



Drumbeat: December 2, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on December 2, 2009 - 9:12am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[The domestic drilling backlash](#): *From New York to Texas, energy companies have come under fire as natural gas drilling gets close to big cities*

Most Americans still support increased oil and gas drilling. But opposition is growing, especially when that drilling nears more populated urban areas. Currently there are natural gas booms happening around New York City, Dallas-Fort Worth, Western Colorado, the Midwest, and elsewhere. Opponents fear this new drilling will ruin the drinking water for millions of people, among other concerns.

And energy companies, accustomed to dealing with rural populations familiar with drilling and eager for jobs and lease royalties, are increasingly finding themselves at odds with a more educated and wealthy populace wary of energy development.

[rg.com/apps/news?pid=20601072&sid=aSYp.bhf9oBY">Derivatives Bill Needs FERC Changes, Lawmakers Say](#)

(Bloomberg) -- U.S. Representative Edward Markey said he is working on changes to derivatives legislation that would preserve the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's authority over wholesale power markets.

Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat, said at a House Energy and Commerce Committee panel hearing today that he is working with the committee's chairman, Representative Henry Waxman, on a "resolution" to change the measure, which is part of a larger package of financial regulations that may be voted on as early as next week.

[Will Iraq Save The World From Peak Oil?](#)

While jaded energy investors may scoff at Iraq increasing its capacity due to past failures, this time the world's largest international oil companies are backing these efforts with money and technical knowledge.

[Total Seeks Iraqi Oil Fields in Return to Roots](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Total SA, which has so far failed to win contracts to develop Iraqi oil reserves, is interested in at least three fields as it seeks to return to a country the French producer first helped explore back in 1927.

“There are a number of fields we are interested in and have worked on in the past,” Yves-Louis Darricarrere, Total’s head of exploration and production, said in an interview. “This doesn’t mean others don’t interest us.” He declined to give details on the French company’s strategy for winning licenses because the contest is “highly competitive.”

[ConocoPhillips slashes its budget](#)

US supermajor ConocoPhillips will cut capital expenditures by an estimated 10% to \$11.2 billion next year, as the hard-hit supermajor continues to grapple with volatile energy markets and tight credit.

[Talisman wields jobs axe](#)

Canadian explorer Talisman Energy is laying off 220 people in its conventional natural gas and shale divisions.

[QatarGas Delivers First Liquefied Gas Cargo to Canada](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Qatar Liquefied Gas Co., the liquefied natural gas producer known as QatarGas, delivered its first cargo of the fuel to Canada as it expands into new markets and brings additional production units on stream.

[Barclays Initiates LNG Services With Excelerate Deal](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Barclays Capital said it will market Excelerate Energy LLC’s liquefied-natural-gas cargoes landing at the importer’s Northeast U.S. port, as the bank begins to offer LNG risk-management services.

[Petrobras Workers to End Stoppages, Approve Accord](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleo Brasileiro SA workers will cease stoppages and approve a 7.8 percent wage increase after the company agreed to cancel the suspension of striking workers, a labor union spokeswoman said.

Talks progressed after the Brazilian state-controlled oil company agreed to cancel the suspension of about 90 employees who went on strike in March, the spokeswoman said today in a telephone interview from Rio de Janeiro.

[\\$2,000 Gold vs. \\$140 Oil -- How gold and oil are very different](#)

Who can forget the insane run-up in oil to \$147/barrel? At the time, there was substantial disagreement as to whether the spike was speculator-driven. I will personally confess that when it was all happening I didn't think speculation was the primary impetus for the run-up. With the benefit of hindsight, however, I've changed my mind. I'm with the majority now who think it was a speculative bubble. (Although I do believe in peak oil and that oil will see \$147+ again in the next decade)

Are we going to see a repeat of this spectacular spike/collapse in the gold market? Quite possibly, but if so we haven't even begun the spike phase yet.

[China rejects Copenhagen climate targets](#)

China and other big developing nations rejected core targets for a climate deal such as halving world greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 just five days before talks start in Copenhagen.

China, the world's top emitter, together with India, Brazil and South Africa demand that richer nations do more and have drawn "red lines" limiting what they themselves would accept, the diplomats told Reuters. Their tough stance could moderate, however, if developing countries pledge steeper carbon pollution reductions of their own.

