



Drumbeat: October 27, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on October 27, 2009 - 9:05am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[logi Energy Determines Saudi Oil Production Has Peaked](#)

New York (HedgeCo.net) – In a discussion with Jim Puplava, FS Radio, Jeffrey Brown described his analytical work with Dr. Samuel Foucher, also part of logi Energy, where they determined that annual production in Saudi Arabia has never exceeded the production in 2005 and believe it never will.

Jeffrey went on to discuss his land export model and the ramifications of depleting oil fields and increasing demands within exporting countries by their own citizens. He and Dr. Foucher have determined, through deep analytics, that the exports from the top 5 exporting countries has peaked and half of all oil ever to be exported after 2005 by these countries will be exported within 4 years, by 2013.

titute away from it is beyond debate. But oil is a resource like no other. The economy's ever more evident inability to reduce dependence on it while retaining growth raises the strong possibility that the peak -- as rationally defined, rather than empirically experienced -- will never be reached.

[Energy Market Reviews](#)

As we've noted in previous article's, Hubbert's "Peak Oil" theory appears to be valid. It is certainly supported by observation in that many cases can be cited where the production from an oil field or an entire oil-producing region has gone into decline exactly as predicted by this theory. However, we do not believe that geological limitations to oil supply constitute a major economic issue. There are vast untapped oil reserves in the world, and if the oil market were able to operate freely then these reserves would probably satisfy demand for generations to come. Furthermore, the free market would develop economically viable alternatives well before we reached the point where oil supply was limited by geology. In a nutshell, a sustained shortage of a commodity as useful as energy would never occur in a free market.

Which brings us to the root of the problem: the oil market is not free. This, and not any geological considerations, will potentially lead to troublesome constraints on oil supply in the future. In other words, if there is going to be an oil supply problem with grave economic consequences then the origin of the problem will be political, not geological.

[What Adds Up to \\$80 a Barrel Oil](#)

You would not know that we were in the midst of a modest economic recovery when examining the price of oil these days. At \$80 a barrel, which we witnessed this past week, the price of the precious commodity is about \$60 above its 20 year average.

The math adds up for the region's producers who are part of what one seasoned energy consultant called the supply management club called OPEC. For all the back seat analysis in the cascade down from \$147 to the mid-thirty level, this price recovery to a one year high speaks wonders about controlling supplies during a recession.

[Qatar snubs US to slake China LNG thirst](#)

Qatar is diverting around 10% of its liquefied natural gas exports to China from the US, Qatar's oil minister said today.

Energy-hungry China is paying more for the gas from the world's largest LNG exporter than the US, Abdullah al-Attiyah told Reuters at a press conference.

[Ukraine 'won't fight new Russia gas war'](#)

A Ukrainian deputy prime minister today claimed there would be no new end-of-year dispute with Russia over gas supplies, but conceded that paying the country's monthly gas bills was not easy.

[Brazil Congress takes up proposed new oil laws](#)

BRASILIA (Reuters) - Brazil's Congress on Tuesday will begin debating the government's proposal to overhaul oil laws governing vast new offshore reserves that could turn the country into a major oil exporter.

At stake is one of the country's largest industrial development projects ever, requiring an estimated \$400 billion to develop vast new subsalt oil fields.

[Fate of oil-rich Kirkuk stalls Iraq election law](#)

BAGHDAD (AP) -- A long-sought political consensus in Iraq over how to conduct crucial upcoming elections fell apart Tuesday over the thorny issue of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk, an Iraqi lawmaker said.

The new snag came as an al-Qaida-linked group claimed responsibility for the twin suicide bombings in the heart of Baghdad Sunday that killed at least 155 people.

[World Bank May Fund Tri-Nation Pipeline, Uruguay Official Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia are in talks with the World Bank for a loan to finance a natural-gas pipeline shared by the three countries, Uruguay's deputy minister for industries, energy and mining said.

[India Allots Reliance Gas to Power Plants, Refineries](#)

(Bloomberg) -- India selected fuel-starved power producers and oil refineries as customers for additional natural gas to be produced from a field operated by Reliance Industries Ltd., which is fighting a lawsuit over sales from the area.

