



Drumbeat: September 16, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 16, 2009 - 9:05am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Consumer prices down 1.5% in past year](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- A key index of consumer prices rose in August, but sank significantly over the past 12 months, the government said Wednesday.

The Consumer Price Index, the Labor Department's key measure of inflation, rose 0.4% in August on a monthly basis. Economists surveyed by Briefing.com expected a 0.3% increase.

...In the near term, "inflation is not the story," said PNC analyst Robert Dye "We're still focused on making sure we emerge from this recession with reasonable momentum."

The government report attributed the month-to-month increase to the gasoline index, which rose 9.1% in August. That jump accounted for more than 80% of the overall CPI increase.

his metric on the link between recessions and oil price is interesting. If Kopits is correct, so much for "green shoots". They will be trampled under foot over and over again unless there is a sudden spike upwards in GDP growth disproportionately more so than oil price increases. Here is the roller-coaster cycle he points out: Higher oil prices mean recessions, recessions mean less consumption than lower oil prices which leads to less exploration and supply which leads to higher oil prices and recession again.

[Apocalypse Now: A Checklist for the Fearful](#)

It's never been hard to find a small group of Cassandras, so-called "doomers" who see the apocalypse foreshadowed in Mayan calendars, Nostradamus writings, and the Terminator movies. And the last year has given them some glimmer of hope.

Next to them are more reasonable dystopians or collapsitarians: back-to-the-land agricultural types against industrial farming; those who believe in peak oil and the crippling shocks that'll someday arrive in our oil-dependent society. (This is to say little of the peak carbon, peak fish, peak dirt, and, most recently, peak dollars crowds).

[Venezuela says signs new \\$16 bln China oil deal](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) - President Hugo Chavez said on Wednesday Venezuela signed a \$16 billion investment deal with China over three years to raise oil output by several hundred thousand barrels per day in the OPEC member's Orinoco belt.

[Japan energy min calls for expanding feed-in tariff](#)

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's new energy minister, Masayuki Naoshima, said on Thursday he wants to expand utilities' purchases of new energy from households to beyond solar power to help contribute to further cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

He said he would make no change to a scheme to take effect on Nov. 1, under which utilities will buy surplus solar-power electricity that households produce at a higher rate.

[Earth's oceans had warmest summer on record](#)

Summer temperatures for the globe's ocean surface ranked as the warmest on record, according to a report released Wednesday by the National Climatic Data Center.

Overall, when the Earth's land areas and oceans are included together, the three-month June-August period measured as the third-warmest summer on record. Global climate records go back to 1880.

[Consumer prices down 1.5% in past year](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- A key index of consumer prices rose in August, but sank significantly over the past 12 months, the government said Wednesday.

The Consumer Price Index, the Labor Department's key measure of inflation, rose 0.4% in August on a monthly basis. Economists surveyed by Briefing.com expected a 0.3% increase.

...In the near term, "inflation is not the story," said PNC analyst Robert Dye "We're still focused on making sure we emerge from this recession with reasonable momentum."

The government report attributed the month-to-month increase to the gasoline index, which rose 9.1% in August. That jump accounted for more than 80% of the overall CPI increase.

[IEA warns Europe of new winter gas crisis](#)

Europe faces the risk of another gas crisis this winter but this danger should not be exaggerated, a senior International Energy Agency official said today.

A pricing dispute between Russia and transit country Ukraine cut gas supplies to Europe during freezing January weather this year.

[Is China cornering India?](#)

The Chinese government's move to increase its diplomatic and military relations with the countries bordering India is being seen as an attempt to corner the world's largest democracy.

China has been trying hard to give further impetus to its relationship with Indian neighbours - Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka. Besides, it has all-weather relationship with India's main foe - Pakistan.

[BHP warns of an energy shortage](#)

BHP Billiton remains uncertain about short-term demand for commodities because of the lingering impact of the global financial crisis.

But it is in no doubt about the longer term, predicting looming global shortages in energy and copper as the industrialisation and urbanisation of China and India pick up pace.

[Oil, Gas Royalty-In-Kind Program to End, Salazar Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The \$6.6 billion U.S. royalty-in-kind payment program for oil and natural gas drilling fees will end, done in by allegations of illicit sexual encounters, drug use and financial mismanagement that eroded government returns.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar told Congress today he will phase out the "controversial" program and switch to a "more transparent and accountable royalty collection" system. He cited Government Accountability Office data and other reports showing failures in auditing, accounting and employee conduct.

