



DrumBeat: June 27, 2009

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Saving Ourselves: Consuming Within Recharge Rates](#)

In fact, every resource has an inherent recharge rate, in the sense that the "balance of a system can be expressed as a relationship relating all of the inputs and outputs into or out of the system." Water is perhaps the easiest to measure, as in the swimming pool example, although in the real world variables such as soil moisture levels and the location of stormwater basins can make the calculations somewhat more complex. Still, rates are estimable if not outright calculable in most locales, suggesting that in practice we can find the balance point between output (i.e., what we consume) and input (i.e., what gets replaced) for any given resource. Using this framework, the distinction between renewable and nonrenewable resources become blurred, since everything has an inherent (or at least potential) rate of renewal and can thus be sustained over time.

[A Buffett Turns to Farming in Africa](#)

The middle child of Warren Buffett is an unassuming Illinois soybean and corn farmer. But for the past four years, he has played a behind-the-scenes role in the global war against hunger. Given a small portion of his father's fortune for philanthropy, he spends much of the year traveling through Africa, experimenting with ideas for helping poor farmers produce enough crops to feed their families and so lessen the continent's food shortage. His foundation is spending about \$38 million this year on projects such as developing a disease-resistant sweet potato, encouraging poachers to switch to farming, providing micro credits, and helping farmers market their crops to United Nations' hunger-relief programs. Probably his most ambitious project under way would give African corn breeders royalty-free access to Monsanto's biotechnology for drought-tolerant corn.

[The Transition Initiative](#)

A WHILE AGO, I heard an American scientist address an audience in Oxford, England, about his work on the climate crisis. He was precise, unemotional, rigorous, and impersonal: all strengths of a scientist.

The next day, talking informally to a small group, he pulled out of his wallet a much-loved photo of his thirteen-year-old son. He spoke as carefully as he had before, but this

time his voice was sad, worried, and fatherly. His son, he said, had become so frightened about climate change that he was debilitated, depressed, and disturbed. Some might have suggested therapy, Prozac, or baseball for the child. But in this group one voice said gently, "What about the Transition Initiative?"

[Nigerian Militants Reject Amnesty. Say Key Issues Not Addressed](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, the main armed group in Nigeria's oil region, said it rejected a government amnesty offer because it failed to address key issues.

"The proclamation of amnesty seems to be directed at criminals," Jomo Gbomo, spokesman for the group, also known as MEND, said in an e-mailed statement yesterday. "If the proclamation was directed at freedom fighters with a cause, it would have addressed the root issues."

[Militarism and oil production](#)

The National Assembly's probe of activities in Nigeria's oil and gas sector brings out to the public domain issues and challenges surrounding operations in the sector, which the Federal Government, at best would wish remains hidden.

On daily basis crude oil production are suspended and most times outrightly shut down as a result of the growing insecurity in the nation's oil-rich Niger Delta.

Recent militant attacks on oil facilities in the Niger Delta have caused the country daily production cutback of over 540,000, or about \$39million losses in revenue.

[Angola: Governments Urge Cooperation Between Oil Companies](#)

Luanda — Angola and Russia have decided to urge their oil companies to establish profitable cooperation for both sides, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos disclosed Friday.

[New flight could stimulate oil and gas ties between Louisiana, Mexico](#)

The AeroMexico nonstop flight between New Orleans and Mexico City will encourage business ties between Louisiana and Mexico, particularly in the oil and gas industry, experts said at a Friday morning forum sponsored by the World Trade Center.

[Canaport terminal the right facility at the wrong time: analyst](#)

The arrival this past week of the first shipment of liquefied natural gas to New Brunswick's brand-new Canaport terminal might be a seminal event in the country's energy history but likely will have little short-term impact on North American markets, analysts said.

[Obama Picked Wrong Advisers for Auto Overhaul, Gerstner Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Louis Gerstner, the former International Business Machines Corp. chief executive officer, praised President Barack Obama's economic performance while criticizing the way the White House handled restructurings of General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC.