[Munk debate on climate change gets it wrong](#)

In a nutshell, Lawson's argument is simple: fossil fuels are cheap compared to the alternatives and if we force cleaner and more costly alternatives on developing countries it will deny them growth and keep their citizens poor and helpless. Plans being considered to fight global warming are "madness" and "scientifically unfounded" and "immoral," he says. Lawson, of course, doesn't even believe in man-made climate change, or peak oil, so figures we can continue going along our merry way burning as much dirty fossil fuel as we can. Lomborg, on the other hand, says he believes in global warming but also believes the costs being proposed to mitigate it are out of proportion with what it will accomplish. Better, he says, to take all that money and put it directly into feeding the hungry, getting medicine for the poor, and helping developing countries help themselves. Problem is he positions this all as a choice between A or B, failing to acknowledge that we need to do both — acting on one doesn't, nor should it, preclude the other. He also seem to ignore the fact that climate change will cause more disease, drought, and extreme weather that will leave the poor in a more dire state.

[7 ways microbes may solve our energy woes](#)

Microscopic organisms — archaea, bacteria and fungi — have the potential to reshape the world's power supply. Microbes could provide a vast energy resource that is as efficient and portable as coal, oil and natural gas, said Bruce Rittmann, director of the Bioenergy Institute at Arizona State University in Phoenix.

[The domestic drilling backlash](#): *From New York to Texas, energy companies have come under fire as natural gas drilling gets close to big cities*

Most Americans still support increased oil and gas drilling. But opposition is growing, especially when that drilling nears more populated urban areas. Currently there are natural gas booms happening around New York City, Dallas-Fort Worth, Western Colorado, the Midwest, and elsewhere. Opponents fear this new drilling will ruin the drinking water for millions of people, among other concerns.

And energy companies, accustomed to dealing with rural populations familiar with drilling and eager for jobs and lease royalties, are increasingly finding themselves at odds with a more educated and wealthy populace wary of energy development.

['Fossil Fuels Continue to Dominate Energy Sources'](#)

A visiting top executive of Saudi Arabia's state-run oil company said Wednesday that fossil fuels would still play the biggest role in global energy use and it was important to try to make the best of them.

"Alternative energy sources hold promise in the long-term, and we should pursue their development in a rational fashion. But in the immediate future, the prudent course is to sustain global economic development by making the best use of proven sources of energy," Khalid A. Al-Falih, president and CEO of Saudi Aramco, said during a speech at Seoul National University (SNU).

[Saudi Aramco CEO: Will Try to Help Stabilize Oil Prices](#)

Saudi Arabian Oil Co., or Saudi Aramco, will do its part to keep oil prices from rising excessively and thus damaging a nascent global economic recovery, Chief Executive Khalid Al Falih said Wednesday.

Al Falih told reporters in Seoul he expects the refining industry to remain weak into next year, although signs of a recovery are appearing, according to a statement issued by S-Oil Corp., in which Saudi Aramco has a 35% stake.

[Seoul offers Nigeria a helping hand](#)

South Korea has joined the European Union and Shell in offering assistance to Nigeria to modernise the impoverished region since the disarmament of thousands of militants under President Umaru Yar'Adua's amnesty programme got under way.

The South Korean delegation's offer could help improve relations with Nigeria following their legal dispute over the exploration rights of two major offshore oilfields, a Reuters report said.

[China's Africa trade to benefit UAE](#)

The UAE is likely to benefit from increasing trade links between China and Africa as it acts as a go-between for the growing traffic between them, says the chief China economist at The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) in Hong Kong.

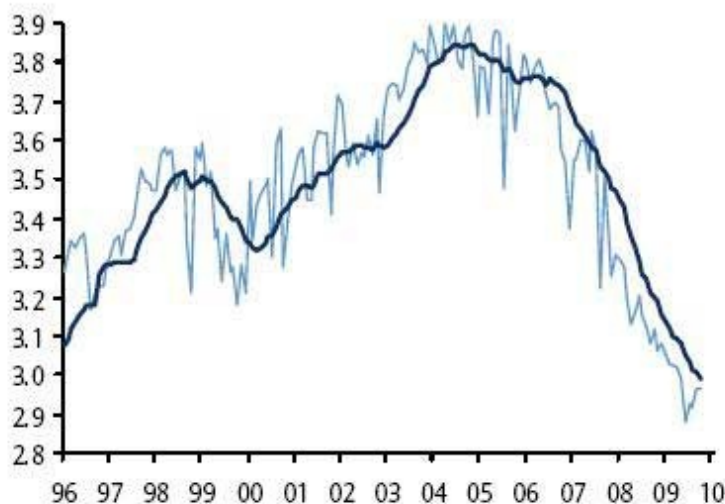
Its continuing presence as a thriving trade hub means the Emirates, and Dubai in particular, will help deliver the rising number of goods traded between China and Africa, said Ben Simpfendorfer.

[Indonesia to Draw Up Rules for Domestic Coal Supplies in 2010](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Indonesia, the world's biggest exporter of coal used by power plants, may draw up rules next year requiring companies to set aside part of their output for domestic needs, an official at the energy ministry said.

