



Drumbeat: November 19, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on November 19, 2009 - 8:57am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[How Understanding the Human Mind Might Save the World From CO2](#)

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"Social psychologists have now known for four decades that the relationship between people's attitudes and knowledge and behavior is scant at best," said McKenzie-Mohr. Yet campaigns remain heavily focused on brochures, flyers and other means of disseminating information. "I could just as easily call this presentation 'beyond brochures,'" he said.

t that increasing demand for oil, combined with its limited supply, is bound to make it more expensive over time, and that Maine's dependence, especially on heating oil, is a disaster in the making. What I find incredible is the idea that we are going to solve the problem by fueling our cars and heating our homes with ammonia, and that this ammonia - let alone a significant supply of fresh water - is going to be produced by windmills in the Gulf of Maine.

[In oil markets, the future looks sour](#)

NEW YORK/HOUSTON (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia's new method of pricing oil bound for the United States reflects the world's growing reliance on sour crude, which is harder to refine.

The sour grades of crude may eventually displace tried-and-true light, sweet crude to become a benchmark.

That could help producers and refiners manage risk as they deal with increasing volumes of higher-sulfur oil, and it may also cut speculators' influence on oil prices, analysts said.

[Mexico's Pemex to tap external markets for 2010 funding](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Mexico's state oil company Pemex will likely tap external

markets to raise funding for projects in 2010, the company's CEO said on Thursday.

[Mexico budget to address permanent shocks - Carstens](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Mexico's recently approved 2010 budget, which includes tax hikes, addresses permanent fiscal shocks related to declining oil production, Finance Minister Agustin Carstens said on Thursday.

[Brazil oil finds in the deep-water subsalt region](#)

(Reuters) - Brazilian state oil company Petrobras on Wednesday announced strong flow rates at the Iracema well near the giant Tupi field, that is believed to hold 5 billion to 8 billion barrels of oil.

The news will likely stimulate further interest in the country's massive offshore subsalt area, which Brazil hopes will turn it into a major player in energy markets.

The following are details about key discoveries the sub-salt area:

[Statoil says U.S. drops probe into Iran case](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - Norwegian oil and gas producer Statoil (STL.OL) said on Wednesday that a probe by U.S. authorities into a 2002 contract it had with Horton Investments Ltd for business development in Iran has been dropped.

Statoil said it reached an agreement with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the U.S. Department of Justice and the Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York that settled the agencies' investigations under a U.S. law relating to Statoil's dealings with Horton.

[China raises power price for non-residential use](#)

BEIJING: China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the top economic planning agency, Thursday announced a rise in the price of electricity for non-residential use by 2.8 fen (0.4 US cents) per kilowatt hour on average nationwide, as of Friday.

[TransCanada to hike gas pipeline tolls](#)

TransCanada Corp. , the country's largest pipeline company, said Tuesday it expects to increase tolls sharply next year on its main natural gas system from Western Canada.

The company said it needs to boost the tolls paid by shippers on its mainline system to compensate for a shortfall in expected revenue in 2009 brought about by declining supplies and shipments from Western Canada's gas fields.

[Shell denies asking for delay in drilling plan](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The president of Shell Oil Co. says the company did not ask a federal agency to delay a decision on the company's request to drill for oil and gas in Alaska's Chukchi Sea.

[Feds OK breakup to cut power costs in Ark., Miss.](#)

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Federal regulators have authorized Entergy Corp.'s utilities in two states to leave a multi-state agreement — a move expected to save money for ratepayers in Arkansas.

[As Electric Cars Arrive, Where Will They Plug In?](#)

Already, utilities, retailers, hamburger joints and others are scrambling to prepare for the swarm of electric and hybrid vehicles, and several are market-testing on-site charging stations. The auto industry is doing its part, not only producing a burst of innovative vehicles, but also attacking some of the nitty-gritty issues, like the size of the plug.

