



Drumbeat: September 2, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 2, 2009 - 9:40am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Time for a quick reality check](#)

SAN FRANCISCO (MarketWatch) -- BP's announcement Wednesday of a "giant" oil field deep beneath the Gulf of Mexico is the kind of story that raises all sorts of breathless expectations and dire predictions.

Time to take a deep breath and look at what we've got.

First of all, BP's discovery, dubbed the Tiber prospect, does not prove or disprove the "peak oil" theory. For all those out there who still believe the center of the earth is full of crude oil, they should revisit a basic textbook on geology.

[Oil reserves and fossil fuel consumption](#)

Oil has been the world's fossil fuel of choice since the late 1960s and our taste for it doesn't seem likely to diminish in the short term. Oil companies are still keen to secure any undiscovered reserves while continuing to be a powerful lobbying presence.

You may think that with pressing concerns over peak oil and global warming, the world would be slowly weaning itself off the energy-rich liquid. But in the 28-year span covered by the BP data below, worldwide reserves fell only twice – in 1998, and a decade later in 2008.

[Fear fuels the new global oil rush](#)

New technology, higher oil prices and a renewed sense of urgency due to expected rising demand after the recession have all fed the new oil rush that has triggered a glut of discoveries.

Warnings from peak oil theorists may have encouraged many countries and companies to redouble their efforts, which could lead to the tipping point on oil supplies being put back.

[Giant oil find by BP reopens debate about oil supplies](#)

BP has reopened the debate on when the "peak oil" supply will be reached by announcing a big new discovery in the Gulf of Mexico which some believe could be as large as the Forties, the biggest field ever found in the North Sea.

The strike comes days after Iran unveiled an even larger find of 8.8bn barrels of crude oil, and the moves have encouraged sceptics of theories which say that peak production has been reached, or soon will be, to hail a new golden age of exploration and supply.

['Peak oil' theory takes another hit](#)

We haven't run out of oil yet. Huge, recent offshore discoveries for Brazil have boosted that country's reserves to 12 billion barrels. That was already a blow against 'peak oil' theorists, who say the world is running out of petroleum.

[Gazprom looks offshore for reserves](#)

Russian gas monopoly Gazprom aims to add 5.6 trillion cubic metres of offshore reserves by 2020, more than doubling its resources and helping it expand into the liquefied natural gas market.

The company's offshore reserves total 4.7 trillion cubic metres now, "a significant rise" from 2.5 trillion cubic meters in 2005, Gazprom executive Valery Golubev told reporters in Moscow today.

Development of offshore fields will help Gazprom develop exports of LNG and, potentially, compressed natural gas, in addition to traditional pipeline delivery, he said.

[Russian oil trade king buys more gas assets](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - One of Russia's most secretive businessmen, Gennady Timchenko, revealed on Wednesday he has built up an 18 percent stake in gas firm Novatek as he seeks to diversify his oil wealth into other industries.

['Hot' jobs? Health care, energy, many not requiring bachelor's](#)

The hottest job areas from now to 2016 will be in health care, education, information technology and clean energy, a new report says.

And though some require bachelor's degrees or higher, many call for an associate's degree and sometimes additional vocational training.

[Russia Increased Oil Output and Exports in August on New Fields](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russian August oil production rose 1.3 percent and exports 5.9 percent against the same period the previous year after Russia's two largest oil producers introduced new fields.

Russian oil production rose year-on-year for the sixth straight month to 9.97 million barrels, after Russia's largest oil producer OAO Rosneft produced 4.7 percent more crude in Russia and its second largest OAO Lukoil produced 1.3 percent more, the Energy Ministry's CDU-TEK unit said in an e-mailed statement today.

Exports of oil from Russia rose to 5.42 million barrels a day in August as Russia produced more crude and Urals blend prices rose faster than Russia's export duty.

