



Drumbeat: September 18, 2009

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Amid Africa's oil boom, U.S. binds ties](#)

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assets into businesses they can see, smell and even taste -- to measure growth not by the flashing numbers on a stock ticker, but by the slow ripening of a tomato.

[Treating Oil Addiction](#) *Fuel (2008)*

"Fuel," Josh Tickell's unabashedly intimate, 11-years-in-the-making attack on America's addiction to oil, is not so much a green documentary as a red, white and blue alarm. But if you can resist the urge to run for the exit, you may leave the theater feeling a lot more hopeful than when you went in.

A sustainable-energy evangelist whose church is a van that runs on grease, Mr. Tickell contends that the oil industry poisons our environment, corrupts our government and cooks our planet. Galvanized by a childhood spent among the oil refineries and pollution problems of Louisiana, Mr. Tickell was an early adopter of alternative fuels. But his exhaustively wide-ranging film is more than an expression of personal affront: though his mother, Deborah Dupré, suffered nine miscarriages ("Factor that into the cost of gasoline," he says), "Fuel" seldom feels vindictive.

[Author outlined dangers of foreign oil dependency](#)

In order to be prepared for a sudden oil shortage, Black suggested that the country should revive the century-old technologies of alternative energy.

"We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we need to unbury it," he said.

[As he sows: An interview Michael Pollan](#)

I mean, there was a whole movement to draft me for secretary of agriculture, which is my idea of a complete nightmare job. It was not a smart idea on anybody's part. Maybe it sent a message and helped the new administration see this movement out there, but I write as one and I speak as one person. And that's the difference between acting politically, and acting as a writer.

When [former Iowa Gov. Tom] Vilsack was appointed, I was asked what I thought. I gave a modest personal answer, which may not have been smart politically. I said something like it was a good day for corn, not so good for America's eaters, and I said it was agribusiness as usual. And a lot of activists were kind of ticked at me, they said: "We're trying to get in with this guy. We think we can work with him. So keep your powder dry." I kept hearing that.

[Energy Industry Slowdown Means Idle Rigs, Cuts in Jobs](#)

John Cromling isn't jumping out any windows, even though the struggles of the oil and gas industry have idled a large number of Tulsa-based Unit Corp.'s drilling rigs.

That has forced Unit to lay off about 800 employees in Oklahoma.

"That's really the only thing you can do to cope with the market. The market is what it is," said Cromling, executive vice president of Unit's drilling company. "You just have to figure out how to stay alive with it being that."

He said only about 35 percent of the company's rigs are working, compared with a 97 percent utilization rate last year.

[U.S. natgas rig count climbs 6 to 705 for week](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The number of rigs drilling for natural gas in the United States climbed six this week to 705, according to a report on Friday by oil services firm Baker Hughes in Houston.

The U.S. natural gas drilling rig count has gained in eight of the last nine weeks but is still down sharply since peaking above 1,600 in September last year, standing at 884 rigs, or 56 percent, below the same week last year.

[Analysis: Drilling Picks Up in the Mediterranean and Black Seas](#)

While the Mediterranean and Black Seas have not always been global hot spots for offshore oil and gas exploration, drilling in these two areas has increased substantially. With multiple projects upcoming and prolific production existing, both the Mediterranean and the Black Sea are logging more rig time every year.

[China's quest for African oil](#)

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton may have peddled democracy when she breezed through Angola in August, but there were few doubts she was thinking oil. And though she denied any interest in what China was up to in the African nation, she couldn't possibly have ignored it.

Beijing and Washington's rivalry for African oil — particularly the coveted resources of Angola and Nigeria — has never been stronger, as America tries to bolster its dwindling reserves, while China seeks resources to fuel its rapid industrial expansion. Both Angola and Nigeria are among America's main oil suppliers. They are also chief sources of crude for China, and with huge Chinese investment now pouring in, Beijing seems to be seeking a lion's share.

[Biden talks oil in Iraqi Kurdistan](#)

ERBIL, Iraq (UPI) -- Kurdish leaders in Iraq welcomed U.S. Vice President Joe Biden to discuss outstanding issues with the central government regarding national oil wealth.

Biden met with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani, the president of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, in an effort to find a resolution to oil issues with the central government in Baghdad.

[Alaska Gov Says Gas Pipeline Competitors Should Work Together](#)

Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell said Thursday that he expects developers of two competing natural gas pipelines, from Alaska's North Slope to Canada and the contiguous U.S., to find a way to work together before he will consider agreements on production tax incentives for the projects.

