



Drumbeat: October 9, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on October 9, 2009 - 9:00am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[The coming food shortage: Potash as fuel for food](#)

In 1798, 32 year-old British economist Malthus anonymously published “An Essay on the Principle of Population” and in it he argued that human population’s increase geometrically (1, 2, 4, 16 etc.) while their food supply can only increase arithmetically (1, 2, 3, 4 etc.). Since food is obviously necessary for us to survive, unchecked population growth in any one area or involving the whole planet would lead to individual pockets of humanity starving or even mass worldwide starvation.

Given the “dust bowl” droughts now gripping countries that make up almost two thirds of the worlds breadbasket – the U.S., many countries in South America, Australia, China and parts of Canada, the price of food staples – wheat, rice, corn, soybeans etc, will continue to rise.

“The whole global picture is flagging up signals that we’re moving out of a period of abundant food supply into a period in which food is going to be in much shorter supply,” says Henry Fell, chairman of Britain’s Commercial Farmers Group.

best word to use in the heading for the back cover copy of a new short book being co-published by International Forum on Globalization and Post Carbon Institute, *Searching for a Miracle: "Net Energy" and the Fate of Industrial Societies* (I wrote the main text, Jerry wrote the Foreword). Jerry liked the word "conundrum," while I argued for "dilemma." We were in basic agreement, though, about a word we *didn't* want: "problem." Problems can be solved; humanity's energy and environmental crises will not be "solved," in the sense that there is no realistic strategy that will enable us to continue, as we have for the past few decades, to enjoy continuous growth in population and in consumption of resources and use of energy. If we are to survive, we will have to accept profound and fundamental changes to our economies and lifestyles.

[I Have Got a Dun Cow and You Can Make Good Cheese: Are Women Holding Us Back?](#)

When I started participating in peak oil and climate change discussions in 2003, let’s just say that the whole thing was much more of a boy’s club than it is now (and in some measure it still is). And one of the laments I most often heard was “we men would be glad to change our lives, but our wives won’t let us – they still want all the trappings of affluence.” Or “No woman will date a man who just wants to farm and grow food.”

Whenever I heard these claims, I would laugh and think about how much some women I knew were struggling to get their husbands to give up their creature comforts.

But they keep recurring. Recently Dmitry Orlov wrote about how hard it is to please a woman – in this case, his wife, who wants more creature comforts than a simpler life can provide – and he terms it not so much as how to please his particular wife, but women in general.

[Managing Russia After the Crisis](#)

The international crisis dealt a severe blow to the Russian economy. The lower oil prices and reversal of international capital flows to emerging markets hit the country hard because the shocks struck just as the economy was on a steep upturn and Russia's dependence on oil made it particularly vulnerable.

[China buys the world](#)

China needs natural resources to power its economy, which grew 7.9% in the latest quarter. One example: China's National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) has invested heavily in Nigeria's oil sector, including this rig near Port Harcourt.

Now, CNOOC is in talks with the Nigerian government about access to some six billion barrels of oil in a deal that could be worth as much as \$30 billion.

[Fadel Gheit: Oil Prices to Remain Inflated, but Don't Pass on Gas](#)

Oil prices have not been driven by supply and demand fundamentals for years. This was exacerbated by the incredible influx of money from financial players into the commodity markets over the last five years and especially oil, which basically created the oil bubble that we had last year. Supply and demand fundamentals are beginning to play a secondary role now in oil prices. Financial players have much more clout and basically manipulate-influence, if not manipulate-oil prices; that is very clear. That's why we have the investigation by the CFTC and all the hearings. I am not holding my breath to see any changes because the politically motivated individuals and the incredible lobbying by financial institutions make it very, very difficult to regulate or enforce regulations in the books to stem that incredible increase in financial institution influence on the commodity prices.

[Interior to Defer Devt, Make Ineligible for Lease Utah O&G Parcels](#)

American Petroleum Institute President Jack Gerard issued the following statement on the announcement today by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to make permanently ineligible for lease eight of the 77 federal oil and natural gas parcels in Utah -- and defer

development on another 52 parcels.