[Is Resolution of Natural Gas Conundrum About to Emerge?](#)

For most of this year, natural gas prices have moved counter to almost everyone's expectations -- falling while crude oil prices have risen dramatically. The conventional explanation has been that natural gas production coming from the newly completed wells in the prolific gas-shale formations around the country is much greater than from

traditionally located and drilled wells. The unanswered questions are when will this phenomenon of more productive wells coming on stream end and why are producers continuing to drill ANY gas wells in a sub-\$3 per thousand cubic feet (Mcf) world?

[Strong interest in Norway's offshore oil licenses](#)

OSLO—Norway's national oil agency on Wednesday said 44 companies have applied for 227 offshore oil exploration licenses near existing fields, a strong sign of interest as the country attempts to fight falling production.

[The Fuel of Growth](#)

When the price of oil dropped to about 25% of its all time high late last year, some thought it was a return to normalcy for a market that has been racked by explosive inflation for the previous two years.

Jump forward six months and the price of oil has doubled — presently it is at 50% of its record high — and there is little sign of price growth slowing down. Gold, one of the main markers of inflation expectations, has jumped from a low of USD 712.3 per ounce at the end of last year to back within USD 50 of the metal's all time high of USD 1004.38. Spot prices of iron ore hit USD 110 per ton last month, still below last year's contract price of USD 120, but higher than the 33% discount iron ore providers negotiated with Japanese and South Korean steelmakers earlier this year.

[The Philippines: Possible blackout looms over 2010 elections](#)

The 2010 national elections might be done in the dark, as the looming energy shortage is expected to rear its ugly head, not in 2012, but much earlier.

This possibility was raised as lawmakers discussed the impending energy shortage with energy chief Angelo Reyes on Tuesday, September 15, during the deliberations on the budget of the energy department and its attached agencies.

[Natural Gas transmission interlude to cost Thailand 1 billion Baht](#)

Chiang Mai (Mizzima) - Natural Gas transmission from Burma and the Thai Gulf has been disrupted due to a technical snag, with damages estimated at 1 billion Baht for Thailand.

The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand has said that the pipeline from the Yetagun field of Burma was shut down for more than nine hours on September 13 and seven hours on September 12. Meanwhile, a pipeline from the Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area (JDA) was shut down for two hours on September 13 and five hours

on the previous day.

[Venezuela's Chavez aims to tap nuclear energy](#)

CARACAS, Venezuela — Hugo Chavez wants to join the nuclear energy club and is looking to Russia for help in getting started.

The Venezuelan leader is already dismissing critics' concerns over his nuclear ambitions, offering assurances his aims are peaceful and that Venezuela will simply be following in the footsteps of other South American nations using atomic energy.

[U.S. fears Venezuela could trigger regional arms race](#)

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- The United States fears recent weapons purchases by Venezuela could fuel an arms race in South America, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Tuesday.

"They outpace all other countries in South America and certainly raise the question as to whether there is going to be an arms race in the region," Clinton said about Venezuela's arms deals, after a meeting with Uruguayan President Tabare Vazquez.

[Overspending and public funds drain foreign assets](#)

Saudi Arabia is draining the massive foreign assets it has accumulated over the past seven boom years to meet higher budget commitments, shore up domestic liquidity and support local funds, a key Saudi investment firm said yesterday.

The withdrawal of nearly SR217 billion (Dh214.8bn) in the first seven months of 2009 indicates the world's oil giant is heavily overshooting budgeted expenditure to offset a sharp downturn in private sector activity, boosting its deposits with local banks, and channeling promised liquidity into public funds, the Riyadh-based Jadwa Investment said in a study sent to Emirates Business.

[BP sells windfarm operation in India](#)

BP has signalled a further retreat from its international renewable business by selling off its wind operation in India today.

[Italy advances, Germany falters, on nuclear energy futures](#)

On September 27th German voters will go to the polls and decide the fate of 17 nuclear power plants and 25% of its electricity supply. While Germans are making this fateful energy policy decision, Italy is moving to build eight new nuclear reactors after earlier this year overturning a two-decade old ban on them. The differences between the two countries is stark. Even more to the point, the two countries could do a complete role reversal in terms of the price of power and where they get it.