[What BP's New Oil Strike Means](#)

BP has struggled recently, the result of highly publicized battles with its Russian partners and a series of accidents in the U.S. at its Texas refinery and on Alaska's North Slope. Now it is getting a huge shot in the arm from its gulf finds, which are just coming onstream with highly profitable oil. Tiber provides further confirmation of BP's vanguard status among companies probing the ancient geological zones far below the seabed of the gulf in water a mile deep.

The London company's two-decade commitment to the gulf has helped resurrect a region that was being dismissed as "the Dead Sea" in the 1990s, after companies hit a series of dry holes. "With respect to the Gulf of Mexico, BP has done very, very well," says Richard Gordon, president of Gordon Energy Solutions, an Overland Park (Kan.) oil and gas consultancy.

[BP Makes "Giant" Oil Find in Gulf of Mexico](#)

Iain Armstrong, analyst at Brewin Dolphin, said the discovery may have implications for long-term oil prices.

"It will ease concerns about peak oil because it shows there is life left in these mature areas," he said, adding that it could be the second half of the next decade before the find is producing.

[BP's Tiber Find Underscores Challenges of Deepwater Exploration](#)

(Bloomberg) -- BP Plc's announcement of a "giant" discovery in the Gulf of Mexico

underscores the technical challenges of deepwater exploration after Europe's second-biggest oil company drilled to a depth that's greater in height than Mount Everest.

[Saudi Arabia Cuts October Crude Export Prices to U.S.](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Saudi Arabia cut the official selling prices for all grades of crude oil exported to the U.S. in October, according to state-run oil company Saudi Aramco.

[Turkmenistan plans military base in gas and oil hotspot](#)

Debates over the inland Caspian Sea's lucrative hydrocarbon resources may be intensified after the president of Turkmenistan announced the country will build a naval base there.

President Gurbanguli Berdymukhamedov made televised remarks to top security officials in which he said the base will be established to help "effectively fight smugglers, terrorists and any other forces".

[Elsevier Publishes Jiang Zemin's Book on China's Energy Policy in English](#)

China's rapid economic expansion raises many questions about how it will acquire the energy it needs to sustain growth. In this unique collection of articles, Jiang asserts a pressing need for China to invest in science, technology, research and development to ensure the steady supply of energy crucial for driving development. In this book *Research on Energy Issues in China* Jiang outlines this energy strategy for China, "We need to steadfastly conserve energy, use it efficiently, diversify development, keep the environment clean, be technology driven and cooperate internationally in order to establish a system of energy production, distribution and consumption that is highly efficient, uses advanced technology, produces few pollutant, has minimal impact on the ecosystem, and provides a steady and secure energy supply."

[Satellites and submarines give the skinny on sea ice thickness](#)

While satellites provide accurate and expansive coverage of ice in the Arctic Ocean, the records are relatively new. Satellites have only monitored sea ice extent since 1973. NASA's Ice, Cloud, and land Elevation Satellite (ICESat) has been on the task since 2003, allowing researchers to estimate ice thickness as well.

To extend the record, Kwok and Drew Rothrock of the University of Washington, Seattle, recently combined the high spatial coverage from satellites with a longer record from Cold War submarines to piece together a history of ice thickness that spans close to 50 years.

Analysis of the new record shows that since a peak in 1980, sea ice thickness has

declined 53 percent. "It's an astonishing number," Kwok said. The study, published online August 6 in *Geophysical Research Letters*, shows that the current thinning of Arctic sea ice has actually been going on for quite some time.

[Humans causing erosion comparable to world's largest rivers and glaciers](#)

A new study finds that large-scale farming projects can erode the Earth's surface at rates comparable to those of the world's largest rivers and glaciers.

Published online in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, the research offers stark evidence of how humans are reshaping the planet. It also finds that - contrary to previous scholarship - rivers are as powerful as glaciers at eroding landscapes.