[In Nod to Global Warming, Navy Preps for 'Ice Free' Arctic](#)

The dwindling Arctic ice cap has launched an international race for control of northern waters: Russia, Canada, Denmark, and even China are hustling to expand their military presence, plant flags and eye those 90 billion barrels of natural gas under the cap. Now the U.S. Navy's getting ready for the thaw, with a strategic plan to maximize the U.S. stake up north.

The Navy's Arctic Roadmap, written by the recently launched Navy Task Force Climate Change (TFCC), opens with an acknowledgment that worldwide temperatures are on the rise — especially up north. "The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the globe. While significant uncertainty exists in projections for Arctic ice extent, the current scientific consensus indicates the Arctic may experience nearly ice-free summers sometime in the 2030s," the document notes.

Then the Arctic Roadmap sets out a three-phase plan to secure U.S. interests in the Arctic. Because there's a lot at stake under that melting cap: energy reserves, transport lanes and potential territory disputes.

[Mysteriously warm times in Antarctica](#)

(PhysOrg.com) -- A new study of Antarctica's past climate reveals that temperatures during the warm periods between ice ages (interglacials) may have been higher than previously thought. The latest analysis of ice core records suggests that Antarctic temperatures may have been up to 6°C warmer than the present day.

The findings, reported this week by scientists from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), the Open University and University of Bristol in the journal *Nature* could help us understand more about rapid Antarctic climate changes.

[‘Titanic Effect’ May Delay Russian Development Plans in Arctic](#)

Even though the Arctic Sea floor contains up to 30 percent of the world’s remaining natural gas reserves and has been identified by President Dmitry Medvedev as “Russia’s resource base for the 21st century,” a climatic quirk may limit Moscow’s ability to develop these and other natural resources anytime soon.

That quirk, which was discussed in detail at a Moscow conference last week, involves the following counter-intuitive development: As global warming has reduced the Arctic ice cap, that has contributed to an increase in the number of icebergs, thus creating a new challenge for drilling platforms and shipping there.

[How Understanding the Human Mind Might Save the World From CO2](#)

The example illustrates a basic principle in social psychology: that people's attitudes do not translate into action. But most environmental activism remains centered around the assumption that changing behavior starts with changing attitudes and knowledge.

"Social psychologists have now known for four decades that the relationship between people's attitudes and knowledge and behavior is scant at best," said McKenzie-Mohr. Yet campaigns remain heavily focused on brochures, flyers and other means of disseminating information. "I could just as easily call this presentation 'beyond brochures,'" he said.

[Paying More for Flights Eases Guilt, Not Emissions](#)

The sheer size of the airline industry’s emissions makes it hard to judge the effectiveness of carbon offset programs.

[Paying Extra for Green Power, and Getting Ads Instead](#)

At least one major program has come under fire from regulators. Last year, a Florida Power and Light green power program, called Sunshine Energy, was terminated by the state's Public Service Commission after an audit found that promised solar power facilities were far behind schedule. The program had more than 38,000 customers, and was once the sixth-largest in the country, according to the renewable energy laboratory.

The audit also found that the vast majority of homeowners' payments went into marketing and administration.

[Moored Tankers 'Not Behind Petrol Price Hike'](#)

Some 10 tankers have remained anchored in Lyme Bay off the Devon coast for two months, with no sign of preparing to leave, as the value of their cargo continues to go up.

The sight has provoked an angry reaction from motoring groups, with the RAC questioning the legality of the practice and the AA describing drivers as "victims".

However, Steve Christy of Gibson Shipbrokers told Sky News Online the tankers were not to blame for misery at the petrol pumps.

[PDVSA Profit Falls 67% on Price Drop, OPEC Targets](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos de Venezuela SA said profit fell 67 percent from a year earlier in the first six months of the year after oil prices plunged and it cut output to meet OPEC targets.