"Today's announcement that Secretary Salazar is removing 60 federal leases from development is just another in a series of actions this administration has taken to delay or thwart oil and natural gas exploration in areas where its development has been designated, and where lease sales have been carefully planned."

[Oil and Natural Gas No Longer Mix](#)

Oil and Natural Gas prices have become disconnected in the USA with respect to historical comparisons. Over the years, utilities and others have switched from oil based products to natural gas. In today's price environment, if one has not already switched from oil to gas, one probably can't due to supply or logistics considerations.

[Tehran moves to impose gasoline rationing ready for showdown with US](#)

The Islamic regime in Tehran plans to slash the supply of subsidized gasoline to the public by 45 percent and ration individual purchases to 55 liters per month, down from the 100 allowed at present. This announcement Wednesday, Oct. 8, by Iranian oil minister Massoud Mirkazemi was Tehran's second step ahead of an expected showdown with the West over its nuclear program.

[India's quest for uranium](#)

Toronto, ON, Canada, — Uranium, the key to nuclear power generation, is in short supply in India. The country's reserves stand at 75,000 tons of low-grade ore, which requires processing before it becomes fuel for nuclear reactors.

This ore contains between 0.03 to 0.2 percent of triuranium octoxide, or U_3O_8 – an impure mixture of uranium oxides obtained in the processing of uranium ore – as U-238, which is the non-fissionable isotope found in natural uranium. International mines have anywhere from 2 to 14 percent.

[From Turbines and Straw, Danish Self-Sufficiency](#)

Last year, Samsø (pronounced SOME-suh) completed a 10-year experiment to see whether it could become energy self-sufficient. The islanders, with generous amounts of aid from mainland Denmark, busily set themselves about erecting wind turbines, installing nonpolluting straw-burning furnaces to heat their sturdy brick houses and placing panels here and there to create electricity from the island's sparse sunshine.

By their own accounts, the islanders have met the goal. For energy experts, the crucial measurement is called energy density, or the amount of energy produced per unit of

area, and it should be at least 2 watts for every square meter, or 11 square feet. "We just met it," said Soren Hermansen, the director of the local Energy Academy, a former farmer who is a consultant to the islanders.

[Obama's end-run around climate change](#)

If Congress won't get the job done on climate change, President Obama has a way to do it himself. But is he strong-arming the legislative branch?

[Apple's chamber exit lauded by energy chief](#)

U. S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu said Thursday that Apple Inc., PG&E and others who have quit the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are making a statement over its "foot-dragging, to denials" on global warming.

[Moore decries buying up third world for food security](#)

Rich nations are practising a modern form of colonialism by acquiring farmland in poorer countries, former New Zealand prime minister Mike Moore says.

"It is a new elephant in the room," Mr Moore who became director-general of the World Trade Organisation in the wake of his stint as PM in 1990.

"I think it is the wrong policy because I don't think food security will be guaranteed in the future because you own colonies overseas," he told the Gulf Times. "The English found that out with sugar".

[Pakistan: Food for thought](#)

The shame therefore had been multiplied, first by a stranger and then a friend. I can afford to take food for granted. Price hikes do not mean I buy less of anything, in fact, I still trawl Essajis at Kohsar market for expensive cheeses; I have let vegetables grow furry monster-shaped fungi in the fridge because I forgot to cook them; roti has been thrown away because we spontaneously decided to order in. Individually, they may not seem much, but the collective weight of this waste is a heavy crime.

Especially now, when food inflation outstrips that of non-food items. A May 2009 UN report says that food inflation increased by 28 per cent in nine months. The price of wheat – that staple of the Pakistani meal - skyrocketed by 96 per cent in May 2007. That means for a person earning Rs 6,000 a month, 4,200 rupees will go to just barely feed themselves and their dependents. That doesn't leave much for education and health.

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Given the “dust bowl” droughts now gripping countries that make up almost two thirds of the worlds breadbasket – the U.S., many countries in South America, Australia, China and parts of Canada, the price of food staples – wheat, rice, corn, soybeans etc, will continue to rise.

“The whole global picture is flagging up signals that we’re moving out of a period of abundant food supply into a period in which food is going to be in much shorter supply,” says Henry Fell, chairman of Britain’s Commercial Farmers Group.

