



Drumbeat: December 4, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on December 4, 2009 - 9:15am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Oil running out faster than admitted](#)

When Winston Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty 98 years ago he made a pivotal reform that assured the British navy's dominance of the waves during World War One.

The British fleet had been powered entirely by Welsh coal until 1911, a fuel that forced long and tiresome refuelling stops that forced warships into port and away from battle.

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He found one in oil. Fifty one years after a crazy Yankee known as Colonel Edwin Drake found black gold in Pennsylvania, Winston Churchill converted his fleet from coal to oil, a step that changed war, peace and business for the rest of the 20th century.

Nearly a hundred years later the stuff is showing signs of running out.

ic, and young people in particular, will need to get involved in a major way.

[Mexican Authorities Slash 2010 Budget For Oil Field Development](#)

The Mexican government has stated its intention to reduce the funds allocated to state owned Petróleos Mexicanos for development of the Chicontepec oil field by 63%. The budgetary cut makes the future of the underperforming project increasingly bleak. Disillusioned with poor results, execution and technological limitations, lawmakers have reduced next year's budget for the project to \$1.61 billion, down from \$4.4 billion allocated for 2009.

[Mexico Pemex May Sell Net \\$3 Billion of Debt in 2010](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos Mexicanos, the state-owned oil company, may sell a net \$3 billion worth of debt next year as it seeks external financing to increase oil exploration.

['Nigeria shake-up will open doors'](#)

Nigeria's controversial oil reform bill is likely to make it easier for more foreign oil companies to compete for lucrative oil and gas contracts in Africa's biggest energy producer, a top industry official said.

[Qatar Says 'Gas OPEC' to Discuss Unstable Gas Price](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The Gas Exporting Countries Forum meeting next week will discuss ways of stabilizing natural-gas prices, said Qatar's Oil Minister Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah.

Natural gas futures for delivery at the Henry Hub in Louisiana have fallen 19 percent this year to \$4.566 a million British thermal units on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Prices sank as low as \$2.409 in September.

[Petrobras to Expand \\$174.4 Billion Investment Plan](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleo Brasileiro SA, Brazil's state-controlled oil producer, plans to expand its \$174.4 billion investment program as it develops offshore fields in the so-called pre-salt region.

[It's Not a "Buy and Hold Forever" Sector](#)

TER: But if we're going from under \$80 today to back over \$100, that's way more than inflation. Isn't that a supply problem?

RW: If supplies get used up, if the economies in Asia hang on, and if the U.S. doesn't get much worse than it is, we should probably get up to \$100. This will be very difficult to evaluate because the International Agency for Oil and Energy—the group that measures oil—is forecasting U.S. demand for next year to go down 1%. Supplies being where they are, there will probably be a cap on price. But if you're looking at a situation where inflation steps up considerably, the price could easily go from \$80 to \$100 based on inflation alone because the dollar is worth less. It's not that the fundamentals are that much different; it's just that the dollar is cheaper. December is historically the worst and weakest month for the U.S. Dollar.

[The Fragile Recovery Of The Oil Services Sector](#)

The oil services industry's third-quarter results were respectable considering the speed and violence of the downturn over the last year. In most cases, we saw some sequential improvement in North American revenue and margins, thanks to a 13% sequential gain in the North American rig count and a seasonal bounce in Canadian activity. Overall, we believe the North American recovery is very fragile, as near-term oil demand and

natural gas supply issues can easily shatter it. Internationally, we also saw the expected margin deterioration, which was led by contract resets, and a challenging Mexican market. Mexico was particularly weak this quarter, as flooding in the Northern and Central regions of the Chicontepec field reduced activity levels as well as the number of highly profitable well completions. In addition, Pemex is considering reworking both existing contracts and future awards to modify the services companies' incentives toward boosting oil production after the Chicontepec field badly missed annual production targets. After reviewing the industry's third-quarter reports, we present our key takeaways.