Profit in the first half fell to \$3.15 billion, the state-owned oil company known as PDVSA said in a statement posted on its Web site today

[Explosive growth: Australia is becoming one of the world's biggest exporters of gas](#)

WALLAROOS, bandicoots and other marsupials on Barrow Island off the north-west coast of Australia will watch curiously over coming months as workers start building a huge plant to liquefy natural gas there. The project, called Gorgon after the group of gasfields lying under the seabed nearby, had been on the drawing board for 30 years before a surge in demand for gas from booming Asian countries finally got things moving. Jon Chadwick, an executive vice-president at Royal Dutch Shell, which is involved in Gorgon and several other liquefied natural gas (LNG) schemes nearby, predicts that by 2020 Australia could become the world's second-biggest exporter of LNG (it is now fifth), surpassed only by Qatar.

[BP, Russian Billionaires Select Barsky to Run TNK-BP in 2011](#)

(Bloomberg) -- BP Plc and its billionaire partners in TNK-BP agreed to appoint Vice President Maxim Barsky as head of the Russian oil venture from 2011, ending a shareholder conflict that disrupted operations last year.

[Ukraine PM seeks to calm fears of new gas war](#)

KIEV (Reuters) - Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, seeking to dispel European fears of a new gas war with Russia, on Wednesday said an agreement struck with Moscow in January guaranteed Russian gas transit in 2010.

[No 'Choice of Evils' Defense in Oil Lease Case, Judge Rules](#)

DENVER — A college student who bid on and won more than \$1.8 million in federal oil and gas leases last year without the intent or ability to pay will not be allowed to argue in court that he acted out of necessity to protect the environment, a federal judge ruled on Monday.

[A Dim View of U.S.-China Electric Car Plan](#)

Should the United States and China be teaming up on clean urban transportation systems instead of clean cars? After the announcement of a suite of new energy partnerships between China and the United States, I sought feedback on the electric vehicle project from Lee Schipper, an energy and transportation specialist who splits his time between the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford. He's quite worried that the program is looking at cars mainly from an energy-efficiency context, instead of how they will shape and affect China's fast-expanding cities in a larger sense. "Creating a zero-carbon car for China tomorrow won't solve the much bigger problems of urban congestion, traffic fatalities and the paving over of once-beautiful cities to make room for more cars," Dr. Schipper said. "The discussions should back up. Energy is only a means to an end. What are the ends, urban access and mobility, or cars for a small minority?"

[Phoenix Solar eyes partner in China](#)

"Asia has huge growth prospects because so far it is so underpenetrated," Christophe Inglin, Phoenix's managing director for Asia Pacific, told Reuters on the sidelines of a clean energy conference in Singapore.

[California Imposes Rule for Efficiency on Some TVs](#)

Recognizing that giant new flat-panel televisions have become major power guzzlers, California on Wednesday became the first state to impose energy efficiency standards on

them.

[The clothes are clean ... but what's that smell?](#)

When you buy a new washing machine, you don't expect it to stink up your house. But that seems to be a common problem for people who own high-efficiency front-loading washers.

[In Pursuit of a Smarter Grid](#)

The so-called smart or super grid – terms that loosely describe an upgraded electricity transmission network augmented by digital communications technology – is championed by Al Gore, the former vice president and climate change crusader; endorsed by John Doerr, the visionary venture capitalist; and pursued by countless start-ups.

Getting the thing off the ground, however, is far easier said than done.

[Study: Asia Surging in Clean-Tech Manufacturing](#)

If the United States government does not invest more money in clean technology, it risks losing out to China, South Korea and Japan, according to a new study from two American policy institutes.

Over the next five years, those three countries will together spend \$509 billion in clean technology through 2013, compared with \$172 billion by the United States, according to a report released on Tuesday by the Breakthrough Institute, an Oakland, Calif., policy group, and the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, a nonpartisan research and educational institute in Washington.

