Natural Gas Industry](#)

Old hands in the industry will tell you that \$3.50 is the shut-in price. Once you go below \$3.50, people will stop producing because it costs them more to produce than the price. The big problem with that argument is that a lot of these wells are now coal-bed methane wells, and you can't shut them in. They get connected to pipelines and they just run. They run because each well has a very small amount of production. It doesn't do any good to turn all these wells off. It would cost more to turn them off than to keep them running.

[NY trial to decide Shell's role in Nigerian deaths](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) – A civil trial that will judge any involvement by oil giant Royal Dutch Shell in the executions of protesters in Nigeria will start this month in New York

City, more than 13 years after their deaths.

Shell is accused of human rights abuses, including in connection with the 1995 hangings of prominent activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other protesters by Nigeria's then-military government. Shell has denied allegations of involvement.

[Ford CO2 emissions show biggest improvement](#)

Ford's CO2 emissions have improved more than any other manufacturer, according to green car website Clean Green Cars.

The introduction the Ka and Fiesta, Ford's newest fuel-efficient models, are largely responsible for the reduction in CO2 emissions.

[Auto industry suppliers cross over to wind power](#)

Merrill is among dozens of companies at the American Wind Energy Association conference in Chicago — which ends Thursday — that have their traded auto-related business for a niche in wind-power.

"We have seen these indicators for years," Ostrander, an engineer, said of the auto industry. "They needed to clean up their own closets."

[Japan nuke plant to restart two years after quake](#)

TOKYO (AFP) – The world's largest nuclear power plant will resume operations this weekend, two years after it was shut down following a strong earthquake off the Japanese coast, according to the operator.

One of seven reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, located 300 kilometres (185 miles) northwest of Tokyo, will likely start test operations on Saturday, said operator Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO).

[Gook: forest industry needs to be more sustainable](#)

Re-localization, he says, is also important for the agriculture industry, which includes Community Share Agriculture models and food security initiatives.

"These are the very fundamental pillars for our survival, especially in the new age of peak oil and needing to move to renewable energy future," he says. "We can't rely on trucks bringing lettuce up from Mexico anymore."

[Domesticated bee numbers soar amid buzzing demand](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The number of domesticated bees is on the rise worldwide despite declining numbers of wild honey bees in the United States and Europe, a study said Thursday.

"The honey bee decline observed in the USA and in other European countries including Great Britain, which has been attributed in part to parasitic mites and more recently to colony collapse disorder, could be misleading us to think that this is a global phenomenon," said Marcelo Aizen of Universidad Nacional del Comahue in Argentina.

"We found here that is not the case."

[Christians Unsure About Climate Change's Causes, but They Back Solutions](#)

Can evangelicals and Roman Catholics be skeptical of human-created climate change but still want to combat global warming? Sure.

[US won't drop cap-and-trade auctions: White House](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The White House is committed to auctioning off polluter permits under a "cap-and-trade" system to fight climate change, a top official said Thursday in remarks likely to anger US industry.

"You should anticipate no changes in our climate proposals," Office of Management and Budget chief Peter Orszag told reporters, despite reported hints that President Barack Obama might now compromise about the auctions.

[Obama Climate Bill Could Anger Greens](#)

Eager to get a climate change bill out of committee, the White House is telling Democrats it will accept a deal on cap-and-trade legislation that gives away some -- possibly even a large majority -- of the carbon permits to business.

[Gov't faces weekend deadline on polar bear rule](#)

WASHINGTON – A decision involving the iconic polar bear could determine whether protecting endangered species might also help save the earth from global warming.

The Obama administration is approaching a weekend deadline to decide whether it should allow government agencies to cite the federal Endangered Species Act, which

protects the bear, for imposing limits on greenhouse gases from power plants, factories and automobiles even if the pollution occurs thousands of miles from where the polar bear lives.

[The Climate Debate Heats Up](#)

Earlier this week, and not a moment too soon, President Obama put the weight of his office behind a bill that aims to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil, tackle the rise in greenhouse gases and create millions of clean-energy jobs.



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