[Solar Industry Takes on Coal and Oil Lobbies](#)

A solar industry leader smacked down the oil and coal industries on Tuesday, calling for renewable energy proponents to open their wallets to level the playing field in Washington.

"The full promise of solar power is being restrained by the tyranny of policies that protect our competitors, subsidize wealthy polluters and disadvantage green entrepreneurs," said Rhone Resch, chief executive of the Solar Energy Industries Association, according to prepared remarks for a speech he is to give at the opening of the Solar Power International conference.

[Nuclear Industry 'Restart' Means More Loan Guarantees, Chu Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The U.S. should consider expanding its \$18.5 billion loan guarantee program for developers of new nuclear power plants, Energy Secretary Steven Chu said today.

The Energy Department is still working to get the currently authorized loan guarantees "out the door" so as many as four new plants can be built, Chu told reporters on Capitol Hill. The Nuclear Energy Institute yesterday called the loan program "clearly inadequate" to make the construction of new nuclear reactors in the U.S. financially viable.

[Former GM plant set to make electric cars](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney.com) -- Electric carmaker Fisker Automotive said Tuesday it is buying an old General Motors plant in Wilmington, Del., and plans on making up to 100,000 vehicles a year at the recently shuttered facility.

"This is a major step toward establishing America as a leader of advanced vehicle technology," Henrik Fisker, Fisker's chief executive, said in a statement. "Wilmington is perfect for high quality, low volume production and will soon be the proud builder of

world-class, fuel-efficient Fisker plug-in hybrids."

[Chevron, Exxon Would Lose Free Carbon Permits in Latest Plan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Major oil companies such as Chevron Corp. and Exxon Mobil Corp. would lose free carbon dioxide permits to smaller refiners under the latest version of a "cap- and-trade" program for U.S. greenhouse gases being pushed by Democrats.

Legislation that passed the U.S. House in June allocated 2 percent of the carbon permits created by a cap-and-trade program to the oil sector, for which all firms would be eligible, with an extra 0.25 percent set aside exclusively for small refiners.

[Industry lashes oil-spill firm](#)

AUSTRALIA'S peak oil and gas body has turned on one of its own, saying established safeguards exist to prevent oil-well blowouts and the disastrous West Atlas spill in the Timor Sea should never have happened.

It comes as the company at the heart of the environmental disaster, PTTEP Australasia, announced another technical delay as it prepared a fourth attempt to plug the leak.

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[OPEC to Raise Output If There's 'Real' Oil Shortage, Qatar Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC will raise oil output if there's a "real" shortage in supply, Qatar's oil minister said as the group prepares to review production levels in December.

"Sometimes the price of oil has no correlation to demand and supply," Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah said today in Ras Laffan, Qatar. "Now what we are seeing is that oil has a strong correlation with the dollar."

[Aramco names Manifa date](#)

Saudi Arabian giant Saudi Aramco will bring the Manifa oilfield on stream in 2013, a company official said.

Aramco has slowed work at the 900,000 barrels per day development as it looks to save costs on oil and gas service contracts and as a slowdown in global oil demand makes capacity expansion less urgent.

[E.ON plant plans raise fear of gas-dependent Britain](#)

E.ON, the energy group that shelved plans for a new coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth, Kent, is drawing up plans to build a new gas-fired plant of the same size in Nottinghamshire, leading to fears that Britain will be over-reliant on imported natural gas.

[China considers new law to protect oil pipelines](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- Chinese legislators are discussing a draft law on the protection of oil and gas pipelines, which, they say, are facing growing problems due to rapid urbanization and the expansion of pipeline networks.

Those who steal from pipelines could face heavy fines of up to 10 times the value of the stolen oil or gas, according to the draft law tabled with the country's top legislature on Tuesday.

[Russia anti-monopoly watchdog fines Rosneft \\$182 mln](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia's anti-monopoly service fined the country's largest oil producer Rosneft 5.28 billion roubles (\$182.4 million), the watchdog said on Tuesday.

[Philippines: Big 3, others blink on oil EO](#)

MALACAÑANG on Tuesday sought to soothe investor jitters possibly caused by Executive Order (EO) 839 and clarified that the government continues to honor its long-term commitments to the oil industry despite issuing the "temporary" presidential directive freezing prices to October 15 levels.