[The IEA's "Whistleblower" Is Irrelevant](#)

Halfway through the article, we perceive the glimmer of the real agenda. To get some substance to the story and to get somebody to go on record, *The Guardian* spoke to John Hemmings a Member of Parliament, and chair of the UK all-party parliamentary group on peak oil and gas. (You can tell from the group's title how alarmist Peak Oil theory is already a mainstay of British political thinking.) Mr Hemmings weighs in that, "this" – by which he means the IEA whistleblowers' personal opinions – "all gives an importance to the Copenhagen [climate change] talks and an urgent need for the UK to move faster towards a more sustainable [lower carbon] economy."

Ah yes, next month's climate alarmist jamboree in Denmark that so urgently requires a shot in the arm if anything meaningful in the fight against CO₂ is to come out of it.

Something, by chance, about which *The Guardian*, the pre-eminent flag-waver for UK global warming and CO2 alarmism, has appeared increasingly concerned.

[Thomas L. Friedman: What They Really Believe](#)

If you follow the debate around the energy/climate bills working through Congress you will notice that the drill-baby-drill opponents of this legislation are now making two claims. One is that the globe has been cooling lately, not warming, and the other is that America simply can't afford any kind of cap-and-trade/carbon tax.

But here is what they also surely believe, but are not saying: They believe the world is going to face a mass plague, like the Black Death, that will wipe out 2.5 billion people sometime between now and 2050. They believe it is much better for America that the world be dependent on oil for energy — a commodity largely controlled by countries that hate us and can only go up in price as demand increases — rather than on clean power technologies that are controlled by us and only go down in price as demand increases. And, finally, they believe that people in the developing world are very happy being poor — just give them a little running water and electricity and they'll be fine. They'll never want to live like us.

Yes, the opponents of any tax on carbon to stimulate alternatives to oil must believe all these things because that is the only way their arguments make any sense.

[On warming, peat is the 'elephant in the room'](#)

TARUNA JAYA, Indonesia - Across a patch of pineapples shrouded in smoke, Idris Hadriyani battled a menace that has left his family sleepless and sick -- and has wrought as much damage on the planet as has exhaust from all the cars and trucks in the United States. Against the advancing flames, he waved a hose with a handmade nozzle confected from a plastic soda bottle.

The lopsided struggle is part of a battle against one of the biggest, and most overlooked, causes of global climate change: a vast and often smoldering layer of coal-black peat that has made Indonesia the world's third-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases after China and the United States.

[API: U.S. Crude Oil Production Continues at Four-Year Highs](#)

U.S. crude oil production for October averaged 5.36 million barrels per day, continuing at levels not seen since 2005, according to API's Monthly Statistical Report.

Crude production from the Lower 48 states averaged 4.67 million barrels per day, up from both last year and prior months. Even though crude production last October had recovered from precautionary platform shut-ins in the Gulf of Mexico in the face of

hurricanes Gustav and Ike last September, output levels then were still lower than this October's by nearly 15 percent. Meanwhile, Alaskan output, at 696,000 barrels per day, slipped from last October by 2.8 percent but rebounded from this summer's lows of less than 600,000 barrels per day.

[Four ways to feed the world](#)

"Ending hunger by 2025 is not realistic," says Joachim von Braun of IFPRI, a food-policy institute in Washington DC. "Halving it might be, but it requires sustained action."

It gets worse: global population is set to grow to 9.1 billion by 2050, while global warming will have a serious impact on farming. What can be done?

[The Rooftop Garden Climbs Down a Wall](#)

IN most ways, the Barthelmes Manufacturing Company is a typical sheet metal fabricator. Five days a week, machines here stamp out thousands of computer cases, electrical patch panels and other items for companies like United Technologies.

Yet a growing part of the company's business is being devoted to something decidedly unindustrial: edible walls — metal panels filled with soil and seeds and hung vertically.

[Energy-saving bulbs 'get dimmer'](#)

Energy-efficient light bulbs lose on average 22% of their brightness over their lifetime, a study has found.

