



Drumbeat: September 9, 2009

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Saudi sees shift in strong oil market](#)

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ers said during his presentation. "However, our projects, base production and work programs remain on track to deliver the anticipated growth in capacity as we enter next year."

[The \(Not So\) Hidden Costs of Crude](#)

As the world's oldest, biggest oil fields slowly tap out, companies are spending ever more to drill farther afield and in deeper water to keep the world's cars and furnaces going. This has led to environmental disruption from the Amazon to the Arctic. Now, it has caused a spreading stain over hundreds of square miles of the Timor Sea between Australia and Indonesia, where oil is spilling unabated from a well drilled by PTTEP, based in Thailand. Still, for the most part, damage from oil spills happens far from the gas stations and parking lots frequented by consumers of this enduring commodity. That's one reason Peter Maass, no friend of big oil, said here last year that it was more ethical to drill in United States waters than to continue to outsource our environmental problems.

[Valero Cuts Use of Maya Oil, Shifts to Lighter Grades](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Valero Energy Corp., the largest U.S. refiner, is shutting coking units and processing lighter oil in order to increase refining margins, Chief Executive Officer Bill Klesse said today in a presentation to investors.

Klesse said that Valero is cutting its use of Mexican Maya crude by 60 percent, along with shutting cokers and fluid catalytic crackers. He said that he expected consolidation and rationalization of assets throughout the industry.

[Marshall Auerback: "Many years of economic stagnation" interview: excerpt](#)

I think too little attention has been paid to the role of speculation in last year's oil market rally. Part of this is a usual blind spot amongst economists. Paul Krugman's presence in this camp lent credibility to the "oil prices are warranted" view. The Princeton economist had been a Cassandra on the housing mania and had also correctly anticipated that the deregulation of energy prices in California could lead to manipulation. So Krugman, sensitive to the notion that speculation can distort prices, nevertheless fell in with the argument that oil prices were simply reflecting supply and demand.

Yet that belief was spectacularly incorrect. Oil peaked at \$147 a barrel in July and fell even more dramatically than it had risen. By October, prices had fallen to \$64 a barrel. Bloomberg columnist Caroline Baum described the world as "drowning in oil."⁸ A report by the Commodities Futures Exchange Commission attributed the large swings in oil prices to speculation. CFTC Commissioner Bart Chilton said that earlier studies that found that the moves were the result of supply and demand relied on "deeply flawed data."

[Malls think outside the \(big\) box](#)

In Nashville, Tenn., One Hundred Oaks Mall welcomed a new kind of tenant in February: the Vanderbilt Medical Center, a sprawling facility that, at 436,000 square feet, takes up almost half the mall.

When owner Tony Ruggeri and a partner bought the space in 2006 the mall faced a dire 55% vacancy rate with a second floor that was virtually dead. Now the health care facility, which had its main opening in February, brings in almost 1,000 employees and just as many patients every day.

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[The Libyan gold rush and the reasons behind it](#)

So what makes Libyan oil and gas so special - so valuable that the government might want to intervene in something as sensitive as the Lockerbie bomber's punishment in order to preserve Britain's chance of a part in the Libyan gold rush? And why is it only now, with the Megrabi affair in the headlines, that Libyan oil is such an issue?

As usual, the driver is geo-political - national security coupled with energy scarcity and price. At present, most of the West's oil comes from the Middle East while much of the gas comes from Russia both fragile and sensitive territories.

That's why bringing Libya in from the cold was, and is, so crucial. After 20 years of being cut off from the US and the UK because of the sanctions imposed back in the 1980s by Ronald Reagan, Libya has more or less been excluded from Western markets so its oil and gas production has been hampered. Production peaked in the 1970s with 3.3 million barrels a day, falling to 1.85 million by 2007.

[The Coming Wave of Resource Nationalizations](#)

Since sometime in 2006 we have had this theory of "The Coming Wave of Resource Nationalizations". The latter has an "s" to impress upon you that we are talking about all natural resources in all countries. Not literally, but we believe it will be a worldwide sweeping event encompassing all classes of natural resources. It sounds scary, yet it will be akin to a depression – it's merely a recession when your neighbor loses his job and will only turn into a depression when you lose yours. We also believe that this will be the Chapter One of what some call the (coming) "Resource Wars".