[Chevron Squeezes New Oil from One of World's Oldest Fields](#)

Chevron Corp. is employing new technologies in hopes of extending the life of one of the world's oldest and most prolific oil fields, a process that is being replicated elsewhere to help the energy industry squeeze more out of aging oil basins.

The Kern River field has produced more than 2 billion barrels of oil in its 110-year history, but Chevron estimates it still holds another 1.5 billion barrels.

[We'll keep the lights on by reducing our demand for energy](#)

To get Britain out of this mess, we need to understand how they got us into it. During 12 years, they made like the ostrich and stuck their heads in the sand. They refused to face the challenges everyone knew had to be confronted. They knew that North Sea oil and gas would peak and fall away, and that we would become increasingly dependent on imported gas. Such as gas from Russia, that flows through the Ukraine to Europe - or not, if the Kremlin turns off the tap.

[Mexican gov't orders state oil firm to suspend onshore exploration](#)

MEXICO CITY (Xinhua) -- The Mexican government on Thursday ordered state-run oil giant Petroleos Mexicanos (Pemex) to halt its exploration in the Chicontepec oil field, but left the final decision to the company.

Pemex said the new Chicontepec onshore field was expected to compensate for the

declining production of Cantarell, which had provided the bulk of Mexico's oil for three decades.

[Mexico Needs to Look Beyond Oil](#)

Since peaking earlier this decade the Cantarell oil fields in Mexico are now in a long-term decline as it pertains to oil production. The long-term implications for Mexico, PEMEX and its prosperity leave policy-makers with a formidable challenge to replace ageing fields.

After producing more than 2,000,000 barrels per day in 2003, Cantarell barely spits out 500,000 barrels per day in 2009. Cantarell recorded the second-highest annual production of all time at 2.1 million barrels per day in 2003 – second only to the largest field by every measure, Saudi Arabia's Ghawar, according to Grant's Interest Rate Observer. But over the last six years daily production has crashed by almost two-thirds.

[Pemex aspires for 60% oil recovery from Cantarell](#)

Pemex Exporation & Production is studying new ways for recovering more oil from the tight reservoir matrix of the Cantarell field off Mexico.

Speaking Oct. 7 at the SPE Annual Conference & Exhibition in New Orleans, Carlos Morales Gil, Pemex E&P director general, said carbon dioxide injection might provide the means to produce additional oil from the field that originally contained about 35 billion bbl of oil in place, making it the third largest oil field in the world. Steam injection is another possibility for improving recovery of the field's 22° gravity oil, he said.

[Will nationalism or pragmatism prevail?](#)

Countries where, by law, oil belongs to the state have basically three options for producing it: a) let someone else do it, b) let someone else help you do it, and c) do it all yourself. All three work in practice, but nationalism is a strong feeling which fuels the aspiration to move from a) then b) through to c).

Mexico started with a) but then jumped to c) in 1938 when it nationalized the oil industry and formed Pemex to take over the private companies. Mexicans are among the most nationalistic people in the world and are proud they have run their oil industry by themselves. However, oil production has been steadily declining, particularly from the giant Cantarell oil field, and the government needs to increase production.

[Fuel oil supply still tight in Fujairah](#)

DUBAI: Middle East fuel oil bunker premiums at the UEA's port of Fujairah remained at around \$15 to \$20 a tonne this week, even with fresh imports from India and Saudi Arabia, traders said.

Fuel oil supply tightened early into the start of the second-half of the year after Iran started to cap their exports due to higher domestic demand. "There hasn't been much change to the premiums for bunkers, and as long as supplies are tight I would be expecting it to stay at these levels now," a fuel oil trader said.

[China top refiners to maintain record runs in Oct](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Top Chinese refineries will maintain their crude oil processing in October at the record levels seen in September despite a fuel price cut, on hopes of a further demand recovery on the back of economic expansions.

Twelve major plants accounting for more than a third of China's capacity, most of them on the eastern and southern seaboard, plan to process 2.66 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil in October, flat from levels in September, a Reuters poll showed.

The volume would represent around 89 percent of their total refining capacity.

[Settlement puts offshore oil port back on track](#)

Plans for a \$1.8 billion oil port off the Texas coast will move forward following the settlement of a lawsuit among former partners in the project.

