



## Is Peak Oil Real? A List of Countries Past Peak

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*This is a guest post by Praveen Ghanta, known on The Oil Drum as [praveen](#). Praveen is an IT consultant in Atlanta, with degrees in economics and computer science. This was originally posted on Praveen's blog, at [truecostblog.com](#).*

**Only 14 of the 54 oil producing nations in the world are still increasing their oil production. The era of cheap oil is definitively over, as shown below.**

Is [peak oil](#) real? The [BP Statistical Review of World Energy](#) provides the data needed to answer this question. Using the [2009 edition](#), I have compiled a list of all oil producing countries and regions in the world, along with the production status of each, ordered by year of peak production. BP groups minor producers into categories like "Other Africa", and "Other Middle East", and that notation is used here. All production numbers are quoted in thousands of barrels/day.

Country	Peak Prod.	2008 Prod.	% Off Peak	Peak Year
United States	11297	7337	-35%	1970
Venezuela	3754	2566	-32%	1970
Libya	3357	1846	-45%	1970
Other Middle East	79	33	-58%	1970
Kuwait	3339	2784	-17%	1972
Iran	6060	4325	-29%	1974
Indonesia	1685	1004	-41%	1977
Romania	313	99	-68%	1977
Trinidad & Tobago	230	149	-35%	1978
Iraq	3489	2423	-31%	1979
Brunei	261	175	-33%	1979
Tunisia	118	89	-25%	1980
Peru	196	120	-39%	1982
Cameroon	181	84	-54%	1985
Other Europe & Eurasia	762	427	-44%	1986
Russian Federation	11484	9886	-14%	1987*
Egypt	941	722	-23%	1993
Other Asia Pacific	276	237	-14%	1993
India	774	766	-1%	1995*

Syria	596	398	-33%	1995
Gabon	365	235	-36%	1996
Argentina	890	682	-23%	1998
Colombia	838	618	-26%	1999
United Kingdom	2909	1544	-47%	1999
Rep. of Congo (Brazzaville)	266	249	-6%	1999*
Uzbekistan	191	111	-42%	1999
Australia	809	556	-31%	2000
Norway	3418	2455	-28%	2001
Oman	961	728	-24%	2001
Yemen	457	305	-33%	2002
Other S. & Cent. America	153	138	-10%	2003*
Mexico	3824	3157	-17%	2004
Malaysia	793	754	-5%	2004*
Vietnam	427	317	-26%	2004
Denmark	390	287	-26%	2004
Other Africa	75	54	-28%	2004*
Nigeria	2580	2170	-16%	2005*
Chad	173	127	-27%	2005*
Italy	127	108	-15%	2005*
Ecuador	545	514	-6%	2006*
Saudi Arabia	11114	10846	-2%	2005 / Growing
Canada	3320	3238	-2%	2007 / Growing
Algeria	2016	1993	-1%	2007 / Growing
Equatorial Guinea	368	361	-2%	2007 / Growing
China	3795	3795	-	Growing
United Arab Emirates	2980	2980	-	Growing
Brazil	1899	1899	-	Growing
Angola	1875	1875	-	Growing
Kazakhstan	1554	1554	-	Growing
Qatar	1378	1378	-	Growing
Azerbaijan	914	914	-	Growing
Sudan	480	480	-	Growing
Thailand	325	325	-	Growing
Turkmenistan	205	205	-	Growing
<b>Peaked / Flat Countries Total</b>	-	49597	-	<b>60.6% of world oil production</b>
<b>Growing Countries Total</b>	-	32223	-	<b>39.4% of world oil production</b>

Only 14 out of 54 oil producing countries and regions in the world continue to increase production, while 30 are definitely past their production peak, and the remaining 10 appear to have flat or declining production [1]. Put another way, peak oil is real in 61% of the oil producing world when weighted by production. Since 2008 capped a record run for oil prices, most countries and oil

companies were trying all-out to increase production. While a handful of producers (think Iraq) might be limited by above-ground factors, the majority of producers simply couldn't do any better in 2008 [2].

The evidence of the demise of the cheap oil era has become insurmountable. In the face of the highest oil prices on record, the great majority of the world's oil producers were incapable of taking advantage and producing more oil. Many nations including the US saw their oil production peak decades ago - there simply is no turning the clock back. This list shows that we are relying on a small number of countries to keep providing cheap oil. We need to move faster to alternatives and greater energy efficiency, before the last fourteen peak as well.

\* More information on these countries:

- Russian Federation - Russia's oil production collapsed by the early 90's as the Soviet Union collapsed, but despite a decade of growth, [Russia's own oil execs](#) don't think the old peak can be surpassed.
- India's production appeared to plateau in 1995, and has stayed within a steady range since. The [EIA forecasts](#) Indian oil production to remain flat or decline slightly in the near future.
- Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) hit a production plateau in 1998, though current production is still very close to 1999 peak levels.
- Other Central & South America - The remaining countries of the Americas hit a production peak in 2003, though it's still too soon to know if this will be final peak.
- Malaysia has been on a production plateau since 1995, and the [EIA projects](#) flat or falling production.
- Other Africa - Oil production in much of Africa is potentially impacted by above-ground constraints, so it's definitely possible that production will rise here. It will rise from a low base of only 50,000 bpd however, and may not have much impact on total world production.
- Nigeria is impacted by domestic insurgencies in its oil-producing regions, and may be able to lift production if the political situation improves.
- Chad's oil production history is too short to definitively identify a peak in production, but the drop-off since 2005 has been dramatic.
- Italy has been on a production plateau for over 10 years, and it's unlikely that a mature economy is significantly under-exploiting its resource potential.
- Ecuador's production grew rapidly until 2004, but has leveled off and declined somewhat since then.

[1] To be considered past-peak, a producer's current (2008) production has to be at least 10% less than its best year, and the best year must have occurred prior to 2005. Some countries' production has been artificially constrained by political and other non-geological considerations. But in some of these cases, it will be difficult to pass an old peak because decades of depletion have occurred since that peak. Iraq peaked in 1979, making it all the more difficult to pass that now.

[2] While OPEC maintains formal production quotas, it is widely believed that only Saudi Arabia had true spare capacity in 2008, while all other OPEC nations were producing at capacity. The truth is unclear, since OPEC nations do not provide detailed reserve statistics for their oil fields.

Total has created its own short [list of oil producers past peak](#), and Wikipedia has a [list here](#).



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