Currently, Italy imports 80% of its natural gas, relies heavily on dirty coal plants, and has some of the highest prices for electricity in Europe. Germany has long since depreciated its nuclear power plants which are now fat cash cows that help the nation preserve a significant degree of energy independence.

[Geothermal Power Offers a Hot Hand Up](#)

Geothermal power is available to all Earthlings, but finding the right spot for a full-scale electrical plant takes a long drill, a lot of money, and luck.

[Critics Say Australia Forgot About Efficiency](#)

Like a number of countries pursuing new vehicle incentive programs and “cash for clunkers” deals, the Australian government recently introduced a tax break giving consumers a 30 percent discount on purchasing new motor vehicles.

...But unlike programs in, say, the United States, which offered between \$3,500 to \$4,500 to consumers who traded old cars for new ones with higher fuel economy, Australia’s program did not carry any special efficiency requirement when purchasing a new car.

Simon Roz, a climate and energy campaigner with Australian Greenpeace, said the rebate was created to “stimulate the car industry with no consideration for the environment.”

[Oil firm pays millions over toxic dumping](#)

A British oil trading company is set to pay out millions of pounds in compensation to thousands of people who fell ill in one of the worst pollution incidents in decades when toxic waste was dumped illegally in one of the world’s poorest countries.

Trafigura, which describes itself as one of the world’s largest independent oil traders, told The Independent in a statement that it was looking to make a “global settlement” to the claim brought by 30,000 people from Ivory Coast who brought Britain’s largest-ever group lawsuit after breathing in fumes from tonnes of heavily-contaminated sludge which was fly-tipped by a sub-contractor in August 2006.

[Shell runs oil sands mine as protest enters day 2](#)

CALGARY, Alberta (Reuters) - Royal Dutch Shell Plc (RDSa.L) said on Wednesday its Muskeg River oil sands mine in northern Alberta was operating at full production as an environmental protest at the site entered its second day.

Shell said it has let the Greenpeace protesters continue their action, which is aimed at spreading the message that development of Canada's oil sands worsens climate change. The demonstration coincides with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit with U.S. President Barack Obama.

[China think-tank bleak on global climate goal](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - An international goal to limit global warming to no more than 2 degrees Celsius appears unreachable even if China embarks on a vast effort to tame its growing greenhouse gas emissions, a Beijing think-tank has said.

The report cast doubt on the prospects for the world to stay within a commonly accepted threshold of dangerous climate change, to avoid worse droughts, floods and rising seas, two months after world leaders including China acknowledged the limit.

[Bill McKibben and Climate Scientists in Boulder: A Critical Report](#)

Why are we losing the war against climate change? Because Americans are, more and more, merely preaching to our respective choirs.

[Scientists find CO2 link to Antarctic ice cap origin](#)

A team of scientists studying rock samples in Africa has shown a strong link between falling carbon dioxide levels and the formation of Antarctic ice sheets 34 million years ago.

The results are the first to make the link, underpinning computer climate models that predict both the creation of ice sheets when CO2 levels fall and the melting of ice caps when CO2 levels rise.

[Peak oil expected in 2009: Macquarie](#) - Spare capacity of 5.2 million bpd will be wiped out by 2012, Australian bank says

Peak oil supply will be hit this year after the economic crisis and low prices in the first quarter of 2009 slashed much needed investment, a senior executive at Australian

investment bank Macquarie said.

“This is our view – capacity has pretty much peaked in the sense that declines equal new resources,” Iain Reid, head of European oil and gas research at Macquarie, told Reuters.

The peak oil theory that oil supply is at or near its peak was long considered marginal.

It gained currency when prices CL-FT zoomed towards their record of nearly \$150 (U.S.) hit in July last year, with leading exponents suggesting various dates for the supply peak to be reached.

Some oil majors have acknowledged the prospect of dwindling production, but others have argued better extraction techniques and other technological advances will offset any decline.

Mr. Reid's latest research report – *The Big Oil Picture: We're not running out, but that doesn't mean we'll have enough* – sees global oil production capacity topping out at 89.6 million barrels per day (bpd) this year, a far more pessimistic view than most other banks or traditional forecasters.

[Irving Oil warns against big energy projects](#)

Irving Oil Ltd.'s chief executive officer issued a direct warning to regional premiers and governors on Tuesday to be wary of building costly energy infrastructure projects.