In some cases they emit just 60% as much light as traditional models which are being phased out of shops, it says.

[Just use less](#)

Energy adviser Maxine Savitz told her Science Center audience, "Deploying existing energy-efficient technology is the nearest term and lowest-cost option."

The easiest way to reduce U.S. consumption of greenhouse gas-emitting fossil fuels may not involve changing the way it is generated, but rather simply using less of it, an energy expert said.

[Six renewable energy sources judged to be best prospect for future, says report](#)

The best prospects for large-scale renewable energy production and net-energy performance remain wind and certain forms of solar, according to a study released by two California-based think tanks.

[New Danish plant turns straw into biofuel](#)

KALUNDBORG, Denmark (Reuters) - A new plant in Denmark has begun converting straw into bioethanol for cars, pellets for biofuel-burning power plants and molasses for animal feed to avoid the carbon emissions from fossil fuels.

[Could cheap algae oil power our energy future?](#)

Although algae is currently the most energy-dense biofuel source, the cost of producing algae oil is prohibitively expensive.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the biofuel would cost around \$8 per gallon at the pump. Other experts have even projected prices of more than \$50 per gallon because of inefficient production and harvesting methods.

However, a team of engineers plans to investigate whether algae commercially grown in the ocean on specialized platforms could reduce the high costs of biofuel production, potentially bringing our energy economy one step closer to shifting from fossil fuels to renewable resources.

[Seeking Wind Energy. Some Consider the Sea](#)

LAST June in a fjord in southwestern Norway, a 213-foot-tall wind turbine did something large wind turbines normally don't do: it headed out to sea.

Towed by tugboats, the newly built turbine, with three 139-foot rotor blades and a 2.3-megawatt generator atop the tower, which itself was bolted to a ballasted steel cylinder extending more than 300 feet below the waterline, made its way to a spot six miles off the coast. Once in position it was moored with cables to the seafloor, about 700 feet below.

[U.S. coal industry stakes survival on carbon capture](#)

NEW HAVEN, West, Virginia (Reuters) - A looming government clampdown on CO2 emissions is about to confront an already embattled U.S. coal power industry with two stark options: capture carbon or die.

[Oceans' uptake of manmade carbon may be slowing](#)

The oceans play a key role in regulating climate, absorbing more than a quarter of the carbon dioxide that humans put into the air. Now, the first year-by-year accounting of this mechanism during the industrial era suggests the oceans are struggling to keep up with rising emissions -- a finding with potentially wide implications for future climate. The study appears in this week's issue of the journal *Nature*.

[Monsoon Model Indicates Potential for Abrupt Transitions](#)

ScienceDaily — A self-amplifying effect presently sustains monsoon winds, but it could also disrupt the circulation over land and sea. The periodical rainfall could stop from one season to another or for months within seasons. High air pollution could lead to the disruption, researchers of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research report in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Online Early Edition. Global warming increases the risk of abrupt monsoon transitions from high-precipitation to dry periods.

[Every Year of Delaying Legislation on Climate Change Adds \\$500 Billion a Year Says IEA](#)

The normally conservative International Energy Agency is now saying that we must act faster to prevent climate change. Not only to prevent catastrophe, but also because the longer we wait, the more difficult and expensive it becomes to achieve the greater and greater cuts that are necessary to keep worldwide temperature rise to 2 degrees Centigrade or a 3.8 degrees Fahrenheit global average.

[John Michael Greer: How Relocalization Worked](#)

One of the points that I've tried to make repeatedly in these essays is the place of history as a guide to what works. It's a point that deserves repetition. A good many worldsaving plans now in circulation, however new the rhetoric that surrounds them, simply rehash proposals that were tried in the past and failed repeatedly; trying them yet again may thus not be the best use of our limited resources and time.