[Mexican oil production: from bad to worse](#)

Figure 44: Oil output and 12 month average (mb/d)



Mexico's declining oil output has been evident for some time now - and it suffered a

symbolic setback when its massive Cantarell field fell so sharply that it lost its place as the country's number one field.

[Mexicans Evading Tax Mock Calderon's Bid to Wean Nation Off Oil](#)

During previous tough times, Mexico could count on Pemex, a cash cow that brings in 37 percent of public-sector revenue. Now Cantarell, the world's biggest offshore oil field, is drying up faster than the government expected.

In September, daily production at Cantarell fell 39 percent from a year earlier to 573,760 barrels. Total Mexican production tumbled by 850,000 barrels a day as of October 2009 since peaking at 3.45 million barrels in December 2003. The government is spending almost \$20 billion a year on exploration to keep Mexico from becoming a net oil importer, which could occur as soon as 2015, the Energy Ministry said in 2008.

[Nuclear power plant may still undergo rehab](#)

The Korea Electric Power Corp. (KEPCo) has told the government the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) may still be rehabilitated, following an almost yearlong study.

"We received the feasibility study and the bottom line recommendation is saying that it is possible to rehabilitate the plant," Froilan A. Tampinco, Napocor president, told reporters.

No cost estimates were provided.

[Fuel shortage hits Nepal's capital](#)

Ongoing protest of petrol pump workers has triggered shortage of petroleum products across the country including in the capital city, Kathmandu.

The Maoist-affiliated NPWA said they have deployed over 10,000 petroleum workers to enforce their protests across the country.

With the deepening shortage of fuel due to the protests, the number of vehicles plying in the capital's streets has declined by over 25 percent, according to traffic police. The fuel shortage has badly hit commuters as vehicles choose to stay off the roads from the early evening.

[Shell critic says oil major targeting his website](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - A prominent Internet critic of Royal Dutch Shell says the oil major

has asked an anti-cyber fraud agency to target his site, which Shell admits provides better information on the group than its own internal communications.

John Donovan, who runs the Royaldutchshell.plc website, where disaffected Shell employees post company news and gossip, said the move suggests Shell has adopted more aggressive tactics in its long battle to shut him down.

[Utilities get \\$9 million from Enron scandal](#)

It's payback time for Enron, Attorney General Rob McKenna announced today. The AG's Office sent more than \$9 million this week to programs that will benefit utility customers who were gouged by the manufactured energy crisis of 2001

Rather than distribute small refunds to individuals, the money will be used to help reduce heating expenses for low-income households and support weatherization programs that improve heating efficiency. Allocations were made based on the number of customers served by each utility.

[Look who's talking now](#)

ECONOMISTS: With everyone grasping for answers, demand is strong for speakers like former CIBC chief economist Jeff Rubin, who's scaring audiences with visions of \$200-a-barrel oil. "In good times, no one wants to hear them," says Bill Leigh, of Leigh Bureau speakers' bureau. "In bad times, they're far more popular."

[Painfully Slow Iowa Corn Harvest Now 87% Complete](#)

To help in moving the big crop this fall, Iowa Governor Chet Culver extended an exemption for grain truck weight limits on Iowa highways for another 30 days, until late December. The weight limit extension, allowing 10% more weight per axle, is now set to expire December 29.

Also, to get more propane hauled into the state and delivered, Culver extended the suspension of driving limits for propane truck drivers. He originally suspended the driver hour limits two weeks ago amid concerns that not enough propane was reaching Iowa due to lack of transportation to grain elevators and on-farm users.

[Solar power coming to Egypt: Minister](#)

CAIRO: Egypt's Electricity and Energy Minister Hassan Younes said on Tuesday that the country is looking to expand solar power production for possible export. He added that in order for this to be a reality, costs of the technology would need to drop

considerably in order to make it cost-effective.

The Egyptian government has repeatedly said it is looking to develop renewable energy resources and hopes to achieve 20 percent of its energy needs by 2020. Wind has been leading this charge – already installed is a wind farm with a capacity of 430 megawatts and the government plans to add 120 megawatts by mid-next year – but solar energy, in a land with over 300 days of sun, has been on the top of many lists, including the ministry's.

[The hot politics of nuclear power](#)

In 2005, environmental groups mounted a fierce campaign against nuclear provisions included in the climate bill sponsored by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.).

Then came an energy crisis, skyrocketing gas prices, a hard-fought presidential campaign, a recession and ballooning unemployment. Four years later, in an example of how quickly politics and minds can change in Washington, it seems the Senate now is ready to go nuclear when a climate bill hits Congress.