Kenneth Irving used a speech at the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers conference in Saint John to underscore to the political leaders that no one can predict the future of energy trends.

He did not offer specific examples, but warned against building large power projects that could turn into white elephants if energy trends suddenly change.

[Oil Risks Pullback to \\$59 If Support Fails: Technical Analysis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil, struggling to sustain gains above \$70 a barrel this month, faces a decline to \$59 if support on technical charts fails in the coming days, National Australia Bank Ltd. said.

Oil is likely to continue drifting in a sideways pattern as traders seek to gauge the market's short-term depth, according to Gordon Manning, a Sydney-based technical analyst. Futures, which touched a 10-month high of \$75 a barrel Aug. 25, haven't traded at \$59 since mid-July.

[Total expects oil production to rebound in 2010 after OPEC cuts weigh on 2009 output](#)

PARIS (AP) — Total SA expects its oil production to rebound in 2010 after cuts by OPEC and falling demand caused by the global recession weighed on its output this year, the company said Wednesday.

The forecast was included in slides on the French oil giant's Web site ahead of a presentation to analysts later in the day.

[Ruble Strengthens to Highest This Year on \\$71 Oil, Economy](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The ruble gained to the highest level this year as oil topped \$71 a barrel, metals prices rose and the government said the worst of Russia's slump is over.

[Hummers Buck Recession Trends In Russia](#)

The recession has hit hard in Russia, and car sales are down 50 percent compared with last year. But one car marketed to the wealthy has bucked that trend: the Hummer. Though sales have dropped dramatically in the U.S., the gas-guzzling American icon is having a banner year in Russia.

[Iran says ready for any possible gasoline sanction](#)

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran is prepared to deal with any possible sanctions on its imports of gasoline that world powers might impose over Tehran's disputed nuclear programme, Oil Minister Massoud Mirkazemi said on Wednesday.

While Iran is the world's fifth-largest crude exporter, it still has to import up to 40 percent of its gasoline supplies as it lacks the refining capacity to meet domestic demand. The United States and its European allies may target fuel imports if Tehran refuses to enter talks over its nuclear programme.

[Nigeria Withdrew 87 Billion Naira From Oil Fund, ThisDay Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Nigeria withdrew 87 billion naira (\$564 million) from a fund created to save revenue from oil exports when prices are high, ThisDay newspaper reported, citing Oludare Osibote, the country's acting Accountant-General.

The money will enable the federal, state and local governments to meet some of their expenditures following a drop in revenue earmarked for them in this year's budget, the Lagos-based newspaper said.

[Nigeria militants extend truce by 1 month](#)

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) -- Militants in Nigeria announced Wednesday they will extend a cease-fire that expired overnight by one month, holding off on attacks on oil installations and kidnapping foreigners, but warned that the government must address its grievances.

The militants are pressing the government to send federal oil revenues to the impoverished southern Delta region, where the oil came from, and wants the government to withdraw troops and help people return to homes they had fled.

[Repsol Says Its La Coruna Refinery Is Running at 80% of Capacity](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Repsol YPF SA's refinery in La Coruna is running at 80 percent of capacity because of a drop in demand.

[Norway: the remote Atlantic island drowning in cash](#)

This fiscal year, for the first time since the Ormen Lange gas terminal was built, Aukra's local council banked \$21m in business tax, twice as much as in the previous year. Back in 2003, just before parliament decided to locate the terminal at Aukra, the island's tax revenue was under 1% of the current sum.

It is an amazing windfall for 3,170 inhabitants. "Aukra is awash with cash", read the headline in DN, Norway's business daily. Other small communities with similar terminals are now under state administration. Aukra is determined to avoid this.

[Ethiopia's Rebels Threaten Oil Companies in Ogaden Region](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Ethnic Somali rebels from the Ogaden National Liberation Front issued a fresh warning to companies exploring for oil in Ethiopia's eastern Somali region, known as the Ogaden.

No business should be conducted in Ogaden "until there is a political solution to the conflict," the ONLF said today in an e-mailed statement. The rebels "will not be responsible for any collateral damages that occur from its engagements with the Ethiopian army," according to the statement. The group also accused oil companies of "disinheriting the Ogaden people of their natural resources."

[Angolan Crude Exports Scheduled to Drop in November](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Angola's daily crude oil shipments are scheduled to drop about 6 percent

in November, bringing exports from Africa's second-biggest producer closer to its OPEC quota.