[Katrina – questions about energy](#)

When Americans were sitting in long lines at gas stations after Katrina forced a shutdown of the oil platforms along the Gulf Coast, the oil companies said the higher prices were needed to get the system back in operation. When gasoline prices later rose above \$4 per gallon, they said the billions in profits were needed due to the rising costs of exploration and production.

Experts keep saying there are no shortages of oil, but each time we have a hiccup in the supply lines, the oil companies begin ratcheting up prices like we were going to run out of the stuff tomorrow. Lynch says prices now appear headed toward \$30 per barrel, but they were showing no signs of abating until a worldwide recession slashed demand.

[Encana says Horn River ranks high as shale-gas find](#)

CALGARY, Alberta, Sept 9 (Reuters) - The Horn River shale-gas region in a remote corner of northern British Columbia could hold as much as 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, EnCana Corp said on Wednesday, placing the find among North America's biggest discoveries.

Data from companies operating in the region, including partner Apache Corp, EOG Resources Inc and Devon Energy Corp and others, shows the Horn River play ranks among the largest gas finds in North America as exploration in the region firms up its potential, Mike Graham, EnCana's executive vice-president, said at an investment conference.

[Mexico Government Seeks Taxes, Spending Cuts to Avoid Downgrade](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Mexican President Felipe Calderon proposed spending cuts and increases in income, corporate and sales taxes as part of "unprecedented" steps to offset diminishing oil revenue and prevent a credit-rating reduction.

The 2010 budget proposal cuts spending by 218 billion pesos (\$16.3 billion), the Finance Ministry said yesterday. Calderon's economic package would also merge some government ministries, modify tax laws and change rules in a bid to boost competition in the energy, banking and telecommunications industries.

[Baker Hughes expects modest North American growth](#)

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Baker Hughes Inc (BHI.N) is anticipating "modest" growth in the number of oil and gas rigs drilling in North America through 2011, the oilfield services company's chief executive said on Wednesday.

Chad Deaton joined the ranks of drilling executives who are forecasting that the North American rig count, which is now at less than half its 23-year peak this time last year, is unlikely to recover dramatically because fewer rigs will be needed to produce natural gas in the prolific shale regions.

[Chevron Exits 6 Fuel Markets, Plans to Quit 3 More](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chevron Corp., the second-largest U.S. oil company, has exited six retail fuel markets this year and plans to quit three more by the end of December to focus on more profitable businesses.

Shedding filling stations will cut costs by \$900 million, Chevron Chief Financial Officer

Patricia Yarrington said in slides prepared for a presentation the San Ramon, California-based company is giving today in New York.

[Suncor scraps plan for Montreal refinery expansion](#)

Suncor Energy Inc. SU-T , Canada's biggest energy company, has scrapped plans for a \$1-billion heavy oil processing unit at its Montreal refinery after determining other investments offer richer returns, a spokesman said Wednesday.

[Gazprom opens new pipeline through Lithuania](#)

SAKIAI, Lithuania—Gazprom on Wednesday opened a new pipeline across Lithuania that will allow the Russian gas company to increase supplies to Kaliningrad, a Russian exclave between Lithuania and Poland.

[China Drops Libyan Oil Deal Amid Resistance](#)

The Chinese are used to encountering resistance from Western governments when they move to buy up Western companies, but now Libya is giving the acquisitive nation a hard time as well.

[Why Is Congress Agnostic About Natural Gas?](#)

The big picture here is that the oil and coal lobbies are flush with cash (and politicians) after decades of subsidization by the US government. The newly created natural gas lobby is not doing a good job of dealing with the entrenched powers that be. While the nat gas lobby has begun a necessary campaign in Washington, DC, they cannot be successful with this strategy alone. The oil and coal powers are too entrenched and too powerful. The only way the natural gas lobby can be successful is going straight to the American people. In this respect, they are failing miserably.

[Living With Coal: Climate policy's most inconvenient truth](#)

All fossil fuels emit carbon dioxide when burned, but the real heart of the warming problem is coal. Emissions from coal are growing faster than from any other fossil fuel. Beyond greenhouse-gas pollution, coal is linked to a host of other environmental troubles such as local air pollution, which is why a powerful coalition of environmentalists in the richest and greenest countries is rallying to stop coal. Mired in opposition, barely any new coal plants are being built anywhere in the industrialized world. Coal, it may seem, is on the precipice.