[Sustainable fertilizer: Urine and wood ash produce large harvest](#)

Results of the first study evaluating the use of human urine mixed with wood ash as a fertilizer for food crops has found that the combination can be substituted for costly synthetic fertilizers to produce bumper crops of tomatoes without introducing any risk of disease for consumers. The study appears in the current issue of ACS' *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, a bi-weekly publication.

[A cordless future for electricity?](#)

"The biggest effect of wireless power is attacking that huge energy wasting that goes on where people buy disposable batteries," he said.

It also will make electric cars more attractive to consumers, he said, because they will be able to power up their vehicles simply by driving into a garage that's fitted with a wireless power mat.

Electric cars are "absolutely gorgeous," he added, "but does anyone really want to plug them in?"

[Oil speculators on the run](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Last year Andrew Hall, the head of Citigroup's energy trading unit, made over \$100 million, making him one of the highest paid people on Wall Street.

That same year Alabama resident Corey Carter spent over a quarter of his \$240 weekly income on gas. Carter lived in the county where residents spent a greater chunk of their income on gas than anyone else in the country.

Some people think Wall Street's increased interest in energy trading and the steadily rising price of gas is no coincidence.

Even the government is reassessing its opinion of speculation's impact on oil prices. In what could be a significant reversal, the U.S. may tighten the rules on energy trading.

[Choking on Natural Gas, But Is It About to End?](#)

The problem for the natural gas market has been that gas production continues to remain strong due to the continued development of new producing wells from the highly prolific gas shale plays sprouting up around the country. The increase in gas production volumes was thought to have been arrested by now as a result of the nearly 50% cutback in gas-oriented drilling since last fall. Unfortunately, E&P companies continue to drill highly prolific wells in the gas-shale basins due to their estimated lower finding and development cost allowing them to generate profits in a low-price environment and in order to retain expensive mineral leases signed in recent years. The impact of these new prolific wells, coupled with the decline in domestic gas demand due to the weak economy, has been greater than expected weekly gas storage injections.

[Expect Oil Prices to Rise: Three Major Oil Exporters Warn About Production](#)

In the last two weeks alone, three of the world top oil exporters have warned that their oil production will decline faster than expected in the next one to three years.

[Pump up the economy: Sealing off vast resources imperils recovery](#)

Last year, amid worries of escalating energy costs, Congress and the president announced an end to the decades-long ban on offshore drilling on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). This bipartisan announcement opened the door to new American oil and gas production and the creation of new American jobs.

Unfortunately, shortly after the door was opened, the Obama administration slammed it shut again in February by imposing a six-month delay on the leasing plan needed to open and develop those new offshore areas.

[Why Do Oil Prices Swing So Wildly?](#)

One reason prices have been rising so strongly this year, for example, is that futures traders are doing what they are supposed to do — anticipating. Just as stock prices anticipate future returns, so do commodity prices. Specifically, traders are betting that the global economy will recover later this year, and that the supplies will therefore tighten. There is good reason to believe this is correct; world oil production last year was barely above 2004 levels, and there is little chance it is going to shoot up. Rather the

opposite: Daniel Yergin, author of *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power*, and head of IHS/CERA, an energy consultancy, told *Newsweek* in early July that “of the 15 million barrels of new net capacity that was supposed to come online between 2008 and 2014, over half of it is at risk of not happening.” Investment in new fields has not been robust; when the current overcapacity is sucked up, the gap between supply and consumption will narrow again, forcing prices up.

[Asia Fuel Oil-Prices fall; cracks, timespreads firm](#)

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Asia fuel oil prices eased for the third straight session on Wednesday, but cracks and timespreads jumped, buoyed by robust bunker demand in Asia and the Middle East, and expectations of shrinking supplies ahead.

Fundamentals are well supported by tighter supplies for the rest of the year due to global refinery run cuts, and healthy demand from the Singapore bunkers market, fuel oil's largest outlet in Asia.