“Everyone who can count noses knows that nuclear is going to be in the bill somewhere,” said Frank O'Donnell, head of the environmental advocacy group Clean Air Watch.

[New Mexico report says transmission system is biggest hurdle to renewable energy potential](#)

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — New Mexico has huge potential to produce electricity from renewable sources but a small window to develop transmission lines to deliver that power to customers, a lawmaker said Tuesday after listening to a report on the issue.

[SD group studies plan to sell wind power to Minn.](#)

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) -- The newly formed South Dakota Wind Energy Association has commissioned a study into the feasibility of developing projects that would sell wind-generated electricity to Minnesota, association officials said.

Board President Jeff Nelson said Tuesday the study will evaluate the benefits and challenges of developing 1,000 megawatts of wind power in eastern South Dakota. That electricity could be sold to Minnesota utilities so they could meet that state's standards for renewable energy, he said.

[Ameren plans solar projects in Missouri, Illinois](#)

ST. LOUIS — Ameren Corp. will build solar energy systems in Missouri and Illinois to explore how best to use the sun to generate electricity, the St. Louis-based utility said.

[Storm Front: An Interview With the Nation's Foremost Climate Scientist James Hansen](#)

So you do not subscribe to the theory that something now is better than nothing?

That's right and we see exactly why. Look at the Kyoto Protocol. It took ten years to get even semi-implemented but in fact emissions -- even the growth rate of emissions -- actually accelerated after that agreement. The thing they are trying to do in Congress, these things will take so long and be so ineffective that we are better off stepping back and taking a year to devise a scheme that would actually work. You don't even need a year. British Columbia showed that when they passed a law for (carbon) taxes, a 100% refund via payroll deduction and five months after the law was passed the system was functioning smoothly and the public liked it. Taking a step down the wrong path is not saving anything -- you've got to reverse and get on a system that works.

[Christophe de Margerie: 'If you stop the production of fossil fuels, you stop the economy'](#)

You say that hydrocarbon production will remain important for a long time to come. But you have also been quoted by “peak oil” advocates as saying that we are running against the limits of our oil reserves.

I have never said that we are running out of oil. I do not believe that. But we are running out of production capacities. It is not a question of reserves as “peak oil” theorists would have us believe but rather a question of available production capacities. So why is it we are reaching a production peak? First of all, there are few “easy” oil and gas fields left out there. Second, oil nationalism as well as the economic crisis are making matters worse. This is leading to less investment. Producing countries at present are quite simply asking “why invest now?”, when they have a shortage of cash and have other priorities.

[Total to Invest \\$18 Billion in 2010, Forge Global Partnerships](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Total SA, Europe's third-largest oil producer, plans to keep investment stable at about \$18 billion next year as it seeks to work more closely with Chinese, Russian and Brazilian competitors to raise output.

[LNG demand 'to jump 40%'](#)

Global gas demand is likely to rise by 25% by 2020, with the use of liquefied natural gas set to surge by about 40% in the same period, a senior ExxonMobil executive said

today.

[Sinopec Plans to Expand Maoming Oil Refinery Capacity](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China Petroleum & Chemical Corp., the country's biggest refiner, plans to expand the capacity of its second-biggest oil-processing plant by 33 percent to meet rising fuel demand.

Sinopec, as China Petroleum is known, will boost the annual capacity of its Maoming plant to 18 million metric tons, or 360,000 barrels a day, from 13.5 million tons, parent China Petrochemical Corp. said in its newsletter today.

[Ahmadinejad Says Iran Can't Be Isolated as U.S. Mulls Sanctions](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said it would be impossible for world powers to isolate his country after the U.S. and European allies said the regime's plan to expand its nuclear program may provoke more sanctions.

"Who can isolate Iran? This is something that's impossible," Ahmadinejad said in an interview on state-run Press TV late yesterday. "The most strategic part of the world is the Middle East."

[EDF Stops Production at Cruas-Meyssse Unit 4](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Electricite de France SA said it stopped production at unit four of its Cruas-Meyssse nuclear site in southern France after heavy rain led to discharges from the River Rhone, affecting the unit's cooling system.

[Peak oil: Problems and possibilities](#)

Oil. It's a nonrenewable resource, but only in the last decade or so has the "non" part really begun to hit home. As oil prices continue their seemingly endless trek skyward, the whispers about peak oil have turned into a roar. Peak oil is the hypothetical date when the combined daily output of global oil producers has reached its maximum and then begins to decline. Essentially, this is the point where supply starts to move downward, while demand continues to climb. You don't need to be an economics major to figure out what the effect on prices will be.