"Who did we pick to figure out how to fix the automobile industry? We picked two investment bankers," Gerstner said in an interview with Bloomberg Television's "Conversations with Judy Woodruff" airing today. "It's sort of like asking the arsonist to run the fire department."

[North Sea tax break plea as oil exploration plummets](#)

The UK Government has been warned that fresh incentives are needed to kick-start exploration in the North Sea after new figures revealed a huge drop in the number of oil wells being drilled.

Statistics released by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) yesterday showed oil exploration – the "lifeblood" of the industry – had plunged by more than 75% in the first quarter of 2009.

In the first three months of last year, 13 exploration wells were being drilled by offshore companies. However, this year the number started has slumped to just three, as the oil price dipped as low as \$35 a barrel.

[Oil tumbles more than \\$1](#)

LONDON (Reuters) -- Oil prices fell more than a dollar on Friday, pressured by weakness on Wall Street and news top African oil producer Nigeria would halt a battle with rebels in its energy-rich Niger Delta.

Crude oil fell \$1.07 to settle at \$69.16 a barrel. London Brent fell 86 cents to \$68.92 a barrel.

[Russia signals it will stay out of OPEC](#)

LUANDA (Reuters) - Russia clearly sees itself as an observer and not a member of OPEC, President Dmitry Medvedev told the oil producer group's current president on Friday.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which accounts for around 40 percent of the world's oil production, has repeatedly invited Russia to participate at its meetings in the hope that it would join or work with the group.

'In regards to our interaction with OPEC our positions are clear. Angola is a member of OPEC, while Russia participates in OPEC as an observer,' Medvedev said at a news conference alongside Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, whose country holds the rotating OPEC presidency.

Medvedev said the current ways in which oil prices were determined were too 'complex and lacked transparency,' adding that the oil market should not depend on one economy -- a reference to the United States.

[Putin invites Shell to join Sakhalin 3, 4 projects](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has invited Royal Dutch Shell to participate in Sakhalin-3 and Sakhalin-4 natural gas projects at a meeting with Chief Executive Jeroen van der Veer on Saturday.

"We are prepared to pursue cooperation further with your company having in mind Sakhalin-3 and Sakhalin-4," Putin said. "These require offshore production in difficult deep sea areas where your experience will be very valuable."

[Gazprom in billion-dollar energy deal in Namibia](#)

Russian energy giant Gazprom OAO said yesterday its banking unit had struck a \$1-billion deal with Namibian energy company Namcor to build a new power plant in Namibia. Under the deal, Russia would build a power plant generating energy for both Namibia and South Africa, getting a foothold in the lucrative Kudu gas field, Namibia's only commercial field to date.

[Refinery deal ends strikes](#)

Wildcat strikes by thousands of contract workers were ending yesterday after a deal was agreed to resolve a bitter row over jobs at an oil refinery.

[Japan firms set to win \\$10 billion Iraq oilfield development contract](#)

TOKYO, (RTRS): A group of Japanese companies led by refiner Nippon Oil Corp is in

the final stage of talks to win a \$10 billion development contract for Iraq's huge Nassiriya oilfield, a Japanese newspaper reported on Friday, the biggest foreign oil deal since the fall of Saddam.

[Competition for remaining oil will be fierce](#)

Current thoughts: Industry secrecy clouds the issue, but peak oil worldwide may have occurred in 2005. Many economists believe the resulting price increases to \$140 a barrel last summer triggered the global recession. Enjoy the present low gas price (\$2.50) because it's only temporary.

Americans are so in love with their cars that they will sacrifice almost everything before giving them up. When gas hits some unbearable price like \$10 and the former middle class no longer can afford to drive, gas and guns will become chaotically intertwined.

No matter whom we elect president or to Congress, the U.S. military will occupy the Persian Gulf until all the oil is gone or we can no longer afford the occupation.

Americans eventually will have profound regrets about the money we have wasted on suburban sprawl and highways since World War II.