[Is Venezuela's stagflation the beginning of the end for Hugo Chavez Frias?](#)

It wasn't long ago that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez' decision to nationalize state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) resulted in a failed coup that very nearly cost him his post.

Now, Chavez' aggressive economic policies are again being called into question, this time as the country slides into what could be a protracted period of stagflation, which is defined by the exasperating mixture of torpid economic growth and high inflation.

[Nigeria: Fuel crisis looms as marketers are held down on account of debts](#)

Another spectre of fuel scarcity is looming in the country owing to ongoing banking crisis which has made it difficult for banks to give loan facilities to oil companies. The suspension of credit facilities means that the burden of importation would fall on the Pipeline Product Marketing Company (PPMC), a subsidiary of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to finance majority of the fuel importation.

The problem, according to industry analysts, is that the organisation supplies more than 60 percent of the premium motor spirit needs of the nation while the major marketers and independent marketers provide the remaining 40 percent.

[Britain faces a blackout and politicians are to blame](#)

A "shortage" can only occur if prices are not permitted to rise sufficiently to price some

users out of the market. In the case of electricity, a product considered essential to everyday living, no such price rise would be politically tolerable – or at least politicians and regulators would so conclude. So the power to allocate scarce supplies would pass from the market to – you got it – them.

[North Korea: Squabble Leads to Murder Due to Firewood](#)

The death of an elderly man in his 60s and the arrest of a man in his 40s involved in a fight over firewood has been reported in Hoiryong, North Hamkyung Province.

Kim Chung Wan (67) in Wonsan-ri, Hoiryong collected canes of corn from a freshly harvested field, and spread them out on his yard on the 21st of last month. In North Korea, corn is a key “winter item” used as fodder for cows on collective farms or as a source of heating by farmers during the winter season.

The field from which Kim had gathered the canes of corn was a “private patch” owned by Jang Kyung Il (43) in a neighboring People’s Unit. Jang, after discovering that canes of corn had disappeared from his field, went to other People’s Units looking for the culprit and ultimately found his corn canes in the front yard of Kim’s house.

Jang, who needed corn canes to use as firewood during the winter season, got into a quarrel with Kim, who is old enough to be his father.

['Reduce the asphalt,' Gehl says](#)

When it snows in Copenhagen, the bike lanes are first to be cleared. Then the sidewalks. If there is money left over, the roads are next.

While it may be a radical concept for a winter city such as Saskatoon, Danish architect Jan Gehl is in favour of transforming Saskatoon into a pedestrian-oriented, bike-friendly city.

"Reduce the asphalt in Saskatoon," he said to strong audience applause at his presentation Monday night.

[A Brief History Of The Light Bulb](#)

Across Europe, it's just about lights out for the humble incandescent bulb. The European Union began phasing out incandescents on Aug. 31, banning stores from buying new stock. (See the best inventions of all-time.)

It's all part of an effort to drive consumers toward a better bulb: Compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) that burn as much as 10 times longer while consuming less than a third of the electricity as incandescents. At as much as \$10 each, CFL bulbs are more expensive, but experts say they pay for themselves in energy savings in just a few months. The

European Union is even touting the switch as an economic stimulus, as experts estimate the swap to CFL will save customers €5 billion annually. Bucks-for-bulbs, anyone?

[Severn Estuary could solve UK's looming energy shortage](#)

THE power of the Severn estuary must be harnessed to prevent millions of families being plunged into darkness through a lack of electricity, it was claimed yesterday.

The UK Government's own figures predict energy demand will exceed supply from the national grid within eight years, leaving the country facing the prospect of widespread power cuts for the first time since the 1970s.

Mick Bates, Welsh Liberal Democrat spokesman on the environment and sustainability, said the Severn estuary's tidal energy should be used to meet the shortfall.