The nonrenewable status of fossil fuels isn't up for debate — we've run out of dinosaurs — but the timing and consequences of peak oil are controversial. Some believe that we are already on the down slope, while others believe this is nothing but fear mongering. In this article, we'll examine the debate and explore some of the consequences that are likely to arise when the well runs dry.

[Global warming threatens China harvests: forecaster](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Droughts and floods stoked by global warming threaten to destabilize China's grain production, the nation's top meteorologist has warned, urging bigger grain reserves and strict protection of farmland and water supplies.

Extreme weather damage can now cause annual grain output in China, the world's biggest grain producer, to fluctuate by about 10 to 20 percent from longer-term averages.

But with global warming intensifying droughts, floods and pests, the band of fluctuation in annual production could widen to between 30 and 50 percent, Zheng Guoguang, head of the China Meteorological Administration, wrote in a new essay. He did not say how long it might be before that could happen.

[Global warming measures will cost 'twice as much as predicted'](#)

Preventing runaway global warming may be twice as expensive as previously thought and Britain will have to incur billions of pounds of additional debt to cover its share of the cost, according to the world's most influential climate change economist.

Lord Stern of Brentford said that future generations would find it easier to pay off the debt than to cope with the consequences of climate change.

[Cold comfort: the psychology of climate denial](#)

It is the human instinct to shut out or modify a terrifying truth: that the world as we know it is heading for a smash.

"It's a paradox: when it comes to disasters, people do not allow themselves to believe what they know," explained Jean-Pierre Dupuy, a professor of social philosophy at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris.

[Jeff Rubin: Financial crisis or energy shock?](#)

Everyone will tell you that it was virtually free credit conditions that spawned the subprime mortgage phenomenon. And everyone acknowledges that it was the sharp mid-decade run-up in interest rates that burst the bubble and caused the collapse in U.S. housing prices and in the value of those mortgage-backed securities that are still wreaking havoc on bank balance sheets all around the world.

But the question folks aren't answering is, what forced that fatal five-fold increase in the federal funds rate in the first place?

The answer to that, my friends, doesn't lie with foreclosed homes in Cleveland, or with over-leveraged banks in New York, but rather with something that was happening in Cushing, Oklahoma.

[Oil falls below \\$78 amid US crude supply jump](#)

Oil prices fell below \$78 a barrel Wednesday after U.S. crude supplies unexpectedly rose, suggesting demand in the world's largest economy remains weak.

By early afternoon in Europe, benchmark crude for January delivery was down 68 cents to \$77.69 in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose \$1.09 to settle at \$78.37 on Monday.

[ICE and NYMEX: two oil titans battling to win](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - The world's two biggest energy exchanges are fierce competitors, but the likelihood is both will emerge as winners from the latest tussles for liquidity.

[Russia plans to export all E.Siberian oil - minister](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia's Energy Minister wants all of the oil produced at new East Siberian fields to be exported, Interfax news agency quoted Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko as saying on Wednesday.

"We are working on the basis that 100 percent of East Siberian oil will be exported," Shmatko was quoted as saying.

[Brazil Pins Hopes On Massive, Untapped Oil Fields](#)

Every few years, the global search for oil yields what's called an "elephant field" — a pool of oil believed to hold a billion barrels or more. Brazil says it's found several such fields that, once in full production, will make the South American country a major oil player.

[Falkland Islands oil reserves 'to help British economy'](#)

A North Sea oil and gas exploration rig is on its way from Scotland to the North Falkland Basin to explore reserves. Scientists believe that the territory could have up to 60 billion

barrels of oil underneath its coastal waters.

[Empty Tankers Sail to West Africa for Higher Rates, SSY Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Supertankers are increasingly sailing to West Africa after unloading cargoes in Asia, rather than returning to the Middle East, to profit from higher rental income, said Ben Goggin, a broker at SSY Futures Ltd.

As many as five empty ships were sent to West Africa over the past week, and more may follow, he said by e-mail today. Average rental income for supertankers hauling Middle East oil to the U.S. or Asia is \$15,418 a day, compared with \$46,129 for West African cargoes sailing to the U.S., according to data from the London-based Baltic Exchange, Oslo-based shipbroker RS Platou A/S, and ship-fuel prices compiled by Bloomberg.

[Shale Gas Debate Generates War of Words But No Hard Conclusions Yet](#)

Think of it as a modern reenactment of H.G. Wells "War of the Worlds", only this episode should be renamed War of the "Words".

Alien opinions invade oil and gas, threatening a collapse in the industry as we know it. In the end, facts, the smallest of things, save the day.

That's the Twitter-esque summation of the increasingly acrimonious debate over whether the shale plays are ultimately economic, a topic about to overtake Peak Oil as the most compelling debate in oil and gas.