[Manifa measures designed to minimize environmental impact](#)

DHAHRAN -- Saudi Aramco has issued an overview of measures taken to safeguard the marine habitats close to its shallow-water Manifa field development in the Arabian Gulf.

Manifa is the company's largest offshore project to date, designed to deliver 900,000 b/d of heavy crude, 900 MMcf/d of associated gas, and 65,000 b/d of condensate. Development started in 2006, and is due to be completed in 2015. By mid-2009, Aramco adds, all platform jackets had been installed. The project also involves constructing a 41-km (25-mi) causeway, with 27 artificial drilling islands.

Manifa Bay contains extensive algal habitats and thick beds of sea-grass that provide a primary source of nutrition for marine life. It is also the habitat of pearl oysters, the hamour fish, crabs, dolphins, shrimp, and sea turtles, including the endangered Hawksbill turtle.

[API: Jobs Summit Is Missed Opportunity to Engage Offshore Industry](#)

The Obama administration has missed an opportunity at its jobs summit by not actively engaging the oil and natural gas industry – an industry that supports 9.2 million American jobs and is poised to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs with the right public policies.

[Palm Oil Jumps to Six-Month High as El Nino Threatens Supply](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Palm oil climbed to the highest level in six months after analysts predicted prices may increase 20 percent in the first half of next year as drought disrupts supplies and demand grows in China and India, the biggest users.

[Cornucopian Man vs. Biophysical Reality](#)

Summary: In this captivating tale, we accompany Cornucopian Man and his faithful side-kick, Economics-Professor Boy, as they battle the confidence-destroying forces of Biophysical Reality. In today's adventure, our heroes try to stop the nefarious villains

from spilling pure Truth onto (gasp!) the front page of the New York Times. It's a riveting story rife with rollicking adventure, knee-slapping humor, and some 'deep thought' to boot! -- So please join Cornucopian Man as he fights to save "Businessssss aaaaaaaaas USUAL!!!!!"

[Escaping The Gift Trap](#)

Many people have come to dread the approach of Christmas, with its stress, crowded malls, and maxed-out credit cards.

In the book *Hundred Dollar Holiday* (Simon & Schuster, 1998, \$15), Bill McKibben makes the case for a more joyful Christmas. And, believe it or not, a more joyful Christmas doesn't involve buying more presents - actually, it involves buying fewer.

[John Michael Greer: Hagbard's Law](#)

It's instructive to compare the resulting brouhaha to the parallel, if much less heavily publicized, debate over peak oil. The peak oil scene has certainly seen its share of overblown apocalyptic claims, and it certainly has its own breed of deniers, who insist that the free market, the march of progress, or some other conveniently unquantifiable factor will make infinite material expansion on a finite planet less of an oxymoron than all logic and evidence suggests it will be. Still, most of the action in the peak oil scene nowadays is happening in the wide spectrum between these two extremes. We've got ecogeeks pushing alternative energy, Transition Towners building local communities, "preppers" learning survival skills, and more; even if most of these ventures miss their mark, as doubtless most of them will, the chance of finding useful strategies for a difficult future goes up with each alternative explored.

[Ten years later, did it even matter?](#)

"Expensive oil may mean the end of life as we know it, but maybe that life wasn't particularly great to start with," Rubin writes. "Smog-congested cities, global warming, oil slicks and other forms of environmental degradation are all part of the legacy of cheap oil."

When exactly the serious oil shocks Rubin warns of will occur is unclear, but what is clear is that the trade advantages of cheap labour in developing nations will disappear when transportation costs start to skyrocket.

[State looks at mileage tax to fund roads](#)

The Texas Department of Transportation is starting to explore a driver mileage tax as an alternative to the state gasoline tax, in the face of dwindling highway funds that will

become depleted in 2012.

In late November, the Texas Transportation Commission laid groundwork for a Highway User Fee Exploratory Committee that would begin meeting in March and draft a report by August, a few months before state lawmakers convene.