[Heinberg: Iowa's future shouldn't depend on fossil fuels](#)

More than 70 percent of Iowa's electricity comes from coal. That's a much higher proportion than the national average of 50 percent. Not only does this imply a supersized statewide contribution to global, climate-changing, greenhouse-gas emissions, it also means vulnerability to higher coal prices.

[Is This the End for Coal?](#)

Momentum is building to block new coal-fired power plants and end mountaintop removal mining. Is there enough political will to make the break?

[How Climate Change Gets a Target Number \(And Why It's 350\)](#)

Financial markets tend to create the capital for everything societies try to do, but they offer a misleading model for anyone thinking about how businesses can address climate change. A group of activists pushing to cap global carbon emissions at 350 parts per million offers a sounder business model.

[BP Makes 'Giant' Oil Discovery in Gulf of Mexico](#)

(Bloomberg) -- BP Plc, Europe's second-largest oil company, reported a "giant" discovery at the Tiber Prospect in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico that may contain more than 3 billion barrels, sending its shares higher.

The well is located in Keathley Canyon block 102, about 250 miles (400 kilometers)

south east of Houston, the London-based company said today in a statement. The Tiber well was drilled to a total depth of approximately 35,055 feet (10,685 meters), greater than the height of Mount Everest.

The latest discovery will help BP, already the biggest producer in the Gulf of Mexico, boost output in the region by 50 percent to 600,000 barrels of oil equivalent a day beyond 2020. It will also allay concerns over BP's reluctance to invest heavily in unconventional projects, such as oil sands in Canada, to replenish reserves as maturing fields age.

[Deep expectations](#)

BP shares have popped higher on the news of the oil major's 'giant' find in the Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday.

As analysts have already begun to note, the use of the word 'giant' to describe the well is almost unprecedented. But the indication is clear: BP thinks this will be a massive production asset, despite needing further appraisal to determine the exact size and commerciality of the discovery.

[OPEC Likely to Keep Output Unchanged, Official Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC is likely to leave oil production unchanged when it meets next week in Vienna, an official from a Persian Gulf member of the group said.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries expects oil demand to recover and is unlikely to change production quotas, in order to avoid derailing the global economic recovery, said the official, who declined to be identified by name because a final decision hasn't been made.

[Oil Uptrend Intact Until a Drop Below \\$66: Technical Analysis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil, which fell from a 10-month high of \$75 a barrel in New York last week, remains in an uptrend and a sustained move lower isn't likely unless prices settle below \$66, National Australia Bank Ltd. said.

Oil may climb to its recent highs in coming weeks even as the volatility in prices reflected uncertainty among traders, according to Gordon Manning, a Sydney-based technical analyst. He correctly predicted Aug. 5 that the market wouldn't settle below \$66 a barrel on its way to a new high for 2009.

[BP: Iraq Oil Deal is Start of Something Big](#)

Iraq is counting on BP's modernization of the Rumaila oil field to nearly double its production and restore its power in OPEC.

[Lula Oil Rules to Stir 'Intense Debate' as Lawmakers Vow Delays](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's proposal for increasing government control over oil reserves will stir debate in Congress that could delay approval, opposition leaders said.

Lula attached an urgency clause to the bills that would require a vote within 90 days. Opposition parties began a filibuster in the lower house and are demanding the clause be removed, Gustavo Fruet, a deputy with the Social Democracy Party, Brazil's biggest opposition party, said in an interview.

[Is Peak Oil a Waste of Energy?](#)

That's the thesis of Michael Lynch, a former MIT energy expert turned consultant, in a lengthy *New York Times* op-ed published last week. "Like many Malthusian beliefs," he writes, "peak oil theory has been promoted by motivated groups of scientists and laymen who base their conclusions on poor analyses of data and misinterpretations of technical material." Lynch concludes that oil will come down to \$30 a barrel as new supplies come online in the deep waters off Africa and Latin America, in East Africa, and "perhaps the Bakken oil shale fields of Montana and North Dakota."