[Anadarko announces find off of Sierra Leone coast](#)

Houston-based Anadarko Petroleum has made a discovery off the coast of Sierra Leone in Africa, the company said today.

Anadarko said its Venus exploration well, drilled about 18,500 feet deep in about 5,900 feet of water, found an "active petroleum system."

[Venezuela Plans to Build Oil Refinery in Mauritania, Efe Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Venezuela plans to build a refinery in Mauritania with a capacity of at least 30,000 barrels of oil a day, Efe reported, citing President Hugo Chavez.

[Why You Need to Invest in Oil Right Now](#)

Hope for alternative forms of energy all you want, but bet on crude. Esquire's financial columnist crunches the numbers from the latest hedge-fund reports for a strategy you can believe in.

[Can Keynesian Spending Achieve National Energy Security?](#)

National and international spending and investment plans to fight climate change are being constantly increased, to a background of government friendly media around the world being instrumented to tread a delicate line between climate change doomsterism and hysteria, and green economy utopia. This uneasy balance of doom and boom is needed to maintain public opinion in favor of coming carbon taxes, job losses, higher energy prices, and legislation to force a change in business practice and lifestyles. The better end in view, media and government spokespersons tell us, is climate and environment protection, sustainable green jobs, and increased energy security from local-produced alternate and renewable energy

[It's Never Worse Than You Think](#)

Worrying about what *might* go wrong in the future is a futile pastime. For all the things that might go wrong, there are plenty that might go right.

Never underestimate the ingenuity of humans to solve problems. We are an intelligent, highly educated race. Collectively, we will find a way to exist in a world of less oil. We will find a way to live with climate change. Heck, England might even find a way to win the

football World Cup.

[Stop Giving the Newspapers Your Advice - They Don't Need It](#)

The failure of newspapers is not a failure of imagination or foresight nor is it a failure of individuals. **This kind of failure is the hallmark of *all* institutions in the face of tectonic disruption.** Institutions are a set of agreements that perpetuate a social order beyond individual intention or tenure. Changing those agreements is costly and time-consuming. So when the rate of change accelerates beyond the institution's adaptive capacity - extinction follows.

The question is not "what should newspapers do?" but "how can a large institution effectively organize in response to disruptive change?" Taken thus, it is not only the fundamental question to ask of newspapers - but to ask of ourselves in relation to a host of big-ticket game-changers such as peak oil, environmental collapse and climate change that simultaneously require and defy our capacity for institutional response.

[It's now downhill all the way](#)

ASK VIRTUALLY anyone in Terrace what peak oil is, and almost no one knows. A few will muddle with the two words and approximate a meaning such as "oil from the mountains" or "the highest price of oil so far" (about \$147 a barrel). But most will reply, "Don't know."

This isn't surprising, given that we live the way we do. Few, perhaps even none, of us have ever experienced a serious fuel shortage. The possibility of a true lack of fuel is simply foreign to us.

[The Brothers Grim](#)

But not all is perfect: the blood supply is dwindling. A hematologist played by Ethan Hawke is trying to come up with a synthetic blood; in this universe, True Blood has yet to be invented.

The script was written in 2003, the first year of Australia's ongoing drought, and the film features an unmistakable ecological bent -- shades of James Howard Kunstler's *The Long Emergency*, with his warnings of peak oil, echo throughout the film -- though the brothers insist they just want the audience to have a good time.

"The depletion of a resource is a hot topic and certainly will be for a very long time," Michael says. "[But] you can come off as a pretentious a--hole if you spend too much time focusing on a political agenda when really you're making a fun, action, splatter movie. You don't want to get bogged down with that stuff.. Hey, the planet's falling apart, what can you say?"

[Will the Brixton pound buy a brighter future?](#)

The Brixton pound is the latest local currency to be launched under the umbrella of the Transition Town Network, a rapidly growing global movement that urges local communities to "respond to the challenges, and opportunities, of peak oil and climate change". The movement – essentially a rebranding of the 1970s permaculture philosophy of self-sufficiency, sustainability and working with nature – began in Kinsale, County Cork, in 2005 and has since spread across the planet from the US and New Zealand through to Chile and Italy. Even Ambridge in Radio 4's *The Archers* signed up last year.