[Homer Simpson and America's energy problem](#)

Our energy dilemma stirs lots of questions but few solutions. In "Who Turned Out the Lights: Your Guided Tour to the Energy Crisis," published by Harper in October, Scott Bittle and Jean Johnson look for answers that will sustain the country through shifting economic conditions. Bittle is executive editor of PublicAgenda.org. Johnson is a co-founder of PublicAgenda.com.

[Taking the smart road](#)

With one of the largest deployments in North America of smart meters and time-of-use (ToU) rates for all of its customers, Toronto Hydro is a leader in the smart grid evolution -- and that's energizing many of the city's businesses to plug in to all the opportunities the smart grid has to offer, as well as to do their part in energy conservation.

[Energy-saver bulbs hazardous to health'](#)

ISLAMABAD: Environment agencies and experts have expressed serious concern over government's plan to purchase 30 million energy-saver bulbs at higher than market prices and distribute them across the country.

According to them, the energy savers or compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) are not environment-friendly and pose health hazards.

[The Green Car of the Year Is a Diesel. Again.](#)

LOS ANGELES — For the second year in a row, *Green Car Journal* has named a German diesel Green Car of the Year.

The 42-mpg Audi A3 TDI topped a field that included three hybrids and two diesels to take the award presented today at the Los Angeles Auto Show. The judges praised the cars "exceptional fuel economy and low emissions" and hailed it as "stylish" and "fun to drive."

[Big Plans for Ethanol from Algae](#)

BioFields holds the rights to use "direct to ethanol" technology in Mexico. The method, developed and patented by the Algenol company, produces biofuel using hybrid blue-green algae, he explained.

The algae produce ethanol naturally, and the technique optimises the process so it can be done on an industrial scale. The ethanol produced can be mixed with gasoline in varying proportions, helping reduce emissions of greenhouse-effect gases generated by vehicles.

"The great success of this technology is that we found a type of algae that secretes ethanol naturally, saving two industrial steps: fermentation and synthesis into ethanol. This makes each microorganism a mini-factory," Ramírez said.

[Arabs Are More Than Oil, Says Lebanon's IndyACT Before Copenhagen Climate Meeting](#)

In the last week of November activists from the Global League of Activists, IndyACT, carried out a peaceful action in the Annual Conference of the Arab Forum for Environment and Development – AFED in Lebanon, to demand the Arab states for active participation in the United Nations climate negotiations in Copenhagen.

The group based in Beirut, Lebanon, urged members to not to be drawn behind the obstructive oil-rich Arab states in the negotiation process. In response to obstructive measures by Arab states, the group also launched the campaign and website: [You Can't Drink Oil](#).

[Oil running out faster than admitted](#)

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[Budgeting carbon cuts](#)

Local and national governments have only 40 years to plan and build a zero carbon society if the world is to avoid catastrophic global warming, David Knight and Bob Whitmarsh warn.

Climate change and peak oil present planners with an enormous challenge. A national and international response, including some permutation of capping greenhouse gas emissions, carbon taxes and investing in clean energy, needs to be combined with bottom-up local and regional initiatives. Target setting is crucial. But at which targets should planners be aiming?

['Collapse': A documentary about our scary fate](#)

Michael Ruppert looks cornered in a gritty Los Angeles meat locker, ranting to an unseen documentarian and smoking as if there was no tomorrow.

And that's exactly his belief: There will be no tomorrow because of our alarming dependence on oil, which is about to dry up, and because our economic system has become one big pyramid scheme. Electric cars are a smoke screen, clean coal is a joke and ethanol is an even bigger joke. You better start saving organic seeds, because they'll be the real currency when (not if) the apocalypse hits.

*(**Collapse** will begin airing on Time Warner Movies on Demand starting Sunday, Dec. 6.)*

[Small houses go big-time](#)

Tell the truth now. You have a formal dining room but eat at the breakfast nook. The living room with the vaulted ceiling sits empty while everyone piles into the family room. That third bathroom doesn't get visited more than once a week.

There's a lot of space that just doesn't get used, despite the labor and material required to build it and the money you're spending to heat and cool it. Looking at it, of course, is free.

