



DrumBeat: May 10, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 10, 2009 - 10:22am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

Tags: [2009](#), [drumbeat: may 10](#) [[list all tags](#)]

[David MacKay: Yes, we can solve the energy crisis](#)

We have an addiction to fossil fuels, and it's not sustainable. The developed world gets 80% of its energy from fossil fuels – Britain gets 90%. This is unsustainable for three reasons.

First, easily accessible fossil fuels will run out, so we will eventually have to get our energy from elsewhere.

Second, burning fossil fuels is having a measurable, and very probably dangerous, effect on the climate.

Third, even if we don't care about climate change, a sharp reduction in Britain's fossil-fuel consumption would seem a wise move if we care about security of supply. Continued rapid use of the North Sea oil and gas reserves will otherwise soon force Britain to depend on imports from untrustworthy foreigners. (I hope you can hear my tongue in my cheek.)

[DAVID MACKAY: How 125 light bulbs can end the energy crisis](#)

The public debate about our energy crisis will be a waste of time - unless we start using numbers we all understand.

[China builds coal stockpile bases](#)

CHINA, the world's largest coal producer and consumer, plans to build stockpiles of the fuel in the eastern province of Shandong to ensure supplies and help stabilise prices, the nation's top economic planner says.

The province would complete the construction of four to six coal stockpile bases within the next three to five years, the National Development and Reform Commission said.

The bases would each have a capacity to store more than 20 million tonnes of coal.

[Shell Site in Western Ireland Attacked; Seven Men Charged](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Irish police charged seven men after a protest late yesterday against a Royal Dutch Shell Plc gas pipeline in western Ireland.

[Kuwait's oil revenue up 44 pct in 2008](#)

DUBAI (Reuters) - Kuwait's oil revenue surged 44 percent in 2008 to 22.67 billion dinars (\$77.74 billion) as energy prices soared, accounting for 94 percent of the OPEC producer's total state revenue, central bank data showed.

Kuwait's oil revenue rose from 15.75 billion dinars in 2007 after crude prices rallied to a peak of almost \$150 a barrel last July, according to data posted on the central bank's website in a quarterly bulletin. (www.cbk.gov.kw)

[Iraqi govt OKs Kurds crude oil export](#)

AFP - BAGHDAD: An Iraqi oil official says Iraq's central government has approved Kurdish plans to start exporting crude oil next month. Oil Ministry spokesman Assem Jihad told The Associated Press on Sunday that the oil would be marketed by the government-owned State Oil Marketing Organization and shipped through a pipeline to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan.

[U.S. Drops Research Into Fuel Cells for Cars](#)

WASHINGTON — Cars powered by hydrogen fuel cells, once hailed by President George W. Bush as a pollution-free solution for reducing the nation's dependence on foreign oil, will not be practical over the next 10 to 20 years, the energy secretary said Thursday, and the government will cut off funds for the vehicles' development.

[Cogeneration: This Ain't Your Daddy's Energy Plan](#)

Producing both electricity and heating from the same source is much more efficient than the energy production system we have now, but there are some problems in large-scale implementation. Although some countries, such as the Netherlands, have large centralized cogeneration plants, it is hard and inefficient to distribute the heat energy, and efficiency is lost in the transmission of electricity as well. On a smaller scale, several universities, including New York University, are considering using cogeneration to produce their heat and electricity and Massachusetts Institute of Technology has implemented a 10-year, 40 million dollar initiative to do just that. The largest potential for cogeneration, however, is in micro cogeneration, where small, highly efficient units produce both electricity and heat for individual buildings or complexes. If used with

something called an absorption chiller, the heat energy can even be used to produce cold water for air conditioning in the summer.

[Nuclear weapons and 'fourth generation' reactors](#)

In short, IFRs could produce lots of greenhouse-friendly energy and while they're at it they can "eat" nuclear waste and fissile materials that might otherwise find their way into nuclear weapons.

Too good to be true? Sadly, yes.

[Shift to Saving May Be Downturn's Lasting Impact](#)

The economic downturn is forcing a return to a culture of thrift that many economists say could last well beyond the inevitable recovery.

This is not because Americans have suddenly become more financially virtuous or have learned the error of their free-spending ways. Instead, these experts say, Americans may have no choice but to continue pinching pennies.

[Weather adds to farmers' financial uncertainty](#)

"Without moisture this wheat is going to continue to die," he said.

Add in the high costs of planting last fall -- the spike in oil prices drove up the price of petroleum-based fertilizers, fuel and chemicals -- and the chances of making a profit this year look bleak.

"Four or five years ago, we were buying \$350 to \$400 a ton fertilizer. This wheat crop here, when we fertilized last August or September, fertilizer was \$1,100," Sellard says.

"Even if we had a decent crop, even if we cut it decently, this wheat crop will be in the red."