[Harper Looking for China Investment in Canadian Mines](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Stephen Harper, making his first trip to China as Canada's prime minister, will encourage companies such as China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. to invest in Canada's mining and energy resources.

Harper's visit this week to Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong culminates a yearlong effort to improve relations with China as Canada tries to reduce dependence on the U.S. amid slumping American demand for lumber, autos and commodities.

[Somali sea gangs lure investors at pirate lair](#)

"Four months ago, during the monsoon rains, we decided to set up this stock exchange. We started with 15 'maritime companies' and now we are hosting 72. Ten of them have so far been successful at hijacking," Mohammed said.

"The shares are open to all and everybody can take part, whether personally at sea or on land by providing cash, weapons or useful materials ... we've made piracy a community activity."

[The Big Guzzle](#)

We know about the pressing problem of peak oil. And it's no longer debatable whether or not global warming — which will be addressed by next month's climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark — is a serious problem. We know what we need to do, and the list includes making cars and trucks dramatically more fuel efficient. The Consumer Federation of America proposed this week that we embrace a 45-mpg standard by 2020 (following on the 35.5 mpg embraced by the Obama Administration).

Now here's the interesting part. There are more than 200 cars and trucks that get 30 mpg or better on the market, but people need to buy them. They have to be convinced that they don't need a Sherman tank in their driveway, and that the desire to "sit up high" should not inform their buying behavior. The planet needs us to think green.

[In Denmark, Ambitious Plan for Electric Cars](#)

COPENHAGEN — Is saving \$40,000 at the showroom enough to get drivers behind the wheel of an electric car? With a program in the works to add easy access to charging stations, Denmark is about to find out.

[Volt rollout in selected states, Buffett predicts all-electric by 2030](#)

General Motors is tomorrow expected to announce that its new Chevrolet Volt electric vehicle will be sold in selected US markets rather than rolled out in a national launch.

[LED Bulbs Save Substantial Energy, a Study Finds](#)

While it is indisputable that LEDs use a fraction of the electricity of a regular bulb to create the same amount of light, if more energy were used in the manufacturing and distribution process, then the lighting industry could be traveling down a technological dead end.

The study results show that over the entire life of the bulb — from manufacturing to disposal — the energy used for incandescent bulbs is almost five times that used for compact fluorescents and LED lamps.

[New York eyes offshore wind farms on Great Lakes](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - New York State is looking for developers to build wind farms on its Great Lakes that could generate 120 to 500 megawatts of power to boost the amount of electricity that comes renewable sources by 2015.

The New York Power Authority would buy all the power generated from the offshore projects, which could be located in either Lake Erie or Lake Ontario.

[UN Stops Approving China Wind Projects, Official Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The United Nations stopped approving aid for Chinese wind-power projects until it determines whether they qualify unfairly, a Chinese official said.

Certification was halted because of UN concern that low power rates set by the state help projects meet requirements to get carbon credits, said a National Development and Reform Commission official who has direct knowledge of the matter. David Abbass, a Bonn-based spokesman for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, wasn't available for comment.

[A new nuclear equation](#)

Nuclear power may be the only technology capable of meeting our growing demand for energy while keeping emissions down.

[Melted Russian Bombs Needed to Ease Uranium Pinch](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The world's atomic-power plants risk running short of fuel within a decade because uranium suppliers can't build enrichment facilities or recycle Soviet-era warheads fast enough, according to the World Nuclear Association.

[EPA: More engine tests needed on ethanol blends](#)

WASHINGTON – The Environmental Protection Agency said Tuesday it wants more tests to determine if car engines can handle higher concentrations of ethanol in gasoline before it decides whether to increase the maximum blend from 10 to 15 percent.

Still, the agency appeared to be favoring a higher ethanol concentration in gasoline, saying that the congressional mandate for increased ethanol use can't be achieved without allowing higher blends of the renewable fuel, most of which comes from corn.

[Energy-Water Nexus \[PDF\]](#)

Why GAO Did This Study: In response to concerns about the nation's energy dependence on imported oil, climate change, and other issues, the federal government has encouraged the use of biofuels. Water plays a crucial role in all stages of biofuel production—from cultivation of feedstock through its conversion into biofuel. As demand for water from various sectors increases and places additional stress on already constrained supplies, the effects of expanded biofuel production may need to be considered.

[Biofuel optimism waning?](#)

LONDON (UPI) -- Executives at supermajor Royal Dutch Shell are pulling back on their optimism for certain biofuels while others look to batteries as a way to cut emissions.

Biofuels made from corn and other sources were lauded as a way to cut greenhouse gas emissions. A link to rising food prices, however, and a net increase in greenhouse gas emissions, in part because of deforestation, are leading researchers to search for alternatives.