[Utilities prepare for winter energy shortages](#)

Faced with the strong possibility of a shortfall in utility natural gas deliverability in the event of a severe cold snap in the coming Southcentral Alaska winter, gas and electric

utilities around the region are completing a contingency plan in an effort to avert the need for power cuts and to ensure that, if power cuts are required, the impact on power consumers is minimized.

[Total May Face Strikes on Possible Refinery Sales](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Total SA, Europe's biggest oil refiner, may face strikes as workers protest the possible sale of some of its plants, a union said.

"Let's be ready for a strike to defend jobs and our refining," the Confederation General du Travail said today in a statement. Total is willing to "sacrifice" European refining capacity to expand in Asia and the Middle East, the union said.

[Top military minds mull climate change, energy efficiency, new fuels and national security](#)

Even accounting for the recent discovery of deep sea oil reserves in the Gulf of Mexico, America controls only 3 percent of the world's oil supply while we consume 25 percent of the oil produced every year. Making the assumption that fuel is going to be available and affordable whenever and wherever we need it leads to a fundamentally flawed strategy. It will neither be available nor affordable.

The growing divergence of supply and demand curves for global oil dictates ever-greater scarcity and ever increasing cost. By remaining dependent on oil the United States will continue to be entangled with unfriendly rulers and undemocratic nations — simply because we need their oil. And we cannot produce enough domestic oil to change this dynamic. That is just a short-term solution that simply continues our harmful addiction to oil. We need to recognize that we cannot drill our way to sustained prosperity and security — we have to wean ourselves from our reliance on oil, starting now. "

[Bad drought sparks boost for portable power team](#)

A brutal drought that has swept through East Africa has created opportunities for Aggreko, the Scottish-based portable power generation company.

[Cameco cuts 79 jobs at fuel manufacturing plant](#)

TORONTO (Reuters) - Canadian uranium producer Cameco has laid off 79 non-union employees at its two nuclear fuel manufacturing plants in Ontario due to a two-week-old strike at the facilities, a company official said on Thursday.

Fuel manufacturing at Cameco's Port Hope, Ontario, facility has been completely halted, while the company's nearby Cobourg operation is running on a partial basis, Cameco

spokesman Lyle Krahn said.

[Tapping wind power potential for now and future](#)

In the power front, the situation is distressingly bad in Bangladesh. With per capita energy consumption just reaching 220 KGOE (kilogram of oil), Bangladesh is one of the low energy consuming countries in the world. The national grid could so far cover only 35 percent of the population, and only 3 percent people receive piped gas supply. 70 percent of the people live in rural areas, where the situation with every passing year continues to be precarious.

[Justice Dept. investigating former Interior Secretary Gale Norton's ties to oil company](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department has launched an investigation into whether former Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton illegally used her position to steer lucrative oil leases to Royal Dutch Shell PLC, the company she works for now, officials with both departments confirmed to The Associated Press.

The criminal investigation is focused on a 2006 decision by the Interior Department to award three oil shale leases on federal land in Colorado to a Shell subsidiary. Oil from the leases could eventually earn the company hundreds of billions dollars.

[Oil barons needn't fear the green machines](#)

LONDON (ShareCast) - Oil bosses are furiously spending billions of dollars trying to find enough of the black stuff to help us maintain our love affair with the car. So, imagine the look on their faces this week when the world's biggest auto makers wheeled out an army of electric concept cars at the Frankfurt motor show.

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But Michael T. Klare, a U.S. energy specialist and professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College, argues that in the years ahead the United States, as well as Europe, will condemn millions of people to the tyranny of dictators.

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[GOP Senator Considering Rider to Limit EPA Authority on Greenhouse Gases](#)

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) may attempt to handcuff U.S. EPA's ability to regulate stationary sources of greenhouse gases with an amendment to the agency's annual spending bill.

[Natural gas producers to start lobbying effort](#)

WASHINGTON – Natural gas producers are planning a major lobbying effort to shape climate change legislation in the Senate, aiming for incentives to boost the use of their resource in power plants and vehicles.

The aggressive push is meant to make up for the gas lobby's relative absence from climate-change negotiations in the House, where a bill that passed in June reserved most goodies for coal-burning utilities and manufacturers seeking incentives to shield them from the cost of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[Iranian president raises stakes against Israel](#)

TEHRAN (Reuters) – President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has raised the stakes against Israel by describing the Holocaust as a lie, just as world powers are trying to decide how to deal with the nuclear ambitions of an Iran in political turmoil.