['End of Oil' Author, Paul Roberts, to Deliver Aiken Lecture \(University of Vermont\)](#)

Roberts' lecture, "The Future of Food in a Peak Oil World," will look at solutions – personal and global – to ensure we develop the capacity to produce food that is safe, nourishing and plentiful enough to meet the needs of a rapidly growing world population while facing the prospect of running out of oil. The 2009-2010 Aiken Lecture, sponsored by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, follows a visit to UVM in June when Roberts met with a number of Vermont leaders in the movement for sustainable food systems.

[World Bank spends billions on coal-fired power stations despite own warnings](#)

The World Bank is spending billions of pounds subsidising new coal-fired power stations in developing countries despite claiming that burning fossil fuels exposes the poor to catastrophic climate change. The bank, which has a goal of reducing poverty and is funded by Britain and other developed countries, calls on all nations in a report today to "act differently on climate change".

It says that the world must reduce its dependence on fossil fuels, but it is funding several giant coal-burning plants that will each emit millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide a year for the next 40 to 50 years.

[When Renewable Is Not Sustainable](#)

Renewable energy is sold to the public as an environmentally benign alternative to energy produced by fossil fuels. With respect to ethanol and solar power, however, the debate has ignored how land and water use is affected by refining ethanol, growing corn and siting solar plants.

Energy production requires water. Producing petroleum, natural gas, coal or methane consumes a lot of water, but much less than it takes to make ethanol. In 2008,

researchers at Virginia Tech quantified the amount of water it takes to produce one million British Thermal Units (BTUs): natural gas requires three gallons, ethanol as much as 29,100 gallons.

[Schwarzenegger signs order boosting clean power](#)

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif. – Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed an executive order Tuesday giving California the nation's most aggressive alternative energy standards, requiring utilities to get a third of their power from renewable sources by 2020.

Schwarzenegger said the order signed at a field of solar panels will reduce California's dependence on fossil fuels and help clean its air while creating a reliable power supply for a state with 38 million people.

[Rolls-Royce plans nuclear plants with EDF](#)

LONDON (AFP) – Engineering firm Rolls-Royce is to collaborate with French power firm EDF to build four new nuclear power plants, it said on Wednesday.

The European Pressurised Reactors are to be built at Hinkley Point and Sizewell. The first should be operational by the end of 2017, while all four should be on stream by 2025.

[Greenpeace boards ship off NZ in climate protest](#)

WELLINGTON (AFP) – Greenpeace protesters boarded a cargo ship on Wednesday off the New Zealand port of Tauranga in a protest over the use of palm kernel from razed rainforests to feed farm animals.

Fourteen activists from the environmental organisation boarded the East Ambition about five kilometres (2.7 nautical miles) from the port on the east coast of the North Island on Wednesday morning.

[Doctors tell politicians to fight climate change](#)

LONDON – A weak response to climate change could be catastrophic for international health, leading doctors said in two British medical journals Wednesday.

Experts have previously warned that global warming could mean a spike in diseases including malaria and dengue fever, and that higher temperatures would result in food shortages, sanitation problems and extreme weather events like hurricanes and floods.

[North America backs plan to cut greenhouse gases](#)

UNITED NATIONS – Small island nations gained North America's powerful backing Tuesday for a plan to convert the U.N. ozone treaty into a tool for phasing out some of the globe's most powerful climate-warming gases.

[2010? Reid's Comments Add Uncertainty to Climate Vote's Timing](#)

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) added another layer of uncertainty to the prospects for passing a comprehensive climate bill this year by opening the door to punting the legislation into 2010, only to have a top aide walk back from his boss' comment a short while later.

Jim Manley, a Reid spokesman, insisted last night that "no decisions have been made" on floor timing for a comprehensive climate and energy bill. "We still intend to deal with health care, [Wall Street regulatory] reform and cap and trade this year," Manley added in an e-mail.

[Climate change hails new era for agriculture](#)

Mariann Fischer Boel, EU Agriculture Commissioner, told Europe's agriculture ministers that every farm policy from now on will have to take into account its effect on climate change.

...In a frank address to ministers, she said: "We must grow more food, in more challenging weather conditions, with lower emissions of greenhouse gases.

"The tasks of putting the brakes on climate change and adapting to it are tasks for today, not tomorrow.

"Let me say it plainly: we're entering a new context for making agricultural policy. Things will not be the same: not in our lifetime; not in our children's lifetime; not ever."



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](#).