[Healthy, organic and cheap school lunches? Order up](#)

The federal government pays, on average, \$2.68 per child per meal – and most food advocates say that simply isn't enough. A few insist it can't be done for less than \$5.

So it's big news when someone tries, even on a small scale, to feed kids well for under \$3 a pop.

For the first time, a small, privately held start-up is pushing to do just that: producing what are by all accounts fresh, healthful, all-natural school meals for just under \$3 apiece. Starting with just one school in spring 2006, Revolution Foods has quietly grown year by year and now delivers about 45,000 breakfasts, lunches and snacks daily to 235 public and private schools in California, Colorado and the District of Columbia .

[Food, like charity, should begin at home](#)

Just suppose that it's more important for us to go four-wheeling and ski-dooing and to build dangerous oil pipelines from one of the world's worst environmental catastrophes, the Alberta Tar Sands, than it is to try to prevent climate Armageddon.

Just suppose that it's more important to us to drive monster trucks and to scamper around the globe for packaged holidays than it is to conserve fuel for food production.

We assume we're the favoured generation, the ones who deserve it all! Who can argue

with us? We've got the money and the means. Further, our growth-addicted economy and media are busily conditioning the next generation to expect the same extravagant privileges.

[Transition mission](#)

Later this month Rob Hopkins and colleagues will publish a detailed sustainable living plan for the Devon town of Totnes - the first of a wave of so-called "Transition Town" plans that are being researched and drawn up in 250 other locations in the UK, the US, Sweden and elsewhere.

It has taken Hopkins and his collaborators just five years to establish the Transition Town movement. Back in 2004 he was teaching what he thinks was the world's first two-year practical course in sustainable design in Kinsale, west Cork, Ireland, when he and his students started searching for local solutions to the twin problems of climate change and peak oil. Moving with his family to Devon, he then began developing a transition plan for Totnes. This sets out what the 8,000-strong local community needs to do to become sustainable and no longer dependent on oil within 15 to 20 years.

[Gore Discusses Environment, New Book at Eizenstat Lecture](#)

The United States reached "Peak Oil" in 1971, meaning the country has produced less petroleum every year since, he said. The drop in domestic production has forced increased petroleum importation, especially from hostile nations in the Middle East and South America.

"This roller coaster has had an alternating effect on our economy," he said. "It is time for us to learn from our own historical experience."

Gore argued generating our own energy from alternatives sources would improve not only our environment but also our economy and national security.

[Time to prepare for a post-petroleum economy upon us](#)

Since petroleum is a non-renewable resource, what more should we be doing to conserve it and to come to consensus about our priorities for its use?

Mayor Kevin Foy: This October the Town Council passed a resolution acknowledging the need to prepare for a post Peak Oil economy and a new Green Economy. The council has asked the Town Sustainability Committee to work to address both short-term and long-term strategies as a component of the committee's Sustainability Work Plan.

[Invasive carp threatens Great Lakes](#)

Fish and wildlife officials will poison a 6-mile stretch of water near Chicago on Wednesday in a last-ditch effort to keep one of the most dangerous invasive species of fish, the Asian carp, out of the Great Lakes.

The Asian carp, a voracious eater that has no predators and negligible worth as a commercial or sport fish, now dominates the Mississippi and Illinois rivers and their tributaries.

[Climate change special: Twelve days to save the world](#)

If we fail, the story of the Maldives will become our story. A ream of scientific studies now suggest we could be on course for 6°C of global warming this century. It doesn't sound like much at first. But the last time the world warmed by six degrees so fast was at the end of the Permian period, 251 million years ago. The result? Almost everything on earth died.

The only survivors were a few shelled creatures in the oceans, and a pig-like creature that had the land to itself for millions of years. The earth was racked by "hypercanes" – hurricanes so strong they even left their mark on the ocean floor. Oxygen levels in the atmosphere plunged to 15 per cent; low enough to leave any fast-moving animal gasping for breath. These six degrees of separation stand between us and a planet we do not recognise and cannot live on.

[Climategate Proves Sunlight Best Reply to Skeptics](#)

Public trust demands that this scientific debate be carried out in the light of day -- even when doing so means that bad science is trumpeted by the opponents of climate action.

One of the papers Jones questioned, for example, was so flawed that after its 2003 publication in *Climate Research*, the resulting furor led to the resignations of half the journal's editorial board. By the time the paper had been discredited by other scientists, the noisiest climate skeptic in the U.S. Senate, James Inhofe of Oklahoma, had already held a hearing to publicize it. Even today, contrarian Web sites continue to tout its specious claim that the 20th century wasn't particularly warm.