Of course there's another side to history that's more hopeful: something that worked well in the past can be a useful guide to what might work well in the future. I'd like to spend a little time discussing one example of this, partly because it ties into the theme of the current series of posts – the abject failure of current economic notions, and the options for replacing them with ideas that actually make sense – and partly because it addresses one of the more popular topics in the ongoing peak oil discussion, the need for economic relocalization as the age of cheap abundant energy comes to an end.

[Review: The Ecotechnic Future by John Michael Greer](#)

Greer's newest book, *The Ecotechnic Future*, builds on *The Long Descent* by sketching out some of the likely dimensions of the future that Greer believes lies on the other side of our descent. It doesn't devote much space to explaining why our civilization is headed for collapse, or describing how people can prepare on the individual and community levels, since these were covered in his earlier book. Instead, in a series of chapters with straightforward titles like "Food," "Home," "Community" and "Culture," it takes an in-depth look at the kinds of changes that we can expect in these and other aspects of our lives as industrial civilization winds down.

[China's gas shortage to give a small boost to gasoline](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - A gas shortage that has hit central and eastern Chinese provinces will give a small boost to gasoline sales by China's oil duopoly, as slower gas supplies force taxis to gas stations, industry officials said on Thursday.

But as taxis burning the clean fuel are heavily concentrated in one region -- the southwestern province of Sichuan and Chongqing municipality -- the impact on China's gasoline balance will be marginal. China is Asia's leading gasoline seller.

[Saudi Arabia: Feeding off an every boost](#)

Can a single natural resource ever have dominated a country's development to the extent that oil has for Saudi Arabia?

[Saudi Arabia: Pointing the way](#)

It's a strange paradox that Saudi Arabia's key strength can be viewed as a source of weakness.

[Cantarell Suffering](#)

Mexico's chief producing oil field, Cantarell, is in a declining level of production already representing an "emergency situation", according to the Hydrocarbon Undersecretary of the Energy Secretariat (SENER).

[Debating dollar stores and globalization](#)

Perhaps there are families who live quite happily on the "100-kilometre-diet". I believe I'm still among the majority of Canadian mothers who prefer to feed their children a more varied menu than potatoes, kale and cabbage during the winter months.

[Cleantech Investors Tweak Strategies But Still Moving Forward](#)

Although cleantech investing, like everything else in the venture world, has slowed because of the global financial crisis, investors are mainly adjusting their strategies rather than pulling back.

[Energy chiefs warn crisis stifling investment](#)

GENEVA — The economic crisis is jeopardising key energy industry investments that are needed to cope with future growth in demand and shifts to cleaner energy, executives and officials warned on Wednesday.

Executives from gas, oil and power generation firms said at a UN conference here that they were delaying and cutting back investments due to the credit crunch, the economic downturn and volatile oil and gas prices.

But, they added, fresh capital is needed to renew and expand infrastructure such as production capacity and gas pipelines, cut carbon emissions from traditional fuels or build up more costly alternative energy sources.

Global energy needs are expected to grow by more than 40 percent by 2030, according to an International Energy Agency report last week, despite a decline this year due to reduced economic activity with the recession.

[Crude Oil Declines for First Time in Four Days as Dollar Gains](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil fell for the first time in four days as the dollar gained against the euro, dulling the appeal of commodities as a currency hedge.

Oil fell from a one-week high reached yesterday after the U.S. Department of Energy said crude stockpiles dropped unexpectedly last week. Stock markets fell across Europe on concern this year's rally has outpaced the prospects for economic growth.

[Air France Pares Hedges as Oil's Swings Lead to Loss](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Air France-KLM Group, Europe's biggest airline, is scaling back on jet-fuel hedging after swings in oil prices contributed to a quarterly loss.

Fuel costs now will be hedged over two years instead of four, and the carrier will lock in purchases for only 80 percent of its annual consumption instead of two full years, Chief Executive Officer Pierre-Henri Gourgeon said in an interview in Paris yesterday.