Setting aside the pitfalls of oil shale, it's probably worth noting that Lynch is not your average oil supply forecaster. He's a frequent guest on talk shows who is famed for attacking Peak Oil with the same zeal that proponents defend it. Lynch is one of many disparate voices quoted in a 2005 *Times* piece, "On Oil Supply, Opinions Aren't Scarce." And way back in 1998, he wrote "Crying Wolf: Warnings About Oil Supply," where he made some of the same points as he did last week.

[Oil industry marks 150 years since first well](#)

TITUSVILLE, Pennsylvania (AFP) – One hundred and fifty years ago this week in a small Pennsylvania town an indefatigable businessman struck oil, changing the world forever.

Boring a pipe deep into the Titusville ground, Edwin Drake drew black crude to the surface, in a process that would be copied all over the world and mark the dawn of the Petroleum Age.

[Forward Curve in Fuel Offers Relief to Shipowners](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Shipowners may see relief from rising bunker costs, their biggest fixed expense, as prices for the fuel are leveling off after months of increases, E.A. Gibson Shipbrokers Ltd. said.

The CHART OF THE DAY shows the cost of bunker fuel in the benchmark Rotterdam market, tanker rates and an index of shipowners' stock prices. The forward curve for bunkers is flat out through February 2010, indicating shippers' fuel costs may stabilize.

[Transneft Fights 27,000-Ton Oil Theft as Violence Surges](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OAO Transneft, operator of the world's largest pipeline network, is struggling to combat oil theft in Russia's Caucasus as attacks on police strain security and federal funds fail to lift the region out of poverty.

Transneft opened an office in Dagestan, between Chechnya and the Caspian Sea, and now has 700 guards along its 300-mile pipe after thieves stole 27,000 tons of oil last year, a record for the region, Jafar Nasirov, Transneft's local chief, said in an interview.

[Oil stirs conflict on Black Sea](#)

While the European Union frets over Russian efforts to impose its energy diktat by building gas and oil pipelines on the bottom of the Black Sea, new conflicts are emerging - not over transit routes, but over rich hydrocarbon resources beneath its ancient waters.

An ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Vanco Energy Company is one example in which resource nationalism and a large dose of alleged corruption has combined to push out a legitimate American company from developing Prykerchynsky, a large underwater gas field in the Black Sea.

[How Will China Handle The Yuan?](#)

EU may have passed the US as China's biggest trading partner, but EU consumers are not in such great shape either. For a discussion of Europe and how it relates to this mess, please see [Deflation Is A *****](#).

Indeed, consumers are tapped out everywhere, and arguably European and Chinese banks are in worse shape than US banks.

Moreover, there is also a not-so-little thing called peak oil that might be keeping oil firm. And it's hurricane season.

The critical issue however, is simple math.

The US runs a trade deficit with China. That means China must accumulate US assets. China does not have a choice in the matter; it is purely a mathematical function. When the US runs a deficit, mathematically someone must run a surplus.

[Union fights refinery over layoffs](#)

MARCUS HOOK --- The president of the steelworkers union that represents 425 employees at the Sunoco plant here said the company is pushing for additional layoffs and refusing to negotiate severance for 48 workers from the refinery's damaged ethylene unit.

"We haven't made any progress," said Tim Kolodi of Local 10-901 of the United Steelworkers Union.

The ethylene complex was damaged by a May 17 explosion and fire, and the company decided in July that it would be closed due to insufficient demand for product.

[BP scraps offshore pay plan](#)

BP has scrapped proposals to change conditions for hundreds of offshore workers, which unions claimed would have cut their pay.

[Chevron Said to Be in Talks With China on Gorgon LNG](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chevron Corp. is in talks to sell more than 2 million metric tons of liquefied natural gas a year from the A\$50 billion (\$41 billion) Gorgon project off Western Australia to China, said two people with knowledge of the talks.