Jones and his colleagues talked about withholding information because they believed, based on bitter experience, that the skeptics who sought their data would cherry-pick their work for misleading "proof" that climate change was overblown. The irony is that by talking about withholding data, they ended up giving those skeptics a brand-new argument against them.

[Target practice in Copenhagen](#)

Climate-change skeptics are barking up the wrong smokestack. The shell game being played isn't with the science, it's with the solutions -- specifically, the carbon emissions targets that enlightened world leaders are pledging to meet. That's where the numbers don't add up.

[Copenhagen Lures CEOs Seeking Certainty on Climate-Change Rules](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Deutsche Bank AG Vice Chairman Caio Koch-Weser says he will attend global climate talks in Copenhagen to push for clarity in how the world reduces greenhouse-gas emissions.

"Transparency, longevity and certainty" are what the clients of Germany's biggest bank want most in a United Nations accord, Koch-Weser said in an interview. "A strong deal is essential to create the rules, price signals and risk-return incentives that business needs."

[Brazil Wants Limits on Tropical Trees for CO2 Credits](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Brazil, whose Amazonia rainforest is the biggest in the world, wants a new climate agreement to limit the use of forests to slow global warming, putting a crimp on investors hoping to create carbon credits from trees.

[UN official calls for funds for climate change](#)

NAIROBI, Kenya – Developing countries will need tens of billions of dollars each year to cope with the effects of climate change such as floods and drought, the global head of the U.N.'s development arm said.

About 100 world leaders will be in Copenhagen next week for a summit on global warming, and the U.N. climate chief, Yvo de Boer, has told reporters that rich countries "must put at least \$10 billion a year on the table."

[Europe Bypassed on Climate Summit](#)

BRUSSELS — No political entity has pushed harder for the Copenhagen conference on climate change to succeed than the European Union.

But just days before the opening of the United Nations-sponsored meeting, the Europeans have been largely pushed to the sidelines, watching as the world's two largest emitters of greenhouse gases, China and the United States, seek to set the rules of the game.

[Australia's Parliament defeats global warming bill](#)

SYDNEY — Australia's plans for an emissions trading system to combat global warming were scuttled Wednesday in Parliament, handing a defeat to a government that had hoped to set an example at international climate change talks next week.

[Mexico to pledge halving emissions by 2050](#)

MEXICO CITY — During crunch talks in Copenhagen next week, Mexico will propose to slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2050 so long as it receives international aid, officials said Tuesday.

The second-largest economy in Latin America after Brazil also aims to reduce emissions from the heat-trapping gases by six to seven percent by 2012 "if we have the necessary technology and financing," Environment Minister Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada told reporters.

[Ontario inches closer to cap and trade plan](#)

TORONTO (Reuters) – The Canadian province of Ontario took steps toward a cap and trade program on Tuesday that will allow the country's manufacturing heartland to cut industrial emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Starting in 2010, Ontario said industrial facilities that release 25,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gases will have to report their emission data to the government and public.

[South Korea in dilemma over gas emissions cut: minister](#)

SEOUL — South Korea is caught in a dilemma between its promise to drastically cut greenhouse gas emissions and mounting concerns that the move will only benefit business rival China, a minister said Tuesday.

Knowledge Economy Minister Choi Kyung-Hwan also said there were fears that energy-intensive local companies such as steel firms and automakers would relocate overseas to avoid tougher curbs on emissions.

[India Faces 'Tremendous Pressure' on Carbon Cuts at Copenhagen](#)

(Bloomberg) -- India may set a goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid isolation at the climate talks in Copenhagen next week after the U.S. and China, the

world's biggest polluters, announced plans.

India may follow China's example and unveil a target to slow its emissions growth, Siddharth Pathak, an adviser to Greenpeace, said by telephone in New Delhi today.

[Farmers could fight climate change: UN food body](#)

ROME (AFP) – The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation said on Tuesday farming could offer a cost-effective way of cutting greenhouse emissions, but had been "largely excluded" from next week's Copenhagen summit.

Agriculture contributes 14 percent of the world's greenhouse gases and is in a position to make a significant contribution to reducing emissions, particularly in developing nations, the FAO said in a statement.

[Global warming threatens food supply: Vietnam](#)

HANOI (AFP) – Vietnam, the world's second-biggest rice exporter, said Wednesday it needs help to safeguard the world's food supply from the consequences of global warming.

"The rice bowl of Vietnam will be severely affected" without action, Nguyen Khac Hieu, deputy director general of the government's climate change agency, told reporters before key global climate talks next week in Copenhagen.

"It's not only for Vietnam's sake but also for the world's food safety," said Hieu, calling for help to enable the country to adapt.



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