[Platts Survey: OPEC Oil Output Rises to 28.83 Million Barrels per day in September](#)

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) crude oil production averaged 28.83 million barrels per day (b/d) in September, up 40,000 b/d from August's 28.79 million b/d, a Platts survey of OPEC and oil industry sources and analysts showed October 8.

"Production has risen again but mainly because of higher volumes from Angola and Nigeria, the latter aided by a decline in militant attacks on oil installations in the Niger Delta, the country's main producing area," said John Kingston, Platts global director of oil. "Once again, quota compliance has fallen, but OPEC does not appear to be unduly concerned. It's hoping to steer clear of taking any output actions that might jeopardize global economic conditions."

[Citigroup ends pay row with \\$250m Phibro sale](#)

Citigroup has sold its Phibro oil trading unit to Occidental Petroleum in a \$250 million deal that will eradicate one of the bank's most pressing problems over pay and perks for select staff.

[In Saudi Arabia, a Campus Built as a 'Beacon of Tolerance'](#)

The research university is the latest, and so far most significant, endeavor by a Persian Gulf nation to diversify its economy and help wean the region from its dependence on oil wealth. Saudi officials describe the multibillion-dollar postgraduate institution as the spear in the kingdom's efforts to transform itself into a global scientific center rivaling those in the United States, Europe and Asia.

But the kingdom's powerful religious establishment is increasingly voicing criticism of the university. On Web sites, clerics have blasted the school's coeducational policy as a violation of sharia, or Islamic law. Last week, a member of the influential Supreme Committee of Islamic Scholars, a government-sanctioned body, called for a probe into the curriculum and its compatibility with sharia law, local newspapers reported.

[Kissinger takes a place at energy table](#)

Former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger will be the star attraction in Paris next week at a major international energy conference where Canadian defenders of Alberta's frequently criticized oilsands sector are expected to get a friendly reception.

Kissinger, central to some of the most significant diplomatic achievements of the 20th century, will share his insights on the role of countries such as Russia and China in the climate-change debate during a gathering of energy ministers at the International Energy Agency.

[Waterloo's faculty of environment to launch new centre to analyze and conserve ecosystems](#)

WATERLOO - The University of Waterloo's faculty of environment will launch Canada's largest transdisciplinary centre to study the inherent complexity of ecosystems and society's responses to environmental degradation during a special event next week in Toronto.

The new Centre for Ecosystem Resilience and Adaptation hosts its official launch on Thursday, Oct. 15, with guest speaker James Howard Kunstler, author of *The Long Emergency: Surviving the End of Oil, Climate Change, and other Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century*. In his talk, Kunstler, who has lectured extensively on urban design, energy issues and new economies, will share details of his long-emergency survival guide. The event, which begins at 6 p.m., takes place at the Toronto Botanical Garden, 777 Lawrence Ave. E.

[Mastering the Art of Sustainable Cooking Campaign Launches](#)

Will you be the one to inspire others to create great food that's also good for the planet? The Mastering the Art of Sustainable Cooking campaign introduced by Brighter Planet this week gives Americans everywhere the opportunity to share their stories of conservation methods and help them take charge against climate change in a place where it may be the least expected: the kitchen.

The judging panel includes celebrated local food pioneer Alice Waters of Chez Panisse and Slow Food International; visionary environmental writer Bill McKibben of 350.org; sustainable entrepreneur Gary Hirshberg of Stonyfield Farms; food activist and anthropologist Amy Trubek; director and producer Ana Sofia Joanes of FRESH; Eating Well Magazine's editorial director Lisa Gosselin; CEO Patti Prairie of Brighter Planet; and food television writer and producer Zachary Cohen of Farm to Table. Judges rate top-ranked entries based on eco-effectiveness and ability to inspire conservation in others.

[New Book Touts Joys of Simple Living](#)

Can living a simpler, smaller and slower life make us happier? Yes, say some lifestyle experts. Downscaling, they say, will also give us more time, greater satisfaction and a better, safer quality of life. Some experts also say a personal simplicity movement could have an impact on culture and society at large.