[Sri Lanka: 'Work to rule' causes acute shortage of fuel – Port, electricity & water to join struggle if demands](#)

There had been several minor clashes near fuel sheds and at certain places police had to

be deployed to control the crowd. Despite the Minister of Petroleum & Petroleum Resources Development A.H.M. Fowzie stating over the media that fuel was available in outlets the public became aware that there was no fuel only when they went to the fuel sheds. At certain fuel sheds vehicle owners had to wait in queues for hours to get fuel.

[Total to pull out of Zambian oil refinery](#)

French multinational oil firm, Total, is in the process of selling its 50 per cent shareholding in Zambia's sole oil refinery to the government this year.

For over two weeks now, the country has experienced severe shortage of fuel especially petrol because of the on-going maintenance works at the 36-year-old Indeni Oil Refinery in Ndola, about 300 kilometres north of the Zambian capital Lusaka.

[Zambia Scraps Diesel, Gasoline Import Duty for Oil Companies](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Zambia passed a law that will allow 12 companies, including Total SA and BP Plc, to import fuel without paying duties to avert a fuel crisis that threatens to cripple its mines.

The government will scrap the 25 percent duty imposed on diesel and gasoline imports until the law expires on Nov. 30, Finance and National Planning Minister Situmbeko Musokotwane said in a so-called Statutory Instrument, a notice by government that is enacting an emergency law. The notice was distributed by the Zambia Revenue Authority in the capital, Lusaka, today.

[Coal linkages to cos to be delayed on fuel scarcity](#)

Power, steel and cement firms seeking coal supply arrangements with state-owned Coal India will have to wait for some more time as the meeting of the apex committee, which grants coal linkages to them has been delayed on account of shortage of the fuel with the producer.

"Coal India (CIL) has hardly any coal to distribute at present. The meeting of the Standing Linkage Committee (SLC), which was due in October-November has been delayed due to that. Schedule of the new meet is still to be worked out," a top coal ministry official told PTI.

[Record of Decision Clears Way for Deepwater LNG Port in Florida](#)

Port Dolphin Energy, LLC, reported that a Record of Decision has been signed in its application for a license to build a deepwater liquefied natural gas (LNG) port off the West Coast of Florida.

The Record of Decision paves the way to the awarding of a deepwater port license to be

issued by the U.S. Maritime Administration. The signing marks the successful completion of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement directed by the U.S. Coast Guard and formal approval last month by Florida Governor Charlie Crist.

[Nation must use oil from unconventional sources](#)

All but ardent environmentalists who have a perverse antipathy toward science seem to recognize that continued use of fossil fuels is inevitable. What is not inevitable is a costly energy crisis that results from an over-emphasis on unreliable energy sources and neglect of oil, natural gas and coal.

[Promise of drilling is vastly overblown](#)

First, the near-shore waters off Florida's western Panhandle contain not oil but deep natural gas, and not so very much of that. The U.S. Minerals Management Service estimates that, as of Dec. 31, 2005, the entire Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico contained 454 billion cubic feet of proven natural gas reserves. If this natural gas were to be produced over a 10-year period, it would provide approximately 125 million cubic feet per day, but this would provide only 5 percent of Florida's daily natural gas consumption.

Whether this deep offshore gas will be economically recoverable when natural gas is currently being sold for a dirt-cheap \$3.50 per thousand cubic feet remains to be seen. It will take billions of dollars of investment and five to seven years before any of this gas ever reaches shore. What is sure in the meantime is that low natural gas prices have caused the number of U.S. drilling rigs exploring for natural gas to fall from 1,600 one year ago to less than 700 today.

[Palin Successor Focuses on Energy Agenda](#)

Mr. Parnell has been focusing on how to rebuild Alaska's energy-dependent economy, which has been battered by falling oil prices, and jump-starting a proposed natural-gas pipeline project. While Alaska has only 700,000 residents, the governor's role is nationally significant because the state is home to some of the country's biggest deposits of mineral riches such as oil and gold.

[Is America Ready For a New 'Power Trip?'](#)

Most books about energy should be classified, along with Valerian and Excedrin PM, as over-the-counter sleeping aids.