[Oil tankers parked off British coast as speculators wait for prices to rise](#)

Ten oil and gas vessels are currently anchored in Lyme Bay in Devon amid claims that speculators are trying to push up the prices paid by motorists.

Local residents say that some of the tankers have been there for months.

Motoring groups last night accused oil traders of refusing to let the ships dock in the hope of squeezing higher profits out of British consumers.

[Petrobras Says Tupi Well to Pump 50,000 Barrels a Day](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleo Brasileiro SA, Brazil's state-controlled oil producer, estimates that a well will produce 50,000 barrels a day from its offshore Tupi field, the biggest discovery in the Americas in more than three decades.

"Initial production at the well is estimated at 50,000 barrels a day, which confirms the high capacity for light-oil output in the Tupi area," Rio de Janeiro-based Petrobras, as the company is known, said today in a regulatory filing.

[Ukraine Seeks Russia Gas Fine Waiver, Warns on Supply](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Ukraine is seeking an amendment to its accord with Russia to waive fines for buying less gas than contracted this year, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko said in a letter to Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev.

State-run NAK Naftogaz Ukrainy may be unable to prepare for the heating season starting at the end of next year, potentially threatening "the reliability of gas shipments to Ukraine and transit to other European states," Yushchenko said in the letter posted on his Web site.

[E.ON Boosts Gas Trading as Oil Rally Skews Contracts](#)

(Bloomberg) -- E.ON AG, Germany's biggest utility, is expanding its short-term trading of gas as higher oil prices raise costs for longer-term contracts through 2013.

While longer contracts will remain a "core part" of E.ON's gas supplies through its Ruhrgas unit, shorter-term buying and selling of the fuel and liquefied natural gas have increased, Tony Cocker, E.ON Energy Trading's chief executive officer, said today at an interview at the EMART energy conference in Barcelona.

[Azeris May Send Gas to Asia as EU's Caspian Pipe Plans Languish](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Azerbaijan, Europe's closest energy ally in the Caspian basin, is threatening to sell its gas to Asian markets, pressuring the European Union to complete pipeline accords to boost its own deliveries from the region.

"If Europe takes too long putting together a solution, then all the gas in the Caspian will go to Asia," said Elshad Nassirov, a vice president at State Oil Co. of Azerbaijan, or Socar. "It's more serious than it seems."

[The case for higher oil prices](#)

In the first two instalments of this three-part series we considered peak oil theory, the importance of the marginal cost of production and the clear trend towards higher-cost oil discoveries. Using US Department of Energy figures, we also revealed that global oil demand exceeds current production rates.

It's now time to consider what this tells us about future oil prices. In the short term, the answer is not much. Over the long term though, the price of oil should equal the marginal cost of production.

[Raymond J. Learsy: The CFTC and Department of Energy Snore Away While the Oil Patch Makes Hay](#)

Late last week the Energy Information Service advised oil stocks surged by 1.762 million barrels, far more than expected, while the U.S. refinery processing rate sank to 79.7% -- the lowest level in more than two decades. Yet on Monday the price of oil jumped by \$2.50 a barrel.

What is going on? We don't really know, but it is clear that the price of oil as currently constituted no longer has anything to do with the market dynamics of supply and demand.

[Food-climate theorist Brown to lecture at Colorado State](#)

A pioneering environmentalist who has written or co-authored more than 50 books will speak at CSU tonight on whether food shortages could be caused by global warming.

Lester Brown, who the Washington Post once called "one of the world's most influential thinkers," will be discuss his latest book "Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization" at 7 p.m. in the main ballroom at Lory Student Center.

[Uniting to keep economic collapse at bay](#)

Readers say I've ignored peak oil in favor of the economic meltdown. But because of the financial crisis, the world is using one-third less than three years ago. Though no new discoveries have been found, using less oil means the impending crisis is pushed back a few years. Nothing threatens our civilization more than Peak Oil and it may come quicker if developing nations recover and pick up the slack from big users such as America.