Yet coal remains indispensable. No other fuel matches its promise of cheap and

abundant energy for development. About half the electricity in the United States comes from burning coal. Germany, the anchor of old Europe's economy, is a coal country. Poland, the heart of new Europe, gets 90 percent of its electricity from coal. The fast-growing economies of Asia, in particular China and India, are all coal-fired. Indeed, while the outlook for coal consumption in the industrialized world is flat, soaring Asian growth is expected nearly to double world consumption by 2030.

[The California Experiment](#)

Busted budgets, failing schools, overcrowded prisons, gridlocked government—California no longer beckons as America's promised land. Except, that is, in one area: creating a new energy economy. But is its path one the rest of the nation can follow?

[Xcel launches Boulder as first 'smart grid' city](#)

it has finished building the infrastructure and has launched the software needed to run its "SmartGridCity" project in Boulder, making it the world's "first fully functioning smart grid enabled city."

['Contraception cheapest way to combat climate change'](#)

Every £4 spent on family planning over the next four decades would reduce global CO₂ emissions by more than a ton, whereas a minimum of £19 would have to be spent on low-carbon technologies to achieve the same result, the research says.

[Fascism, Genocide, and Extinction: An Indictment Against Civilization](#)

What if it is civilization itself—the very thing Gore and friends are saving—that is the cause of ecological catastrophe? “For the first time in more than three billion years of life, a living system is relentlessly creating the means not of self-preservation, but self-destruction” (Schmookler 175); that “living system is civilization. In the proper historical context, civilization is revealed to be a fascist system of control, a ten thousand-year genocide against sustainable ways of life that pushes humanity toward extinction.

[Love a local business? Buy a share](#)

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON, N.Y. (Fortune Small Business) -- John Halko was halfway through renovating an expanded space for Comfort, his mostly organic eatery in Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., when the credit crisis hit. His source of funding -- a home-equity line -- ran out, so he applied for a loan at a local bank. He was turned down.

Halko wasn't ready to throw in the dish towel. His solution? The modern equivalent of

an old-fashioned barn raising. Instead of soliciting neighbors to lift timbers, he asked them to open their wallets. For every \$500 they purchased in "Comfort Dollars," his patrons received a \$600 credit toward meals at the restaurant. As the community rallied around Comfort, Halko says, "it gave us hope." He raised \$25,000 in six months, and the new, larger space - now called Comfort Lounge -- opened for business in May.

[World Threatened by 4 Degrees of Warming, U.K.'s Miliband Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The world risks warming by 4 degrees Celsius by 2100, and there's a "real danger" the United Nations won't reach a deal to fight climate change by its December deadline, U.K. Foreign Secretary David Miliband said.

[North Sea cod 'doomed by climate change'](#)

Cod are doomed to disappear from the North Sea because of climate change and not just as a result of over-fishing, researchers from the Royal Society have claimed.

In the past 40 years the average temperature of the North Sea has increased by one degree centigrade with catastrophic effects on its delicate eco-systems.

[Developing World's Energy Needs Set Stage for Fight](#)

NOIDA, India -- At a wedding ceremony in New Delhi, the power blinked off just as the groom was placing the ring on his bride's finger. A factory in Nigeria was forced to relocate because the cost and scarcity of electricity made it impossible to turn a profit. Street protests over the chronic lack of power in Karachi, the economic hub of Pakistan, turned deadly as mobs chanted anti-government slogans.

Scenes like these unfolded with increasing frequency this summer across the developing world as the demand for energy expanded but governments eager to create more industrialized economies failed to keep up.

Developing nations' urgent need for more energy has become a central issue this year as developed countries -- including the United States -- push for a global reduction in carbon emissions ahead of a climate change conference scheduled for December in Copenhagen. Many African, Latin American and Asian countries want to avoid legally binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions, blamed for global warming. They say that their emissions are well below those of the developed world and that such limits would hinder their efforts to lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, even though economic growth would also inevitably expand the nations' carbon footprints as more of the poor gain access to electricity, air conditioners, refrigerators and cars.

[Platts: OPEC Bumps Up Output to 28.79MM BOPD](#)

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) crude oil production averaged 28.79 million barrels per day (b/d) in August, up 220,000 b/d from July, as Iraq and several other producers raised volumes from the previous month, a Platts survey of OPEC and oil industry officials and analysts showed September 8.