If they're not wonky or technical, they're gloomy and depressing.

That may help explain why so many Americans are asleep at the wheel as we barrel toward a radical and imminent shift in our energy landscape – toward the U-turn

leading to our post-petroleum future.

[100% Renewables by 2030 for Less Than Fossil Power: A Case is Made](#)

Can the whole planet really get 100 percent of its energy from renewables in just two decades?

Yes, according to new research, and for cheaper than coal.

But how exactly? The answer lies in scaling up three categories of existing clean energy technologies – wind, solar and water – and global political will.

[Scientists plan to make artificial sun in 2018](#)

ITER is designed to produce approximately 500 MW of fusion power sustained for up to 1,000 seconds through the fusion of about 0.5 g of deuterium mixture in its approximately 840 m³ reactor chamber.

Fusion has many potential attractions. As a "clean nuclear stove" it is considered an abundant fuel, intrinsically safe, no production of CO₂ or atmospheric pollutants, and producing relatively short-lived waste. It may be the best hope to break the world's oil dependence and restrict climate-change damage.

[Armenia approves expansion of nuclear plant](#)

Lawmakers voted in favour of plans to build a new 1,200-megawatt unit with a projected cost of four to five billion dollars (2.7 to 3.4 billion euros). Officials have said they expect the new reactor to be completed by 2017.

Energy Minister Armen Movsisian told lawmakers the new reactor would allow Armenia to increase electricity exports, a key source of revenues for the landlocked and resource-poor country.

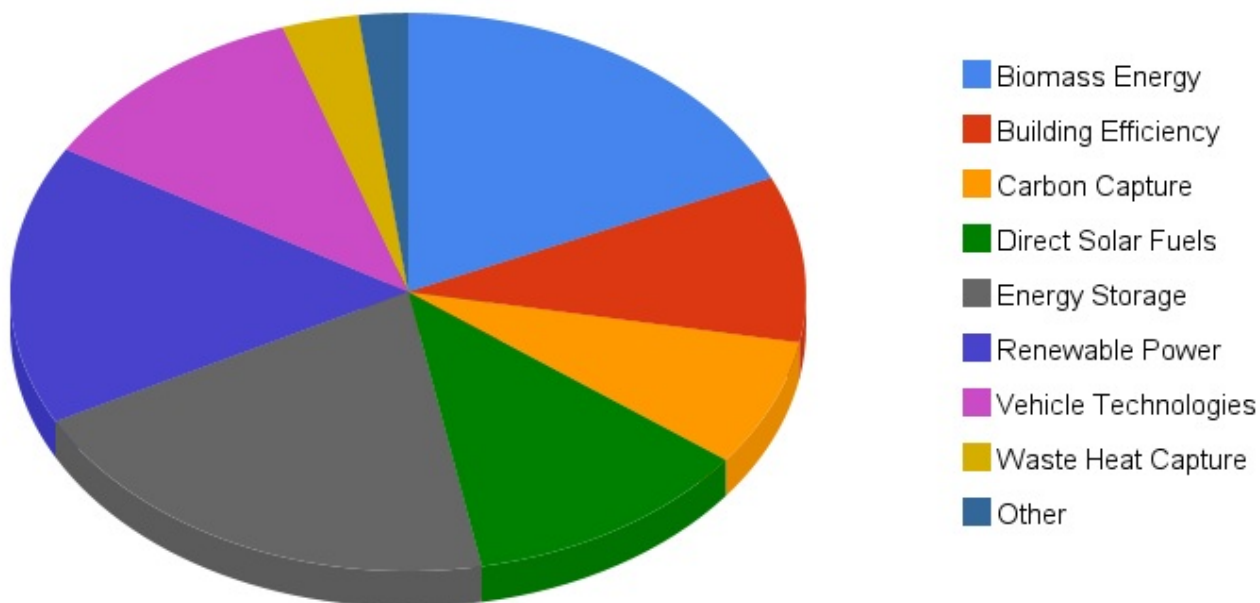
[Millions of homes to get smart meters](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Some 18 million smart meters are set to make their way into American homes as part of the economic stimulus plan focusing on energy efficiency, Energy Department officials said Tuesday.