[Clean Energy Will Lag Behind Global Power Demand](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Wind turbines, solar panels and hydropower stations won't be built fast enough to keep pace with global electricity demand through 2030, the International Energy Agency forecast.

The CHART OF THE DAY shows a widening gap between power generated with renewable fuels and total consumption. That means coal-fired plants, which are cheaper and more polluting, will increase their share in the energy mix, discharging extra heat-trapping emissions that threaten to raise the planet's temperature, the IEA said.

[Poet reduces cellulosic ethanol production costs](#)

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – Poet LLC, the nation's top ethanol producer, says it is has reduced its cellulosic ethanol production cost during the past year from \$4.13 per gallon to \$2.35 per gallon.

[Transformer maker to open first US site in Colo.](#)

WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. – A company that makes transformers that convert electricity from renewable energy sources to the grid plans to open its first U.S. plant in Wheat Ridge in January.

[Smoke rises from Japan nuclear plant](#)

TOKYO (AFP) – Smoke rose on Thursday from the world's largest nuclear power plant in Japan, which was shut down by an earthquake two years ago, but the operator said no-one was injured and there was no radiation leak.

[U.S., China May Double Renewable Stimulus Spending](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The U.S., China and other major economies may more than double stimulus spending on clean energy next year after holding back most of the money promised for projects, an analyst said.

Stimulus spending on ventures such as wind parks and solar farms may more than double to \$57.8 billion in 2010 from \$24.3 billion this year, said Michael Liebreich, chairman of New Energy Finance, a London-based consulting firm. Green projects may secure \$55.6 billion in stimulus funds in 2011.

[Coal at what price?](#)

Are politicians and business serious about effectively addressing climate change? Australia has significant raw resource availability, it drives the nation's economy, but who would have imagined, in the face of peak oil and the damaging effects of fossil fuels, the Victorian government would be entering a minerals extraction boom with a major focus on coal.

[India PM heads to U.S. in test of ties with Obama](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) – India's prime minister and U.S. President Barack Obama meet next week to strengthen ties, with the emerging Asian power increasingly playing a bigger role on global issues such as climate change and trade.

[India adopts single pollution standard norms](#)

NEW DELHI (AFP) – India on Wednesday tightened air quality rules and said it will enforce a single standard for industrial and residential pollution.

The Revised National Ambient Air Quality Standards rule would lead to the use of "clean fuel" to lower emissions, Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh said.

[Russia ready for deeper emissions cut: EU](#)

STOCKHOLM (AFP) – Russia is ready to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 to 25 percent by 2020 from 1990 levels, raising its target from 15 percent just weeks ahead of a UN climate summit, the EU said Wednesday.

[Australian Firefighters Urge Passage of Climate Bill](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Australian firefighters, spurred on by what they say are record temperatures contributing to "catastrophic code red" fire-danger warning, urged

lawmakers to pass climate change legislation under debate by Senators.

Politicians threatening to block or weaken the proposed carbon reduction scheme are putting lives and properties at risk, Peter Marshall, national secretary of the United Firefighters Union, said in a statement today. The body represents 13,500 professional firefighters.

[Storm Over the Chamber](#)

As president of the nation's largest and oldest business association, Mr. Donohue is no stranger to sharp policy debates. During his 12-year tenure, the chamber has been outspoken on trade, tort reform, union organizing rights, financial regulation and health care. Mr. Donohue has hired an army of lobbyists and has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on advertising, advocacy and political campaigns to make sure its voice is heard. The chamber represents its generally conservative membership of 300,000 companies and local business groups on these issues without much public protest.

But climate change poses a different sort of challenge for Mr. Donohue. Many of the chamber's big-business members are deeply split on the issue, with some standing to profit from an economy moving away from reliance on fossil fuels, while others could see devastating increases in costs.



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