[Diverting Aid for Climate Change Threatens Children, Oxfam Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Diverting overseas aid from economic development to fight global warming may threaten the lives of at least 4.5 million children in the poorest nations, the anti-poverty group Oxfam said.

[Bangladesh fears climate change will swallow a third of its land](#)

Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Dipu Moni warned Thursday that rising oceans from climate change could swallow up to a third of her low-lying country and urged other nations to take action at an upcoming environmental summit to mitigate the damage.

[The Peak Oil Crisis: The Next Price Spike](#)

The peak oil thesis holds that the cessation of further growth in world oil production will be accompanied by wild price swings as the world attempts to adjust to the new state of affairs.

Now that mankind's oil supply has not grown significantly in the last four years despite some very high prices in the interim, many people believe that the peak has arrived in the form of a bumpy plateau and will soon begin the inevitable fall that must come with the depletion of a finite commodity. To be fair, some optimists don't see a significant decline coming for another 10, 20, 30 or more years, but few, including perennially optimistic government forecasters, predict significant further growth - at least not for conventional oil.

[Oil Investors Embark on Voyage of Discovery](#)

Barely a week goes by without a major oil discovery being announced. Recent hot spots include the Gulf of Mexico, Brazil and West Africa. But beware jumping to conclusions about how much this changes the dynamics of energy supply, for oil bears or peak-oil pundits.

[New trade flows threaten Europe's oil refiners](#)

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - An anticipated bounce in fuel demand next year will not be enough to prevent European refiners from cutting runs or even closing because of fierce competition in traditional export markets.

Demand is set to pick up for most fuel next year as economies return to growth, but refiners will no longer be able to count on a gasoline exports to the United States, which has traditionally provided a lucrative revenue stream, refiners and analysts said.

[Ecuador warns oil companies to keep up investments](#)

QUITO (Reuters) - Ecuador could cancel contracts with petroleum companies if they do not fulfill their investment plans, Oil Minister Germanico Pinto said on Thursday in the government's latest warning to the private sector.

The socialist government has a troubled relationship with foreign investors, punctuated by tax and other legal disputes. But Pinto said that so far, he sees no signs of companies failing to live up to their investment commitments.

[Is There Something Wrong with the Crude Oil Market?](#)

With the official end to summer, the Labor Day weekend, behind us and the nation's largest energy company investor conference underway, the oil market received several shot-in-the-arm positives last week. Wall Street talking-heads had a difficult time understanding what was going on with the price of gold and crude oil futures soaring on

the first trading day following last Monday's holiday. Gold futures traded over \$1,000 an ounce and crude oil prices jumped by \$3 a barrel. The inability of the talking-heads to explain the phenomenon left us wondering if we were seeing a global investor reaction to Washington politicians returning to work.

[Oil surplus peaking this year, bank says](#)

The world supply, or surplus, of oil will peak this year after the economic crisis and low prices in the first quarter slashed much-needed investment, says a senior executive at Australian investment bank Macquarie.

"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, said in an interview.

[Not your average peak oil theory, from Macquarie](#)

Mainstream financial analyst types tend to shy away from talking about peak oil - even when they are talking up a looming supply crunch, this is usually attributed to the short-to mid-term under-investment problem. So a presentation by Iain Reid, a senior oil analyst at Macquarie Bank, stirred much excitement when some details were published this week.

[2009 Annual Report: Magellan Flagship Fund](#)

We attempt to increase our understanding of important markets, such as oil supply and demand. Global petroleum usage has declined in the recession from about 88 million barrels per day to about 85 million. The US motorist is currently a key factor in terms of demand, with the US consuming about 25% of daily oil usage and about 55% of that is used to power the 200 million + consumer motor vehicles. As the marginal cost of production of oil is well below the market price, producers have not meaningfully rationed supply over past decades and probably will not in the future. Hence, the world is vulnerable to Peak Oil if left simply to the working of market forces. Market forces may result in a rapid crossover from relatively plentiful, relatively inexpensive oil to shortages and price shocks.

Thus, we are looking at US Energy Policy as it evolves. Similarly the recent rapid improvement in commercialisation of hybrid and other long life battery motor vehicles is very meaningful. As well as impacting oil usage downward, foreseeable future benefits of improved battery technology also include storage of electricity at solar and wind facilities, and improvements in the cost effectiveness of desalination. Major technological advances and commercialisation will have profound impacts, including on food production as well as on energy cost and usage.