[Saudi, UAE, Kuwait economies to shrink says IMF](#)

The International Monetary Fund slashed its 2009 economic growth forecast for the Gulf region by more than half to 1.3 percent as the three largest oil-exporting economies, including Saudi Arabia, shrink in a global slowdown.

The IMF, which said in February Gulf states were set to grow 3.5 percent this year, warned on Sunday of downside risks from sustained low oil prices and any further deterioration in bank balance sheets due to exposure to weakening real estate markets.

[Kuwait, China sign energy and other agreements](#)

China and Kuwait signed agreements on oil and gas and the environment Sunday, as Beijing pushes to deepen ties to resource-rich countries to feed its energy-hungry economy.

[Oman oil output rises 6.1% in Q1 2009](#)

Oman's oil output in the first quarter of 2009 rose 6.1 percent on the year to 786,700 barrels per day (bpd), official data published on Sunday showed.

[Iraqi Kurdish region says it expects "historic" oil windfall](#)

Arbil, Iraq - The government of the semi-autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq announced on Sunday that it expected a 'historic' windfall from oil exports from the region, despite a dispute with Baghdad over the exports.

The regional government's Ministry of Natural Resources on Sunday said the Kurdish region would export roughly 100,000 barrels of crude oil a day in the next month from two oil fields, days after an official from the Oil Ministry in Baghdad denied there had been an agreement on exports.

[Gas pipe fire lights up Moscow](#)

The fire is Moscow's worst for at least 20 years. There are conflicting reports of injuries: some said five people were hurt, but there has been no confirmation from city authorities. Nearby homes were evacuated as firefighters tried to stop the blaze spreading. Phone lines in the area were cut as underground cables melted.

Similar fires have been seen recently in other parts of the former Soviet Union. They are usually blamed on technical problems in ageing equipment which has suffered years of under-investment

[Peak oil fails to register with Gordon Campbell and Carole James](#)

The two main provincial political parties, the B.C. Liberals and the B.C. NDP, don't like talking about peak oil. They both seem to think it's good public policy to build a new multibillion-dollar bridge across the Fraser River.

Today, I've been reading Jeff Rubin's startling new book, *Why Your World Is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller: Oil and The End of Globalization* (Random House Canada, \$29.95). And I've got to say, it's pretty depressing to think that the two people with a shot at becoming premier both seem completely oblivious about international oil markets.

[It's Not All Or Nothing In The Oil Versus Alternatives Debate](#)

We should step away from the all-or-nothing debate on fossil fuels vs. renewables, they said, stop demonizing any of our potential energy sources, and get serious about addressing our energy problem before it's too late. As the head of the API said, "The energy issue will intensify until cooler heads prevail," and the debate desperately needs to be depoliticized.

But in the next breath, apparently unaware of the obvious contradiction in it, I saw those same executives complain bitterly about the policymakers who stand in the way of their progress. I heard them discount the potential of wind and solar to meet our energy needs, while trumpeting the much smaller footprint of modern oil and gas production. I heard overblown claims about how technology will continually increase reserves, and how offshore drilling in America could solve our problems if only they were allowed to do it.

[White Energy files for bankruptcy protection](#)

(Reuters) - Ethanol producer White Energy Inc filed for Chapter 11 protection in a Delaware bankruptcy court on Thursday, citing adverse market conditions, court documents showed.

In court filings, the company said that while cost of raw materials to produce ethanol were high, excess supply of ethanol in the market has kept ethanol prices low, resulting in "minimal or non-existent profit margins."

[When Wilmington had windmills](#)

A good rule of thumb would be, where there were cows, there would probably be a windmill to pump the water. Cows use a lot of water. Capt. Larz Neilson wrote that he remembered a windmill at Tom Daly's dairy farm on Andover Street, known as Knollwood Farm.

Windmills began to go out of use in the early 1900's, when people changed over to gasoline pump engines. In 1911, Reading Municipal Light Dept. wired the town, and many people got electric pumps. In 1928, Wilmington installed a town water system making windmill pumps obsolete.

[Tree-Killing Hurricanes Could Contribute To Global Warming](#)

ScienceDaily — A first-of-its kind, long-term study of hurricane impact on U.S. trees shows that hurricane damage can diminish a forest's ability to absorb carbon dioxide, a major contributor to global warming, from the atmosphere. Tulane University researchers from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology examined the impact of tropical cyclones on U.S. forests from 1851–2000 and found that changes in hurricane frequency might contribute to global warming.

[Cleanup funding benefits energy giants](#)

Reporting from Sacramento -- Some of the country's wealthiest oil companies and gas station chains have collected hundreds of millions of dollars from a cleanup fund conceived to help smaller, financially struggling entities.

Environmentalists and former lawmakers who pushed to establish the fund, which motorists pay into whenever they buy gasoline in California, say they never intended it for large energy companies with the means to repair environmental damage from their own operations. Yet big firms have taken \$490 million from the fund since it was created in 1989.



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