Excluding Iraq, which does not participate in OPEC output agreements, production from the 11 members bound by quotas rose by 120,000 b/d to 26.24 million b/d, the survey showed.

[Saudis Threatened by Al-Qaeda Terror, Yemeni Rebels](#)

Saudi King Abdullah may decide to intervene militarily if the conflict on his border threatens to spread to the country's own disaffected Shiite minority in the eastern oil-producing region, said Mustafa Alani, a regional security expert at the Dubai-based Gulf Research Center.

"If you have a terrorist issue and a rebellion that is unfriendly to Saudi Arabia, that is a recipe for disaster for the Saudis," said Rochdi Younsi, head of Middle East research at the New York-based Eurasia Group.

The conflict in Yemen may also be part of a pattern of confrontation between Iran and Saudi Arabia as the two vie for regional pre-eminence. They already are engaged in a proxy battle for influence in Lebanon and are at odds over Iraq and possible Iranian efforts to exploit dissatisfaction among the Shiite communities in other Arab Persian Gulf states.

[Russian reporter critical of dam accident attacked](#)

MOSCOW – A fire broke out Wednesday at the Siberian hydroelectric plant that was wrecked in a deadly industrial accident last month, prompting an evacuation of workers but no injuries, the dam operator said.

...On Tuesday, Russia's top audit agency said a 2007 probe found that most of the dam's equipment was obsolete and that auditors had forwarded the findings to prosecutors.

Meanwhile Wednesday, a Russian reporter who wrote scathing articles about the accident said he was attacked by unknown assailants.

[Russia Reaches Agreements on Iraqi Power, Pipelines](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia reached agreements on joint power projects and natural-gas pipelines in Iraq after sending its first official delegation to the Middle Eastern country

since the U.S. invasion.

[Lula Says Not In Brazil's Interest To Join OPEC](#)

Brazil has no interest in joining the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) because it does not aspire to become a crude oil exporter, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said.

[Venezuela Oil Minister Not Coming To OPEC Mtg-Sources](#)

VIENNA -(Dow Jones)- The oil minister of Venezuela, a core member of OPEC, is set not to attend the organization's meeting due later Wednesday, people familiar with the matter said Wednesday.

[CNPC Gets \\$30 Billion Loan for Overseas Oil Takeovers](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China National Petroleum Corp., parent of the world's biggest company by market value, received a \$30 billion loan to fund overseas expansion as the country's government stepped up its hunt for energy resources.

[Israeli Energy Cos To Begin Drilling For Oil By Dead Sea](#)

JERUSALEM -(Dow Jones)- Three Israeli energy companies said Wednesday they have received permission to start drilling for oil on the shore of the Dead Sea.

[Chevron May Foot Legal Bills for Man Who Taped Judge](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chevron Corp., battling a \$27 billion environmental lawsuit in Ecuador, said it may pay the legal bills of a U.S. businessman whose secret recordings of meetings with the judge on the case led the jurist to step down.

[Brazilian oil field holds 1.1-2 bln barrels: BG](#)

LONDON (AFP) – British energy producer BG Group on Wednesday said that an oil and gas field it helped to discover off the coast of Brazil holds between 1.1 and 2.0 billion barrels.

"The Guara discovery in the Santos Basin pre-salt, offshore Brazil is now estimated to contain recoverable volumes of 1.1 to 2.0 billion barrels of oil equivalent," BG said in a statement.

[Gold Party Has Barely Started](#)

Perhaps the market is beginning to take the Peak Oil Theory seriously? But we understand the importance between gold, oil and our stomach. Perhaps Nate Hagen understated the magnitude of the recent IEA report when he wrote, “the initial language in this year’s Executive Summary is of an urgent nature.”

[Peak Oil Investing Hedge Fund Launch](#)

New York (HedgeCo.net) - Hedge fund investor, logi ENERGY LLC., has announced the formation of The Peak Oil Value Fund. Launched September 8, the new hedge fund is the first of its kind aimed at institutional and accredited investors.

“We believe that the effects of Peak Oil on the markets are a temporary Global Macro series of events” Larry Ortega CIO of the Peak Oil Value Fund said, “We only have a few years to take advantage of these opportunities.”

[Boone Pickens Puts His Money Where His Mouth Is on Energy](#)

Next up is T. Boone Pickens' hedge fund, BP Capital Management. He runs an energy-centric set of funds out of Dallas, Texas and is a big advocate of Peak Oil Theory. On the positive side of things, he has landed himself on Forbes' billionaire list. Yet on the negative side of things, he also graced the list of top hedge fund manager losers of 2008.