Is that how you should be living?

[Imagining 2020 #4: Green Crude by Pete Fowler](#)

I was very pessimistic until last year about our prospects of weaning off fossil fuels before reaching an irreversible tipping point. Some positive feedback loop would kick in, like higher temperatures releasing trapped methane from arctic permafrost and seafloor sediments. Increased atmospheric methane, about 30 times as potent a greenhouse gas as CO₂, would further raise temperatures. End result? Within a few decades Earth

would be as hot as Venus. The whole of humanity would go the way of the civilisations described by Jared Diamond in Collapse, who could see they were on a track to self destruction but were unable to alter course.

In 2008 I read one of the most positive books ever written; The Singularity Is Near, by Ray Kurzweil. He points out that whichever way you measure the rate of technological change, it accelerates exponentially. Moore's law for instance predicted in 1965 that artificial intelligence would double in complexity and halve in cost every two years. It's held for the last 44 years, and if it continues to hold until 2020, we'll then have machines approaching human intelligence.

[Saudi Arabia's Naimi Says Oil Price 'OK' Near \\$75](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Saudi Arabia, the biggest oil producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, said crude oil prices are satisfactory close to their current level of \$75 a barrel.

Asked whether OPEC should raise production at its Dec. 22 meeting, Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi said: "We still have time, but right now the price is OK, between \$70 and \$80, close to the target, almost \$75."

Inventories of oil "are coming down," he told reporters today in Cairo, before a meeting of Arab petroleum ministers. He declined to comment more on OPEC policy.

[ANALYSIS - OPEC set for no change, oil price holds the key](#)

DUBAI/LONDON (Reuters) - OPEC is expected to hold output steady when it meets in Luanda at the end of this month, rounding off a year of stable production policy and of robust oil prices.

Oil inventories are brimming and any recovery in demand is expected to be slow, but international benchmark U.S. crude futures have more than doubled from just above \$32 a barrel last December to above \$76 now -- roughly the level OPEC has said is high enough for producers and not too high for the still delicate world economy.

"The oil price has not been the cause of surprise for us for some time, so there is really no need for OPEC to surprise the oil market," one OPEC delegate told Reuters.

[ConocoPhillips to Keep Lukoil Stake, Chief Mulva Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- ConocoPhillips, the third-largest U.S. oil company, will keep its stake in OAO Lukoil as it seeks to divest \$10 billion in assets over the next two years.

The Houston-based company's 20 percent stake in Russia's second-largest oil producer

is a “strategic asset” and won’t be sold, Chief Executive Officer Jim Mulva said in an interview at a conference in the Kazakh capital Astana today.

[Nigeria repairs key pipeline for two refineries](#)

BARCELONA (Reuters) - Nigeria has repaired a key pipeline connecting Chevron's Escravos oil and gas fields to two domestic refineries, a senior industry official said on Friday.

[Colonial Pipeline Limits Gasoline Supply Shipments for Cycle 70](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Colonial Pipeline Co., which operates the largest pipeline linking U.S. Gulf Coast refiners and East Coast markets, will limit shipments of gasoline because orders exceed the company’s ability to deliver fuel on time.

The Alpharetta, Georgia-based company issued the requirement, known as an allocation, in a bulletin to shippers for the 70th cycle. The restriction applies to shipments on Colonial pipelines north of Collins, Mississippi.

[Sinopec Says Operations Next Year Will Be ‘Fierce, Arduous’](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China Petroleum & Chemical Corp., the nation’s largest oil refiner, said its operations face risks and uncertainties next year because of volatile global crude prices and rising domestic chemical capacity.

Both the oil products and chemical businesses will face “fierce” competition and the first quarter of next year will be “arduous,” according to a statement today in the online newsletter of parent China Petrochemical Corp.

