



The Bullroarer - Saturday 22nd August 2009

Posted by [aeldric](#) on August 21, 2009 - 6:19pm in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

The Australian - [Tone down hype on renewable energy](#)

The economics of the RET wilt under cost-benefit analysis

STRIPPED of the political grandstanding, Australia's Renewable Energy Target would fail any reasonable cost-benefit test. However much internal warmth the thought of more windmills and solar panels might generate, the cold hard truth is that renewable energy targets have serious economic implications that warrant close scrutiny. Unfortunately, in handing alternative energy companies a subsidised monopoly to supply 20 per cent of our electricity, the RET scheme is unlikely to reduce emissions cost effectively, if at all.

The economics are simple. Given current technology, the electricity generated from renewables will be much more expensive. In May last year, the Productivity Commission calculated that next year, the cost of one megawatt hour of electricity from Australia's vast black coal reserves would be \$30-35. Wind power would cost twice as much -- \$55 to \$80 per megawatt hour. And however scorching the Australian summers, solar power will cost \$200 to \$400 per megawatt hour.

NZ Herald - [NZ's emissions target 'inadequate', says UN climate scientist](#)

Climate Change Minister Nick Smith is rejecting criticism by a top United Nations climate scientist that the Government's emissions reduction target is disappointing, inadequate and unambitious.

NZ Herald - [GM aims for record fuel-saving with Volt](#)

General Motors says its Chevrolet Volt electric car could get 1.2 litres/100km (230mpg) in city driving, making it the first American vehicle to achieve triple-digit fuel economy if that figure is confirmed by federal regulators.

SMH - [When governments fail, the public must set the agenda](#)

The consequences of a lack of vision are not trivial. There is no need to detail the

impoverished mess which is public transport in Sydney, or the daily inconveniences suffered by passengers obliged to use it. With every day that Sydney wallows in its conceptual chaos, the city is less and less prepared for great challenges which are rapidly approaching. Climate change. Peak oil. The epidemic of lifestyle diseases linked to urban design. All these will fall - are now falling - more heavily on this city because it lacks the vision to plan its transport and the will to act on its plan.

Radio NZ - [Climate policies on agenda at joint Cabinet meeting](#)

The first-ever joint Cabinet meeting between senior New Zealand government ministers and their Australian counterparts has been held in Sydney.

Prime Minister John Key said the meeting on Friday was a great opportunity for a wider exchange of ideas between the governments and a chance for the 16 ministers to talk about how to strengthen the trans-Tasman relationship.

Mr Key says the countries agreed at the meeting they should align their climate change policies as closely as possible.

Mr Key wants emissions trading schemes in both countries to be aligned so that carbon credits can be traded across the Tasman.

NZ Herald - [Toyota goes cheap and chic in drive for profits](#)

He also emphasised fuel efficiency, saying rising oil prices and dwindling supplies had left the industry at a "once-in-a-century crossroads" where excelling at making fuel-efficient and alternative-power vehicles would be a matter of survival.

Voxy.co.nz - [Government Should Listen Carefully To Expert Advice On Climate Change](#)

Labour's climate change spokesperson Charles Chauvel today thanked the head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Dr Rajendra Pachauri for his frank comments on New Zealand's greenhouse gas reduction target.

"I agree with Dr Pachauri's view reported in the New Zealand media today that the Government's conditional emissions reduction target of 10-20 per cent is much too low.

The Australian - [MAP banks on economy's take-off](#)

MACQUARIE Airports believes the worst of the global aviation crisis may be over and says it is in a strong position to benefit from a recovery, despite yesterday reporting a first-half net loss of \$299million.

ABC - [Climate policy on agenda at Nationals conference](#)

The National Party will today formalise its opposition to the Federal Government's emissions trading scheme.

The first item to be debated at the National Party's annual federal council is a motion to oppose the Government's key climate change policy.

It is likely to get widespread support, but the move could cause friction with the Liberal Party.

The Australian - [Push for sugarcane energy](#)

"Plant trash that was once considered so worthless it was burnt on the ground can now converted into valuable energy that will help provide new jobs as we transition to a low-carbon economy."

Drive South - [Merits of fuel efficiency ignored in diesel road user charges](#)

This blunt approach sees ultra-fuel-efficient small diesels such VW's Polo Bluemotion charged at exactly the same per-kilometre rate as large diesel SUVs that use twice as much fuel, or more.

Given those larger diesels are, in turn, significantly more fuel-efficient than their petrol equivalents, and that one finding of the review is that even higher RUCs are needed, one wonders what incentives will be offered to encourage the use of the types of fuel-efficient vehicles required to help New Zealand reduce its emissions in the years ahead.

Voxy.co.nz - [Workable Approach To Climate Change](#)

NZMEA Chief Executive John Walley says, "Science and technology targeted at reducing emissions and increasing carbon sinks in the primary sector is the key to relatively painless reductions in net carbon emissions; ongoing support for research in this area is vital."

The Australian - [Queensland to clean up coal-fired power](#)

QUEENSLAND will ban new coal-fired power stations except for those that can be fitted with clean coal technology.

The move institutionalises the technology in the nation's major coal-producing state.

There are four new coal-fired power stations planned for the eastern seaboard -- one each in Queensland and Victoria, and two in NSW -- and all have provision for clean coal technology.

Figures released by climate change and sustainability minister Kate Jones yesterday showed a projected one in 100 year storm tide rise of 42cm at Noosa in the event of an expected 30cm sea level rise.

ABC - [Climate change 'can open new Indigenous dialogue'](#)

Aboriginal leader Professor Patrick Dodson says modern challenges such as climate change could provide a way for Australians to learn from Indigenous knowledge and values.

ABC - [Farm support for climate change package](#)

Rural lobby group AgForce says the Queensland Government's new climate change package offers more opportunity for landholders to help with the climate change solution.

I feel the need to rant about the next few stories... but instead I will just point out that China is playing a smart game of chess, while we are playing a dumb game of checkers. Many of the people involved in the deal on our side probably have suspicions about the long-term consequences of this chess game, but they will get paid huge bonuses as a result of these deals, so they don't really care, do they?

The Australian - [Australia signs \\$50bn gas deal with China](#)

AN Asia-fuelled, decades-long windfall for Australia's natural gas sector looks assured with up to \$100 billion of fresh investment over 12 to 18 months expected across a range of projects after China promised last night to buy \$50bn worth of natural gas from the proposed North West Shelf Gorgon development.

Herald Sun - [Miners big and small set themselves up for boom to come](#)

And Felix Resources has recommended a \$3.33 billion friendly offer from Yanzhou Coal Mining that will see China's fourth-biggest producer of the fossil fuel scoop up a handful of mines in Queensland and NSW.

The Australian - [Shock of the new](#)

The present story is that political relations have deteriorated while economic ties have taken another leap forward. The contrast is stunning. The deepening Australia-China trade bond has its own momentum separate from political strains. It reminds of China's

huge energy demands and that its regime legitimacy depends upon its economic growth. But the freeze in diplomatic ties testifies to the serious limits on the Australia-China political relationship.



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