[Inflation Fear Pushes U.S. Endowments Deeper Into Commodities](#)

(Bloomberg) -- George Washington University is increasing holdings of commodities such as oil and natural gas out of concern that a return to inflation rates last seen in the 1970s may ravage the value of its \$1 billion endowment.

[Natural Gas Stocks: The Ultimate Form of Stored Solar Energy](#)

I have made the point in previous articles that natural gas, oil and coal are like giant batteries that nature has provided. They are the ultimate form of stored “solar” energy.

To over-simplify for explanation of this perspective, if it were not for photosynthesis courtesy of the sun, plants could not grow and thrive and most species of animals could not live. If plants and animals had not lived and then died over the eons of pre-recorded time, giving up their water and leaving behind their carbon, there would be no fossil fuels. Centuries and millennia of compacting the remaining carbon in these life forms created these giant batteries for our use.

[US Energy Use Drops In 2008](#)

ScienceDaily — Americans used more solar, nuclear, biomass and wind energy in 2008 than they did in 2007, according to the most recent energy flow charts released by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The nation used less coal and petroleum during the same time frame and only slightly increased its natural gas consumption. Geothermal energy use remained the same.

[ADB to 'Scale Up' Clean Investment, Fund Manager Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The Asian Development Bank, which has committed about \$375 million to clean-energy funds, plans to "scale up" spending on pollution-reduction projects in Asia as developers struggle to borrow in a recession, an official said.

[Hurricane Fred becomes a Category 2 storm](#)

MIAMI – Hurricane Fred has quickly strengthened to a Category 2 storm in the Atlantic and forecasters say it could become a major hurricane later in the day.

[Federal survey finds coal ash sites in 35 states](#)

WASHINGTON – The toxic leftovers from burning coal for power are sitting in nearly 600 sites in 35 states, according to a federal survey released Tuesday.

Spills have occurred at 34 of those sites over the last decade.

[Laos power plant misses jumbo payout](#)

To mine lignite these days is as unhealthy as admitting to smoking five packs of cigarettes per day. Lignite is a dirty fossil fuel, so heavy in sulfur, carbon and water that often the only effective way of getting energy from its source is to process the lignite at the mine's mouth. Otherwise, the cost of transporting the coal often makes it uneconomic compared with other energy sources.

A 2007 New Zealand report called lignite the "wettest, most inefficient and polluting coal there is" and noted in its assessment of a plan there to convert lignite to liquid fuels that one lignite facility would produce twice as much carbon dioxide per year as the total amount generated by coal-fired electricity in all of New Zealand.

[Big Oil's Stain in the Amazon](#)

Because of concerns about climate change, a lot of current environmentalist advocacy — including movies like “An Inconvenient Truth” — concentrates on the dire results of burning fossil fuels. Joe Berlinger’s “Crude,” a thorough and impassioned new documentary, focuses its gaze on production rather than consumption. The film, which follows the fitful progress of a class-action lawsuit undertaken on behalf of the people of the Ecuadorean Amazon, is not about the unintended consequences of using petroleum. Instead, it examines the terrible, frequently unacknowledged costs of extracting oil from the ground.

[Bright idea or sci-fi?](#)

It sounds like something out of a sci-fi novel. Solar power plants orbiting the planet, each the size of 700 Canadian football fields, beaming clean energy down to Earth 24 hours a day so we can run our factories, charge our gadgets and keep our home appliances humming.

But for the scientists and engineers attending the International Symposium on Solar Energy from Space, a three-day conference this week in Toronto, there's nothing fictional about it. In their view, building massive space-based solar power systems represents, over the long term, one of the most effective ways of tackling the double menace of global warming and peak oil.

[US firm wins huge solar power project in China](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – US energy giant First Solar won a deal with China to build the world's largest solar power plant in the Mongolian desert which officials say could mitigate climate change concerns.

First Solar will construct the two-gigawatt plant in Ordos City, Inner Mongolia, under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) inked Tuesday with Chinese officials at the company's headquarters in Tempe, Arizona.

[Okla. researchers look for cash in the switchgrass](#)

ARDMORE, Okla. – Watching grass grow is tedious, but researchers in the Oklahoma Panhandle say they'll stare at their switchgrass — all 1,000 acres of it — until they know whether they've found a commercially viable source of biofuel.