[Auto-psy](#)

From the perspective of a deliberate non-driver, the car is indefensible. It's the devil's chariot, death on wheels, the ultimate privatised commodity. Motorists, meanwhile, believe car ownership to be a right.

The authors of *After the Car*, both sociologists in the field of mobilities - the study of how people, things and information move and get moved - are firmly in the "devil's chariot" camp. Dennis and Urry exhibit a refreshing understanding of the sheer inefficiency and inconvenience of cars, describing them bluntly as "steel-and-petroleum" machines, and roads as the "killing fields" of contemporary societies.

[The Population Reduction Agenda For Dummies](#)

There are still large numbers of people amongst the general public, in academia, and especially those who work for the corporate media, who are still in denial about the on-the-record stated agenda for global population reduction, as well as the consequences of this program that we already see unfolding.

We have compiled a compendium of evidence to prove that the elite have been obsessed with eugenics and its modern day incarnation, population control, for well over 100 years and that goal of global population reduction is still in full force to this day.

[Plug-in cars](#)

The \$787 billion stimulus spending bill enacted in February promotes plug-in electric cars for use by the federal government, and eventually, the public.

Purpose of these plug-in cars is to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and wean America off foreign energy sources.

That sounds good, except it won't work. America doesn't have the electrical capacity to make it work, and a report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) says the plug-in vehicles being pushed by the Obama administration won't decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

[Climate Change Bill Narrowly Passes in House](#)

The House passed legislation Friday to overhaul the nation's energy policy and curb global warming, handing President Obama a landmark legislative victory on one of his top priorities.

[Obama Implores Senate to Pass Climate Bill](#)

Hours after the House passed landmark legislation meant to curb greenhouse gas emissions and create an energy-efficient economy, President Barack Obama on Saturday urged senators to show courage and follow suit.

[What the Energy Bill Really Means for CO2 Emissions](#)

With a razor-thin margin of just seven votes, the House of Representatives on Friday evening passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act — the first bill to put a fixed and declining cap on U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions. Republicans and Democrats in the House spent much of the day sparring in sharp language over the bill, which will reduce U.S. carbon emissions 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 and 83% below by 2050. In the end, the vote of 219 to 212 included more than 40 Democrats who broke ranks with their party's leadership to vote against the bill. Republicans savaged the bill as an economy-killing energy tax — one member even called for a moment of silence for the Americans who would lose their jobs because of the bill — and some left-wing environmental groups, including Greenpeace, withdrew their support because they believed the bill's compromises made it far too weak.

[One brief shining moment for clean energy](#)

Passage of the first climate bill in Congress is a remarkable first step to cut global

warming. But it's not enough.

[Welch supports climate change bill](#)

He said science has shown that sweeping changes are needed. "Although some dispute it, there is little doubt that our oil is a finite resource, that we are at or near peak oil, that global warming is real, the threat to our economy immediate, the need to act urgent," Welch said.

The legislation will create jobs in a new "green" economy in Vermont and across the country, Welch said in a telephone interview prior to Friday's vote. "The concern I heard is people want jobs," he said. The country is falling behind in capitalizing on an emerging economy, he said.

[20 scientists urge Obama to act on climate change](#)

Scientists are calling on President Barack Obama to get heated up about the climate.

Twenty leading U.S. climate scientists and experts have sent an open letter to the president and members of Congress, urging action on the issue of climate change, according to a statement by James Gustave Speth, dean of the Yale University School of Forestry & Environmental Studies.

[Maryland congressmen break along party lines on cap-and-trade](#)

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, the state's lone Republican, whose district takes in northern portions of the Baltimore metro area and extends to the state's western border, was the only Marylander to vote "No." The remaining congressmen, all Democrats, voted "Aye."

[Global economies eye 'green growth'](#)

The world's main economies are looking to "green growth" as the way forward out of the current crisis, opening up new prospects for climate-change negotiations ahead of the key climate change convention.



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