Chevron may be in negotiations with China National Offshore Oil Corp. and China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. to sell a part of an uncommitted 3 million tons a year of its share of Gorgon, the two people said, requesting not to be identified as the discussions are confidential. Chevron's 50 percent stake in the 15 million ton-a-year venture entitles it to sell 7.5 million tons and the rest is equally divided between Exxon Mobil Corp. and Royal Dutch Shell Plc.

[Derivatives Oversight Should Be Combined, Luthringshausen Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Regulators should consolidate functions of agencies overseeing the \$592 trillion over-the-counter derivatives market, Options Clearing Corp. Chief Executive Officer Wayne Luthringshausen said.

Certain roles of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission should be combined “under a new principles-based statute to ensure holistic oversight of all derivatives,” Luthringshausen said in prepared remarks to be delivered to a joint meeting of the agencies in Washington today.

[Solar panels stolen from gas company well pads in western Garfield County](#)

PARACHUTE, Colorado — The Garfield County Sheriff's Office is investigating a theft of 22 solar panels from natural gas well pads near Parachute.

[Sharp, Kyocera Set to Gain From DPJ Emissions Plan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The new Japanese government's pledge to accelerate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions may lead to higher subsidies for makers of solar cells such as Sharp Corp. and Kyocera Corp. while forcing utilities to pay premium prices for solar power generated by consumers.

The Democratic Party of Japan's proposal to double the emissions cuts outlined by the ousted Liberal Democratic Party could lead to a carbon tax that has a severe impact on automakers, oil refiners and power producers, analysts and industry groups say.

[When it comes to mpg, I'm buying the 'hype'](#)

LOS ANGELES – The crippling success of Cash for Clunkers, the sustained popularity of the Toyota Prius and splashy headlines afforded the 230-mpg Chevy Volt would seem to signal a fuel-efficiency awakening in the United States not seen since the energy crisis of the 1970s.

Tell that to the angry-faced guy riding my bumper as I coast up to a red light.

[Zero-Emission Cars: A Battle Among Technologies](#)

Auto-marketing gurus take note: the brave new world of ZE cars is here, ready or not, and please make them sexy.

[The mystery of Chernobyl](#)

A bitter dispute is raging over whether the fallout zone is a wasteland or wonderland. Now, a team of scientists is heading back into the contaminated area to find out the truth.

[China's Birthday Plans Marred by Pollution, Asset Sale Protests](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chinese workers are taking to the streets to demonstrate against pollution and job losses stemming from state-asset sales, highlighting social tensions weeks before the Communist Party celebrates 60 years of rule on Oct. 1.

About 10,000 villagers in Fengwei in southeastern Fujian province clashed on Aug. 31 with 2,000 riot police to protest industrial pollution, taking some local officials hostage, the South China Morning Post reported today, citing witnesses and authorities. In Hunan province, 5,000 coal workers at several mines in the past week struck to demand better treatment as their state-run company sought to privatize, the paper reported.

[China detains 15 parents for lead poison unrest](#)

BEIJING – Police in central China detained 15 parents for blocking roads and damaging government offices in a protest over factory pollution that left hundreds of local children with lead poisoning, villagers said Wednesday.

In a bizarre twist, police in Hunan province's Wenping township accused the parents involved in the Aug. 8 unrest of being either members of the banned spiritual movement Falun Gong, or influenced by such members.

[Great Barrier Reef May Face Catastrophic Damage, Report Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Catastrophic damage to the Great Barrier Reef, the world's most extensive coral reef system, may be unavoidable if global warming continues unchecked, according to an Australian report published today.

[Scientists Argue that Climate Change Mitigation Strategies Fall Short, Ignoring Significant Carbon Cycling Processes of Inland Waters](#)

AVONDALE, Pa. /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In the paper, The Boundless Carbon Cycle, published in the September issue of Nature Geoscience, scientists from the University of Vienna, Uppsala University in Sweden, University of Antwerp, and the U.S.-based Stroud(TM) Water Research Center argue that current international strategies to mitigate manmade carbon emissions and address climate change have overlooked a critical player - inland waters. Streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands play an important role in the carbon cycle that is unaccounted for in conventional carbon cycling models.