[KGB Interrogation: John Dashwood](#)

I would just say that our perception is that there is about twice as much oil out there to be discovered or to be produced than has been produced in history so far. Certainly the phrase that we use is that yes fossil fuels are indeed 'finite', but they're not finished.

[Crude Oil May Fall as U.S. Fuel Supplies Increase, Survey Shows](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil futures may decline as U.S. fuel stockpiles increase and refiners prepare to idle units for seasonal maintenance.

Sixteen of 42 analysts surveyed by Bloomberg News, or 38 percent, said futures will drop through Sept. 25. Fourteen respondents, or 33 percent, forecast that the market will rise and 12 said prices will be little changed. Last week, 45 percent of analysts said oil would fall.

[Citigroup CEO Pandit Says Phibro Business Will Be Restructured](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Citigroup Inc. Chief Executive Officer Vikram Pandit said the bank will restructure its Phibro LLC energy-trading business as the bank faces what may be a \$100 million payday for the unit's chief, Andrew Hall.

"That business will be restructured and rationalized," Pandit said yesterday at the 92nd Street Y in New York. When asked if \$100 million was too much to pay, he replied, "Yes."

[Pdvsas bond issue cuts price of dollar in the unofficial market](#)

The US dollar has reached its lower level thus far this year in the unofficial market due to the higher supply of dollars through the issue of Pdvsas foreign currency-denominated bonds.

According to financial sources, the state-run oil holding Petr6leos de Venezuela (Pdvsas) is selling to brokerage houses part of the papers maturing in 2017 and 2011 that were bought back recently by the oil company.

[BG Venture Said to Seek \\$700 Million From Kazakhstan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- A BG Group Plc venture will seek to recover at least \$700 million in export duties from the Kazakh government at an arbitration hearing in London later this month, two people familiar with the matter said.

The U.K.'s third-biggest oil and gas producer said it paid duties "under protest" last year in relation to Karachaganak, its largest project in Kazakhstan. BG and its partners in the development, including Eni SpA of Italy, are now looking to claw back the taxes, said the people, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the case is confidential.

[Sinopec Tianjin to delay new refinery to Dec - source](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Top Asian refinery Sinopec Corp has delayed the start up of its new 200,000 barrel-per-day (bpd) refining plant in Tianjin to around mid-December or later, an industry official said on Friday.

The delay of the plant, the fourth major new facility to come online in China this year, could help ease the heavy surplus in Asian diesel market despite the approach of winter heating oil demand, partly due to heavy exports from China.

[UAE is oil-rich, but struggles to get power to all](#)

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates — In dusty and sweltering Industrial Area 13, just beyond the glow of Dubai's illuminated skyscrapers, Abdullah Kuttakunnil serves patrons of Kannur Restaurant by candlelight.

It's a matter of necessity, not ambiance. For much of the past month, residents of Sharjah, an increasingly teeming city hugging an interstate border with the wealthier city-state of Dubai, have suffered through power failures often lasting most of the day.

[Russian Utility Threatens to 'Hang' Customers for Unpaid Bills](#)

(Bloomberg) -- A Russian utility in the city named after the founder of the Bolshevik secret police is threatening "to hang" customers who don't pay their bills.

The Federal Anti-Monopoly Service is investigating whether Nizhny Novgorod Utility Systems violated advertising laws by posting photographs of delinquent consumers on billboards under the rubric: "Hanged As Promised."

[Timor Sea Oil Spill May Worsen, Australian Conservationists Say](#)

(Bloomberg) -- An oil spill from a leaking well off Western Australia that has polluted the Timor Sea with 1,200 metric tons of oil may worsen and is a "major ecological disaster in the making," a conservation group says.

"This is a disaster that risks blowing out further in terms of its scale and impact on the

ocean,” Darren Kindleysides, director of the Australian Marine Conservation Society, said in an e-mailed statement today. The spill has covered 15,000 square kilometers (5,800 square miles), with 400 barrels a day leaking from the Montara field, the group said.

[The Financial Crisis and Imperialism: Interview of John Bellamy Foster](#)

BMR: What is the likely impact of the present financial crisis on geopolitics, especially if the crisis is considered in the context of the energy crisis including the peak oil issue, the food crisis, The Great Hunger, the environmental crisis, and the declining dollar? Will the world experience war(s) as an effort to survive? Will monopoly-finance capital attempt to create another bubble, as capital is gripped with contradictions within and without?