The meters, which are designed to more effectively communicate with utilities and appliances, and help consumers manage their electricity more efficiently, are being distributed by utilities around the country with partial funding from the federal government that was allocated under the stimulus plan.

[Chart: How the 'Darpa for Energy' Is Slicing Its \\$150-Million Pie](#)

ARPA-E Grant Awards



The lion's share of the grant money went to energy-storage projects followed by biomass-energy technologies and then renewable power like wind and solar. That said, the money was spread pretty evenly among the agency's areas of interest. Of the 10 technological categories, seven of them received more than \$10 million, and none received more than \$30 million. Oil and gas received the least money with a sole project garnering \$1 million.

[Prices at the pump near summer peak](#)

NEW YORK - Retail gas prices are spiking to levels last seen in the heat of summer driving season, raising fears that consumers could cut back on holiday spending.

But the crude rally propelling the jump at the pump hit the brakes Monday, as a barrel of oil tumbled more than 2 percent and the dollar strengthened after hitting a 14-month low.

[Michael T. Klare: Where The CIA Got It Wrong About The U.S.](#)

Okay, now for the serious version of the above: In November 2008, the National

Intelligence Council (NIC), an affiliate of the Central Intelligence Agency, issued the latest in a series of futuristic publications intended to guide the incoming Obama administration.

Peering into its analytic crystal ball in a report entitled *Global Trends 2025*, it predicted that America's global preeminence would gradually disappear over the next 15 years -- in conjunction with the rise of new global powerhouses, especially China and India. The report examined many facets of the future strategic environment, but its most startling, and news-making, finding concerned the projected long-term erosion of American dominance and the emergence of new global competitors. "Although the United States is likely to remain the single most powerful actor [in 2025]," it stated definitively, the country's "relative strength -- even in the military realm -- will decline and U.S. leverage will become more constrained."

[Understanding Energy: Professional Money Management and Peak Oil](#)

Over the past two weeks I've taken the time to read over a new, 68 page Peak Oil report from Paul Sankey at Deutsche Bank, entitled, *The Peak Oil Market*. What's notable about this report is its holistic, comprehensive treatment of the global oil system as a moving and dynamic interplay between supply, demand, and technological mitigation.

[The case for oil](#)

For several years, and when prices were booming in the sector, our analytical team operated without a resources analyst. Since then, the oil price has fallen and we've now added a new resources analyst to the team. Is oil still a worthy investment?

[Nigeria Delta Truce Depends on Progress in Talks](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The current truce in Nigeria's southern oil region will last as long as the government and rebels make progress in peace talks, the leader of the main militant group in the Niger River delta said.

Henry Okah, the leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, or MEND, said President Umaru Yar'Adua assured him at a meeting last week that his government will talk to all groups in the region. MEND announced an "indefinite cease-fire" on Oct. 25 after the meeting.

[China says investment overseas up sharply](#)

BEIJING—China's investments overseas nearly tripled from a year earlier to \$20.5 billion in the third quarter as companies snapped up mining and oil assets, government data showed Tuesday.

Beijing is encouraging its companies to invest abroad to diversify an economy driven by exports and investment and to take advantage of sharp declines in asset prices due to the global economic crisis.

[Profits slump at Russian-British oil major TNK-BP](#)

MOSCOW (AFP) – Russian-British oil major TNK-BP on Tuesday announced a sharp drop in its net profits for the first nine months of the year due to a fall in crude prices.

For the nine months to September, net profit at Russia's third largest oil producer plunged 43.7 percent from a year earlier to 3.69 billion dollars, it said in a statement.

[BP net profit falls 34%](#)

LONDON (AFP) – Energy giant BP said on Tuesday its third quarter net profit fell 34 percent from a year earlier to 5.34 billion dollars (326 billion pounds), hit by falling product prices and tighter refinery margins.

[SemGroup Bankruptcy Reorganization Approved, Disputes Settled](#)

(Bloomberg) -- SemGroup LP won approval of a reorganization plan that will make the bankrupt oil trader a public company owned mainly by its lenders when it leaves court protection next month.