[Vertical Village Brings Energy-Efficient Gaudiness to Dubai](#)

In the United Arab Emirates, Dubai has always maintained a reputation as the center of excess and oil money gone awry, while Abu Dhabi's Masdar City has emerged as the UAE's sustainable core. But Dubai's developers might be signaling a shift away from energy-gulping air-conditioned beaches and desert-bound ski resorts. Graft Lab is offering up a multi-use complex that could end up scoring a LEED Gold rating. Don't worry Dubai lovers. It's still gaudy.

[New wind turbine idea for schools](#)

Wind turbines should be built outside every school in Britain, according to the man who's in charge of looking into climate change for the government.

Lord Turner says using more turbines will reduce our need for energy sources that are harmful to the environment.

Some people don't like the turbines as they think they are ugly.

But Lord Turner said building wind farms along motorways and outside schools was an

imaginative alternative to only using them in the countryside.

[Pacific Ocean 'dead zone' in Northwest may be irreversible](#)

Oxygen depletion that is killing sea life off Oregon and Washington is probably caused by evolving wind conditions from climate change, rather than pollution, one oceanographer warns.

[U.K. Needs to Invest 200 Billion Pounds in Energy in 10 Years](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The U.K. needs to invest as much as 200 billion pounds (\$320 billion) in power plants and infrastructure in the next 10 years to secure energy supplies and meet climate-change targets, the industry regulator said.

Domestic energy bills in the U.K. may rise as much as 25 percent by 2020 to help fund the spending, the London-based Office of Gas & Electricity Markets said today in a statement distributed by the Regulatory News Service.

"These are big challenges," Ofgem Chief Executive Officer Alistair Buchanan said in the statement. "Consumers are already enduring high energy prices."

[Global oil demand to rise more quickly than foreseen: agency](#)

Paris - As the world's economies recover more rapidly than forecast from recession, global oil demand is now also expected to rise quickly more than had been foreseen, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Friday in Paris.

As a result, in its Monthly Oil Report, the IEA has revised upward its forecast for global oil demand for both 2009 and 2010.

[Offshore Drilling Could Add, Subtract Support for Senate Climate Bill](#)

Can Congress drill its way to legislation to cut greenhouse gas emissions?

Perhaps, says Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who believes there is public support for both reducing reliance on energy imports and curbing carbon dioxide emissions. "If you married these two ideas up, I think you could get 60 votes, but that means give and take," Graham said yesterday.

"My hope is that if you marry these two ideas up you would get the votes for a reasonable climate change proposal, that's blocked now, and you would be able to become energy independent, that's blocked now," Graham added. "Both ideas run into a

wall. I am trying to knock that wall down."

[BP chief urges governments to back natural gas to cut emissions in climate fight](#)

Governments must promote the expanded use of natural gas if the world is to start making a serious attempt to cut carbon emissions, the chief executive of oil major BP PLC said yesterday. Natural gas offers the cheapest and quickest way to cut emissions of carbon dioxide because other technologies, such as carbon capture and storage, are years from maturity, BP CEO Tony Hayward said at the World Gas Conference.

[Betting Big on a Boom in Natural Gas](#)

In summer 2008 the U.S. and much of the rest of the world were consumed by talk of peak oil and natural gas and fears that high fuel prices would persist forever. Today analysts still worry about the oil supply but far less about natural gas. U.S. gas producers, capitalizing on a technological breakthrough, have in recent years unlocked an enormous volume of natural gas in the shale rock under Colorado, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, and other states. According to a July report by the Colorado School of Mines, the U.S. now holds 1,800 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, one third of it in shale, the equivalent of some 320 billion barrels of oil. That's more than Saudi Arabia's 264 billion barrels.

[Power-Station Coal May Rise to \\$100 a Ton in 2010, Bumi Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Power-station coal prices may climb by more than 40 percent in 2010 from current levels as a global economic recovery boosts demand from power plants and steel producers, an official from PT Bumi Resources said.

[Why the 'peak oil' debate is irrelevant](#)

The debate over exactly when we will reach "peak oil" is irrelevant. No matter what new oil fields we discover, global oil production will start declining in 2030 at the very latest.

That's the conclusion of the most comprehensive report to date on global oil production, published on 7 October by the UK Energy Research Centre.