JBF: The Great Financial Crisis and the Great Recession that followed close upon it have uncovered the depth of the contradictions facing capitalism in this phase, which I have labeled "monopoly-finance capital." Specifically, the overall crisis has revealed that capitalism, at its vital core, is caught in a stagnation-financialization trap with no visible way out. The geopolitical implications of course are vast.

[The Iran Whisperers](#)

As I've said many times, the Iranians would be foolish to acquire a nuclear weapon. It would be tantamount to painting a bull's eye on their backs. The Israelis (and we) would have a perfect excuse to blow their entire nuclear industry to smithereens. And as I've also said many times, with peak oil either here or just around the corner, it's the energy, not a weapon, that makes Iran's nuclear program worth having.

[Resilience Takes Form -- A Handbook for Transition](#)

Something strange has happened over in old Blighty. I'm not sure if the Utopian dreams of the 1960's are making a comeback or if a new movement, one grounded in reality but focused on our future, has taken shape. No matter how cynical you are, you can't ignore one of the fastest growing grassroots movements in the UK -- The Transition Network.

[Chaos & Claustrophobia: Toronto '09 titles from "Lebanon" to "Collapse"](#)

Ruppert encourages a sort of Darwinian survivalism with a priceless anecdote about a bear that invades a camp: "You don't have to run faster than the bear," he says. "You only have to be faster than the slowest camper." A lesson for us all.

If Ruppert sounds bitter and misanthropic, he also ultimately comes across as deeply human, vulnerable and sad. One of the biggest revelations of the film isn't the CIA's role

in drug smuggling, Smith's initial entry-point into the subject, or the value that organic seeds may have as a future currency, but that the high-point of Ruppert's day is walking down the street with his dog in Culver City, eliciting as many smiles as he can from passersby.

[Canning revival](#)

Back in June, McMahon organized a "green café" for the East Toronto Climate Action Group. Twenty-five neighbours crowded into the local coffee shop to watch Al Gore's latest flick, talk about potential energy shortages and climate change and brainstorm about what could be done.

"What came up was a lot of food," McMahon says. Food security, community gardening, shopping locally and canning.

As the world edges closer to peak oil capacity and communities are forced to become more self-sustainable, McMahon says re-learning the old home trades, or "reskilling," will be crucial.

"I'm sad my grandparents aren't around any more to teach me this," she says. "I don't know how to darn a sock. We're trying to tap into seniors, or anyone who learned (these skills) from their grandparents."

[Western Rail Network Key to Regional Sustainability](#)

There are so many issues one could cover here. Glaeser admits that more spending won't relieve congestion in the Eastern corridors, yet calls for more spending in those corridors. Samuelson also claims that there is no economic gain to be had from building rail which is completely unbelievable because U.S. history since the 1850's cannot even be understood without contemplating the development of the railroad.

[Putin Deputy Blames 'Corporate Ethics' for Siberian Dam Deaths](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's energy chief, Igor Sechin, blamed local managers and faulty equipment for the accident that killed 75 people at Russia's largest hydropower plant last month.

"There is something wrong with corporate ethics here," Sechin told journalists late yesterday in Abakan, capital of the Khakassia region of Siberia where OAO RusHydro's Sayano-Shushenskaya station is located. "RusHydro needs to address this issue and probably certify its personnel on ethics."

buys nearly as much power as it makes

The problem: The plant can't operate at full capacity because its production wells are producing geothermal water that isn't hot enough, even though its temperature is higher than the 180 degrees Raser initially said it would need.

[Success of Palm Oil Brings Plantations Under Pressure to Preserve Habitats](#)

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Idyllic scenes of palm trees swaying over sandy beaches have long decorated brochures meant to lure tourists to Indonesia and Malaysia. But few visitors see the giant palm plantations away from the shore.

Each year, the plantations produce millions of tons of palm oil, which has soared in popularity since the 1970s and is now found in foods like margarine, potato chips and chocolate, as well as in soap, cosmetics and biofuel.

[Brazil eyes limits on Amazon sugar cane growth](#)

BRASILIA — The Brazilian government presented new legislation Thursday intended to protect the Amazon from deforestation by banning any new planting of sugar cane, widely cultivated for ethanol production.

"Now we can say that our ethanol is 100 percent green," said Environment Minister Carlos Minc announcing the proposed rules.