[260 Chemicals in Secret Energy Cocktail](#)

The chemicals used by companies in proprietary mixtures for "natural gas fracking," the nation's biggest energy rush in decades, have for the first time been disclosed.

[U.S. bid to curb oil sands imports may violate WTO](#)

CALGARY - Attempts by U.S. politicians to curb imports of oil sands and "dirty" energy from Canada could face a challenge under World Trade Organization rules, the author of a survey into U.S. protectionism said yesterday.

[Climate change protesters target power station](#)

LONDON (AFP) – Ten protesters were arrested Monday as environmental campaigners prepared to spend the night at a coal-fired power station as part of a climate change rally, police said.

Protesters cut through security gates at the Didcot power station in Oxfordshire early

Monday, and some climbed to the top of the emissions chimney, police said.

[Utah bidder asserts oil auction was illegal](#)

SALT LAKE CITY – Defense lawyers for a college student who disrupted the auction of oil and gas drilling leases on land around some of Utah's national parks outlined in court papers Monday a plan to put global warming on trial instead of their client.

The lawyers for Tim DeChristopher want to call some of the nation's pre-eminent climate scientists to testify about what they said are the dangers that heat-trapping gases have in store for the planet. Prosecutors have objected to widening the scope of the trial into a publicized philosophical discussion over global warming and environmental damage – points they said are irrelevant to the charges.

[Chamber files suit to protect against pranksters](#)

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Chamber of Commerce filed a civil complaint on Monday against members of a liberal activist group who staged a news conference to falsely announce that the 3 million-member business federation had reversed its stance on climate change legislation.

"The defendants are not merry pranksters tweaking the establishment," said Steven Law, general counsel for the chamber. "Instead, they deliberately broke the law in order to further commercial interest in their books, movies and other merchandise."

[Electric-Car Makers Grab U.S. Cash to Blunt Risks in New Market](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Electric-car makers ranging from Ford Motor Co. to California startups are using \$11 billion in taxpayer funds to supply a market that does not yet exist.

[Our view on coal production: Mountaintop mining leaves giant scars in Appalachia](#)

Buried underneath Appalachia is some of the best coal in the USA, and for years it was mined the traditional underground way, which can be difficult, dangerous and expensive. In the 1970s, however, mining companies figured out a cheaper and more productive way to get at much of that coal: Use explosives to blow the tops off mountains and take the coal directly out of the ground.

"Mountaintop removal" mining became widespread in the 1990s and now accounts for about 10% of U.S. coal production. It employs thousands of workers in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Ohio. But it often comes at a grievous environmental cost that will leave its mark long after the coal is burned.

[Opposing view: Preserve high-wage jobs](#)

There are several ways to see mountaintop mining in Appalachia, but critics see only one — it's the picture of big shovels extracting coal in rugged terrain. What they don't see are the 80,000-plus jobs in a half-dozen states throughout Appalachia that are tied to surface coal mining.

Thousands of these miners, their families and friends rallied this month in Kentucky, West Virginia and other coal communities to save their jobs from federal regulators in Washington who have imposed a creeping moratorium on the region's coal mining. These are high-wage jobs capable of supporting families, paying up to twice the average wage in Appalachia, a region that like most of rural America has struggled to create high-wage employment.

[Australia Coal Mines Can Bear Proposed Carbon Cost](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Australia's coal-mining industry can afford the cost of carbon reduction proposed by the government's climate change legislation, Greg Combet, the minister assisting the minister for climate change, said today.

The cost may amount to about 80 Australian cents per metric ton of coal produced, assuming a carbon permit cost of A\$25 (\$23) per ton, Combet told a conference on the Gold Coast, Australia.

[Senate Climate Bill Revives Complaints of Coal-Dependent States](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Climate change legislation proposed in the U.S. Senate has revived a fight over the cost of combating global warming between coal-dependent states and those that get energy from cleaner sources.

[Emissions Cut to Cost 3% of Global GDP, Pachauri Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The cost of cutting greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the impact of climate change may amount to 3 percent of the world's economic output, said Rajendra Pachauri, the chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"The cost to the global economy in 2030, so that's 21 years from now, will be no more than 3 percent of the global GDP," he told the CarbonExpo Australasia conference on the Gold Coast, Australia today via video link.