[Peak oil means a bumpy ride before 2030 ... or 2020](#)

While the report defends more optimistic estimates of the size of oil resources, it also notes that much of this is in smaller, less accessible fields that might only be produced

relatively slowly and at high cost. It also highlights the accelerating decline in production from existing fields: more than two-thirds of current crude oil production capacity might need to be replaced by 2030 to prevent production from falling.

[Crude Oil May Decline as Fuel Supplies Increase, Survey Shows](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil futures may decline as U.S. fuel inventories climb and consumption decreases, a Bloomberg News survey showed.

Eleven of 29 analysts, or 38 percent, said futures will drop through Oct. 16. Ten respondents, or 34 percent, forecast that the market will rise and eight said prices will be little changed. Last week, 48 percent of analysts said oil would fall.

[Gazprom 'cannot guarantee Europe's gas'](#)

Russian gas giant Gazprom cannot rule out new interruptions in Europe's gas supply until a row with Ukraine is resolved, a senior company executive said.

"We cannot guarantee 100% that situations like that of 2005 and 2009 will not happen again," German news agency DPA quoted Gazprom number two Alexander Medvedev saying on the sidelines of the World Gas Conference in Buenos Aires.

[PetroChina Parent Wins Engineering Contracts in Sudan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China National Petroleum Corp. said it beat 13 bidders from countries including India to win seven engineering contracts in Sudan, holder of Africa's fifth-largest crude oil reserves.

A unit of China National Petroleum was awarded \$260 million of engineering and construction contracts for an area known as Block 6 in September, China's largest oil and gas producer said on its Web site today.

[Venezuela Pulls Out of Vietnam Oil Refinery, PetroVietnam Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos de Venezuela SA pulled out as a joint-venture partner to help Vietnam's state oil company build a third refinery, said Phung Dinh Thuc, chief executive officer of Vietnam Oil & Gas Group.

[LUKOIL says has no official word on Conoco stake](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian oil major LUKOIL said on Thursday it had no official information from its partner, ConocoPhillips, about a report that the huge U.S. oil company might halve its stake in LUKOIL.

Conoco said on Wednesday it will cut its 2010 capital budget by 12 percent and sell off \$10 billion in assets in the next few years to improve its financial position.

[GM, Toyota Fuel-Cell Plans Clash With U.S. Battery Car Push](#)

(Bloomberg) -- General Motors Co., Toyota Motor Corp. and other automakers want to sell consumers electric cars powered by hydrogen within six years. Their plans clash with the U.S. government's infrastructure priorities.

[Chávez to Iran: How About Some Uranium?](#)

When Venezuela's Mining Minister Rodolfo Sanz walked into a televised Cabinet meeting this week, President Hugo Chávez impishly asked, "So how's the uranium for Iran going? For the atomic bomb." Chávez was joking, but few were laughing outside Caracas and Tehran. Ever since Chávez announced last month that he was seeking Russia's help to develop nuclear energy in Venezuela — and especially since Sanz turned heads a couple of weeks ago by disclosing that Iran is helping Venezuela locate its own uranium reserves — the South American nation and its socialist, anti-U.S. government have become a new focus of anxiety over regional if not global security.

[Allston-Brighton CDC celebrates the past and looks ahead to the future](#)

The Allston-Brighton Community Development Corporation highlighted the past, present and future sustainability efforts during the organization's annual meeting last week.

More than 100 residents, politicians and activists met at the Veronica Smith Senior Center to review the ABCDC's sustainability efforts in the neighborhood and to learn about similar projects taking place at the city, state and federal level and to gain a better understanding of new opportunities for federal stimulus grants in order to promote local green economies.

[May Look Like Any Other, But This House Is All Green](#)

You might think the home has all the earmarks of a fair exhibit or an attraction at Epcot Center: the amazing Home of the Future, complete with energy efficient appliances in the kitchen and an on-demand water heater in the basement.

And in one sense, you'd be right. The home built by Bill Potter of Squash Meadow

Construction and his wife Kerry Quinlan-Potter is the first home on the Vineyard to achieve the gold certification standard of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

[How rising gas prices will change our lives for the better](#)

Chris Steiner, a senior writer at "Forbes", said in an interview Wednesday that \$4 is just the beginning. According to Steiner, an Evanston resident, prices will reach \$6 to \$8 within the next decade.