[People won't change lifestyle for planet-straw poll](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - People want to save the planet but are unwilling to make radical lifestyle changes like giving up air travel or red meat to reduce the effects of climate change, a straw poll by Reuters showed.

[EPA's CO2 Rules Target Only Major U.S. Polluters, Groups Say](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Only large industrial polluters would be subject to U.S. regulation of greenhouse gases under a proposal developed by the Environmental Protection Agency, environmental groups said.

[In Geneva, Designing a Global Climate-Alert System](#)

While the big picture on climate change has been virtually settled by decades of scientific work, the details of what exactly will happen in a warmer world are still fuzzy — and the climate devil will be in those details. Yet new updates on climate science come out only intermittently — the IPCC goes five or six years between releasing its massive assessments. That's far too infrequent for policymakers — especially as the world attempts to draft a successor to the Kyoto Protocol at the upcoming Copenhagen climate summit in December. "We all collectively have to share information about climate change in a way that will better inform ongoing decisions that people need to make," says Jane Lubchenco, the head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). "There's an urgent need for ongoing, relevant information about climate change — and there's no current mechanism for providing that."

[UN chief urges leaders over climate change](#)

LONGYEARBYEN, Norway (AFP) – UN chief Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday urged world leaders to act now to halt global warming, as he saw first-hand its effects in the Arctic ahead of a key climate change summit in December.

[Ed Miliband warns of 'climate change poverty'](#)

Millions will be condemned to poverty and homelessness if world leaders fail to reach an ambitious deal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the climate change summit in Copenhagen later this year, Britain's Climate Change Secretary, Ed Miliband, warned yesterday.

[Govt says greenhouse gas pollution to jump](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) – India expects its greenhouse gas emissions to jump to between

4 billion tonnes and 7.3 billion tonnes in 2031, a report said on Wednesday.

Per capita emissions are estimated to rise to 2.1 tonnes by 2020 and 3.5 tonnes by 2030.

[India's forestry plan in spotlight](#)

NEW DELHI (AFP) – India has turned to its vast forest cover to absorb its growing greenhouse gas emissions and stem international pressure to sign on to binding carbon reduction targets.

Authorities pinned their hopes earlier this month on the concept of carbon capture in an effort to boost India's environmental credentials ahead of global talks in Copenhagen aimed at reaching a consensus on fighting climate change.

[Poor nations need 'wartime' support against climate change: UN](#)

GENEVA (AFP) – Developing nations need a 600-billion-dollar "Marshall Plan" annually to tackle climate change with support from rich nations on a scale not seen outside wartime recovery, a UN report said Tuesday.

[Change is seen in Atlantic from climate, fishing](#)

PORTLAND, Maine – The basic makeup of the ocean waters off the Northeast and the mid-Atlantic region has fundamentally changed in the past 40 years because of climate change, commercial fishing pressures and growing coastal populations, according to a new report.

[Arctic thaw threatens much of world: WWF report](#)

GENEVA (AFP) – Global warming in the Arctic could affect a quarter of the world's population through flooding and amplify the wider impact of climate change, a report by environmental group WWF said Wednesday.

Air temperatures in the region have risen by almost twice the global average over the past few decades, according to the peer-reviewed scientific report.

[Study: 1.6 billion face water, food threat in Asia](#)

KATMANDU, Nepal – Effects of climate change including the melting of Himalayan

glaciers threaten water and food security for more than 1.6 billion people living in South Asia, according to a study released Wednesday.

India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Nepal will be most vulnerable to falling crop yields caused by glacier retreat, floods, droughts and erratic rainfall, said the study financed by the Asian Development Bank.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).