[Interest in algae's oil prospects is growing](#)

To many, algae is little more than pond scum, a nuisance to swimmers and a frustration to boaters.

But to a growing community of scientists and investors in Southern California, there is oil locked in all that slimy stuff, and several dozen companies are racing to try to figure how best to unleash it and produce an affordable biofuel.

[Algae Fuels Are Too Darn Expensive](#)

Unlike other types of renewable alt-fuel sources, like corn and switchgrass, algae can be cultivated in harsh, even toxic environments that aren't viable for less hardy forms of plant life. As a plus, algae creates a CO₂ absorber. So growing it and then burning the oil derived from it as fuel creates a nice, efficient feedback loop that gets us away from petroleum while simultaneously reducing greenhouse gases.

Sounds great, except that the numbers don't work. This is what any alt-fuel source is up against when it does battle with petroleum: Dinosaur oil is packed with energy, and it's still super-cheap. It's also tucked away in environmentally benign fields underground. One it gets out, and is, say, burned as gas or ... um ... spilled from tankers in pristine Alaskan waters, well, that's when it causes problems. But we don't currently have to expend any effort to make it. It's just there, and has been for millions of years.

[World's largest turbine blades to be made in Britain](#)

Britain will manufacture the world's largest wind turbine blades, thanks to grants for offshore wind energy firms arranged by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

Energy and Climate Secretary Ed Miliband has announced grants will go to Clipper Windpower, Artemis Intelligent Power and Siemens Wind Power UK.

[India's Gujarat to Give Contracts for Solar Project](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Contracts to build the world's largest solar power facility in India's Gujarat state, valued at \$10 billion and backed by former U.S. President Bill Clinton, will be awarded by January, a state government official said.

[Disappearing Wetlands Taint New Orleans' Rebound From Katrina](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Carlton Dufrechou can fly 10 minutes from New Orleans and be over the open waters of the Mississippi Sound. Two decades earlier, before erosion took its toll, he would have looked down on lush wetlands.

The destruction accelerated four years ago last month, when Hurricane Katrina struck. The third-deadliest storm in U.S. history claimed more than 1,800 lives, displaced 1 million residents and damaged more than half of New Orleans' housing stock. Katrina also wiped out 80 square miles of marsh within hours, four times the amount lost by the entire state in a year.

[Kenya: Country at Crossroads in Fight Against Poverty](#)

Nairobi — Kenya is at the crossroads between tackling climate change and reducing poverty levels. Debate is rife that conserving the environment will end drought, famine and disease and lead to a drop in food prices.

Poverty reduction in Kenya and other countries is also expected to take centre stage when world leaders join President Obama at his first United Nations address on climate

change in New York.

[Chevron Australia CO2 Liability Deal May Be Precedent](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Chevron Corp., Exxon Mobil Corp. and Royal Dutch Shell Plc agreed to invest in the \$37 billion Gorgon natural gas venture only after Australia's government assumed liability for potential damages hundreds of years from now. That may set a precedent in this resource-rich nation.

[Twiddling our thumbs while waiting for a U.S. climate-change bill](#)

Having ceded important parts of Canada's climate-change policies to the United States – or, to put matters more mildly, having decided to wait on the United States – the Harper government can hardly take a lead in North America on reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

With climate-change talks resuming in Copenhagen in December, the U.S. remains a long way from developing a coherent position – which means Canada is stalled, too.

[Drought Causing India Farmers to Sell Wives](#)

One farmer in Jhansi, named Kalicharan, told The Telegraph that he had borrowed money to buy a water pump. When the money lender came for the repayment, he took his wife and three children.

"I told him to give me some time to arrange money but he forcibly entered my house and took my wife and children," Kalicharan told the newspaper.

[Arctic ice melts to third - smallest area](#)

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - The Arctic ice pack melted this summer to its third-smallest size on record, up slightly from the low points of the past two years but continuing an overall shrinking trend symptomatic of climate change, U.S. scientists said on Thursday.

Northern sea ice retreated to its minimum extent for 2009 on September 12, when it covered 1.97 million square miles (5.1 million square km), and now appears to be growing again as the Arctic starts its annual cool-down, the National Snow and Ice Data Center reported.

That level falls 20 percent below the 30-year average minimum sea ice cover for the Arctic summer since satellites began measuring it in 1979, and 24 percent less than the 1979-2000 average, the Colorado-based government agency said.



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