His first book, "\$20 per gallon; How the inevitable rise in the price of gasoline will change our lives for the better", became a New York Times bestseller in August. In the book he examines how each incremental rise in the price of gasoline will change the fabric of American life forever.

[Meet the Candidates: Brian Brennan](#)

We have a number of SOAR protected properties throughout our city and spheres of influence, but not all farm land is protected. Some of the recent decisions to develop were based on the fact that the land had long been designated with rights to develop, and preventing development was akin to a taking and made the city liable in a lawsuit. In an ideal world, we would have been able to secure conservation easements or buy up the development rights, but as this county has twice voted down open space tax increments, we come up short every time.

In this era of post-peak oil planning, we need to keep our food sources as local as possible, for security purposes as well as for sustainability issues.

['Uncertain Resource': Do we have a water crisis, or a crisis of water management?](#)

Gleick began with a recurring theme at this year's conference: Water may be a very old commodity, but we need to think about it in entirely new ways. "I think we're desperately in need of new thinking about water," he told conference attendees. "Our current use of water is out of balance, it's unsustainable."

That's not unsustainable as in, "We're going to run out." From an absolute perspective we can't run out of water: It's a sustainable resource — it can't be used up. But as Gleick said, we can functionally run out of water because "We don't get water where we want it. We don't get water when we want it." And available water may be unavailable if it happens to be contaminated by industrial and agricultural waste, or infectious agents.

[U.S. Chamber of Commerce shrugs off defections](#)

The president says he's 'not particularly worried' about Apple and three utility companies quitting over climate change.

[Changing alliances shape climate-change debate](#)

The high-stakes fight over global warming legislation in Congress has forced American businesses to pick sides. And some old alliances are breaking as a result.

[Africa meet to discuss development, climate change](#)

DAKAR (AFP) – African policy makers meet in Ouagadougou Friday to discuss climate change just two months before a critical UN summit where African countries are poised to seek billions in compensation for the effects of global warming.

Experts say Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the regions most affected by global warming. The World Bank estimates that the developing world will suffer about 80 percent of the damage of climate change despite accounting for only around one third of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

[U.S. May Not Make CO₂-Emissions Pledge, Pershing Says](#)

Bloomberg) -- The U.S. may not agree to cut greenhouse-gas emissions in a new treaty this year because there is no domestic law setting a framework, the country's top negotiator said at United Nations climate talks in Bangkok.

[Climate talks ending with rich-poor rift wide open](#)

BANGKOK (AFP) – Two weeks of crucial UN climate talks were due to conclude Friday after exposing huge rifts between rich and poor nations, just weeks ahead of the deadline for sealing a planet-saving global deal.

Only five negotiating days remain, in November, before 192 nations converge for a critical December showdown in Copenhagen, where they have pledged to conclude a treaty to tackle global warming.

Without rapid action, scientists say, the world faces catastrophe in the form of drought, flooding, famine and forced migration.

[Econ 350: Can we still afford to save the climate?](#)

Recently, many climate scientists have doubled down on the “safe” level for atmospheric CO₂. To avoid global warming catastrophe-collapse of the continental ice-sheets and sea level rise of dozens of feet — prominent voices led by NASA’s James Hansen are now telling us we have to get down to 350 ppm, and quickly.

Game over?

No. Instead, time to adjust our thinking about what is possible.

[Fossils Suggest an Ancient CO₂-Climate Link](#)

By looking at the chemistry of fossilized foraminifera — tiny sea creatures no bigger than a grain of sand — a team led by Aradhna Tripathi, of University of the California, Los Angeles, has detected a significant CO₂ bump during both warming episodes.

If they're right, it could be pretty bad news, even for those who already worry about rising CO₂. It's generally agreed that during the earlier warm period, known as the Miocene Climatic Optimum, which occurred 15 million years ago, the global temperature was high enough to make sea levels between 80 ft. and 130 ft. higher than they are today. According to the new study, CO₂ levels in the atmosphere at that time hovered at from 390 to 430 parts per million (p.p.m.). Today's CO₂ level: 387 p.p.m. and rising.



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