[UN signals delay in climate change treaty](#)

UNITED NATIONS – Just weeks before an international conference on climate change,

the United Nations signaled it was scaling back expectations of reaching agreement on a new treaty to slow global warming.

[Senate panel kicks off climate bill drive](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – A Senate committee on Tuesday launches three long days of hearings on a Democratic climate bill in a bid to further convince an international summit in December that Washington is serious about tackling global warming.

[Deal-Breaker for Climate-Change Treaty May Be Obama's Congress](#)

(Bloomberg) -- When Barack Obama was elected president, he was heralded as a possible savior for climate- treaty talks that had dragged on for years while George W. Bush rejected limits on U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions.

“America is back” at the United Nations negotiating table, Democratic Senator John Kerry declared after the November election. Danish climate minister Connie Hedegaard said U.S. emissions policy moved forward 35 years overnight.

Instead, Obama may send empty-handed envoys in December to the table in Copenhagen where 192 countries will try to assign emissions reductions because Congress has given him no mandate. With the European Union, Japan and Australia ready to pledge cuts of more than 20 percent only if other nations follow suit, the stage is set for promises to collapse.

[Asia, Africa Are 'More Vulnerable' to Climate Change](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Developing nations in South Asia and Africa including India may face greater threats from heat- trapping pollution if nations fail to reach a new climate agreement at Copenhagen, a United Nations official said.

“The unfortunate coincidence is that developing countries are located in the tropical belt and are more vulnerable to the impact of climate change,” said Marcel Alers, a climate change mitigation adviser to the United Nations Development Program.

[Freaking out](#)

FOOLS rush in where climatologists fear to tread. That, at least, is what critics are saying about a book called “SuperFreakonomics”, which was published on October 20th. Its authors are self-proclaimed “rogue economist” Steven Levitt, of the University of Chicago, and his swashbuckling sidekick Stephen Dubner, a journalist. The internet is now alight with controversy about a chapter in the book that examines climate change.

[More than 1 way to cool Earth](#)

Why, then, are so few people willing to talk about such "geoengineering" solutions? There could be a fear of unintended environmental consequences, although the lack of significant side effects from Pinatubo is encouraging. It might be that this solution just seems too good to be true. Could it really be so simple and cheap?

Modern society is in love with costly, complicated solutions. (Governments in particular seem to like them.) But we tend to forget how many hard problems in the past were solved simply. Instead of the long-feared mass starvation, the worldwide population has instead charged forward to nearly 7 billion people, thanks in large part to the simple breakthrough of high-yielding crops. Polio and many other horrible diseases were essentially wiped out by simple vaccines. The automobile seat belt – a simple strap of nylon! – has saved roughly 250,000 lives in the USA alone since 1975.

[Vegetarian diet is better for the planet, says Lord Stern](#)

Eating meat could become as socially unacceptable as drink-driving because of the impact it has on global warming, according to a senior authority on climate change.

Lord Stern of Brentford, former adviser to the government on the economics of climate change, said people will have to consider turning vegetarian to help reduce global carbon emissions.

"Meat is a wasteful use of water and creates a lot of greenhouse gases. It puts enormous pressure on the world's resources. A vegetarian diet is better," Stern said.

[Climate report warns coastal residents](#)

The vulnerability of Australia's coastline to rising sea levels has prompted calls for drastic measures, including stopping developments in danger zones and allowing governments to force people from their homes.

A parliamentary report has warned most of the Australian coast stands to be impacted by climate change through a rise in sea levels, more frequent storms, flooding and coastal erosion.

With 80 per cent of Australians living on the coast, it has sparked calls for an urgent national response from all three levels of government to deal with the impending danger.

[Ailing planet seen as bad for human health](#)

Climate change will make Americans more vulnerable to diseases, disasters and heat waves, but governments have done little to plan for the added burden on the health system, according to a new study by a nonprofit group.

The study, released Monday by the Trust for America's Health, an advocacy group

focused on disease prevention, examines the public-health implications of climate change. In addition to pushing up sea levels and shrinking Arctic ice, the report says, a warming planet is likely to leave more people sick, short of breath or underfed.



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