The site is billed as the largest such project in the world as scientists try to determine if making ethanol from switchgrass is cost effective. The goal is to determine whether small-scale experiments of using the tall, thin plant native to the Great Plains to make ethanol can be duplicated on a large scale.

[ND agency aims to resolve ethanol plant insolvency](#)

BISMARCK, N.D. – North Dakota's Public Service Commission plans to seek permission to go ahead with a state insolvency case against an ethanol factory that is under bankruptcy protection from its creditors.

[NRC seeks better leak detection at US nuke plants](#)

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. – Federal regulators say they're looking for better ways to detect leaks from buried pipes at nuclear power plants.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said Tuesday that it has told its staff to consider whether programs to find underground leaks need to be improved.

[How Air Pollution Can Damage the Heart](#)

Sitting in traffic can certainly be infuriating enough to raise your blood pressure. But new research shows that traffic can raise your blood pressure and put your heart at risk in a more direct way - by exposing you to the pollution in exhaust fumes.

[Capping of plane emissions 'vital'](#)

LONDON (AFP) – The government's official climate change advisors warned Wednesday that the country may have to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90 percent by 2050 to accommodate the continued growth of the aviation industry.

An 80-percent cut on 1990 emission levels is already planned for households and industry but the Climate Change Committee (CCC) states that another 10 percent may be needed to allow the aviation sector to expand.

[Passengers face new tax to halt rise in air travel](#)

Tens of billions of pounds will have to be raised through flight taxes to compensate developing countries for the damage air travel does to the environment, according to the Government's advisory body on climate change.

Ticket prices should rise steadily over time to deter air travel and ensure that carbon dioxide emissions from aviation fall back to 2005 levels, the Committee on Climate Change says. It believes that airlines should be forced to share the burden of meeting Britain's commitment to an 80 per cent cut in emissions by 2050.

[Carbon Auction Prices Set to Fall Amid Delays in Senate Bill](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Prices of permits to emit carbon dioxide in the U.S. Northeast may fall to the lowest levels on record at an auction today as the economy shrinks and the Senate delays establishing a national pollution-trading market.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative for 10 states from Maryland to Maine plans to sell 30.6 million permits at its fifth quarterly auction after prices fell 50 percent in the past year. The deepest recession in five decades sent natural gas prices tumbling 79 percent and cut demand for power from coal-fired plants, reducing the need for carbon contracts.

[Climate bill needed for U.S. security, ex-officials insist](#)

WASHINGTON — America's national security is at risk unless Congress and the Obama administration end partisan wrangling and agree on legislation to reduce U.S. contributions to climate change, a bipartisan group of former presidential advisers, cabinet members, senators and military leaders said Tuesday.

The energy and climate debate is divisive, but it's possible for the government to devise a "clear, comprehensive, realistic and broadly bipartisan plan to address our role in the climate change crisis," declared the Partnership for a Secure America, a group that seeks a centrist, bipartisan approach to security and foreign policy.

[Federal agency advances walrus listing petition](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — A second Arctic marine mammal moved closer to an Endangered Species listing due to global warming Tuesday with a petition to grant the Pacific walrus protection passing its first review.

[Tornado Threat Increases as Gulf Hurricanes Get Larger](#)

Tornadoes that occur from hurricanes moving inland from the Gulf Coast are increasing in frequency, according to researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology. This increase seems to reflect the increase in size and frequency among large hurricanes that make landfall from the Gulf of Mexico. The findings can be found in Geophysical Research Letters online and in print in the September 3, 2009 issue.

“As the size of landfalling hurricanes from the Gulf of Mexico increases, we’re seeing more tornadoes than we did in the past that can occur up to two days and several hundred miles inland from the landfall location,” said James Belanger, doctoral student in the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at Georgia Tech and lead author of the

paper.

[Turkey tells Iraq, Syria: No water](#)

ANKARA, Turkey (UPI) -- Turkey says it cannot give drought-stricken Iraq and Syria any more water from the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, claiming it's short of water itself as it forges ahead with a mammoth dam-building program.

The thirsty downstream states, witnessing their farmland turning into dustbowls and their people migrating to overcrowded cities, say Turkey's dams are the root of the problem. Both rivers rise in Turkish Anatolia.



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