[China's Sinopec signs 20-year deal with Exxon Mobil to buy Papua New Guinea gas](#)

BEIJING (AP) — State-owned Sinopec Corp. said Friday it has signed a 20-year contract with Exxon Mobil Corp. to buy gas from Papua New Guinea, in the latest of a flurry of foreign deals to secure fuel for China's booming economy.

The liquefied natural gas will come from a project being developed by Exxon Mobil and other investors in Papua New Guinea's central highlands. Sinopec gave no financial details.

[How utilities are just like banks](#)

Just like many UK consumers were offered products to fix tariffs back in 2008 when natural gas prices were much higher — up until 2012 in some cases — so were industrial and commercial players.

Now, according to Nick Campbell, an analyst at energy consultancy Inenco — a firm that advises companies on how to manage their energy exposure — many companies have found themselves stuck with uncompetitive three-year deals fixed back in 2008 when prices were sometimes twice as high.

[Shell Starts Reassessment of New Zealand's Oldest Gas Field](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Royal Dutch Shell Plc, Europe's largest oil company, has sought a formal reassessment of the fuel remaining in New Zealand's oldest gas field.

Shell and partner Todd Energy Ltd. have begun the process to re-determine the field's outstanding reserves, customer Vector Ltd. said in a statement to the New Zealand stock exchange today. Vector has hired an international consultant and the parties will meet Feb. 3 on the issue, the Auckland-based company said.

[Seadrill's West Atlas Condemned, Removal Date Unsure](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Seadrill Ltd., the drilling company founded by billionaire John Fredriksen, said it's unclear how long it will take to remove its fire-damaged West Atlas rig from the Montara field after it was formally condemned.

West Atlas caught fire on Nov. 1 along with PTT Exploration & Production Plc's Montara wellhead platform off the Australian coast. The blaze broke out while trying to plug a leak by pumping heavy mud into the well, according to PTTEP Australasia.

[Valero May Buy Ethanol Plant, Sell Paulsboro Refinery](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Valero Energy Corp., the largest U.S. independent refiner, is looking to buy additional ethanol plants because they provide a good supplement to Valero's business of producing gasoline, diesel and other fuels, Chief Executive Officer Bill Klesse said.

The San Antonio-based company, which bought ethanol plants from bankrupt producer VeraSun Energy Corp. earlier this year, will consider plants that are available at below their replacement cost, Klesse said in an interview at the Platts Global Energy Awards.

[Will fusion fade ... or finally flare up?](#)

Is nuclear fusion the ultimate energy source, or the ultimate pipe dream? Millions upon millions of dollars are being spent to find out which answer is the right one. For some technologies, the answer could come sooner than later. For others, it may be later rather than sooner.

[In uranium we trust](#)

NEW YORK (Fortune) -- With just one more permit from the State of Colorado, Energy Fuels Resources Corporation founder and CEO George Glasier can break ground for the first new U.S. uranium mill since the Cold War.

[Tesla \\$128,500 Electric Car Drives Like Go-Cart on Meth: Review](#)

Of course claims and reality can go off on different paths like Cain and Abel. The Tesla puts out no pollution and will rumble with Porsches off the line, but unlike a second-generation Prius, there are compromises.

Range on my test drive is disappointing. At a full charge of the lithium-ion batteries, the car's digital monitor gives me an expected range of 203 miles, and then begins downgrading that number more quickly than stock in a newspaper conglomerate.

[Pioneering solar-powered plane makes airborne hop](#)

GENEVA (AFP) – The prototype of Solar Impulse, a pioneering Swiss bid to fly around the world on solar power, briefly took off for the first time on Thursday but under battery power, the organisers said.

The high tech single-seater with the wingspan of an Airbus A340 airliner (63.40 metres) made a controlled 400 metre (yard) flight about one metre above the runway at Duebendorf air base near the Swiss city of Zurich, said co-founders Bertrand Piccard and Andre Borschberg.

[Solarfun to build 100 MW solar power plant in China](#)

(Reuters) - Chinese photovoltaic cell maker Solarfun Power Holdings Co Ltd said one of its units had signed an agreement to build a 100 megawatt solar power plant in China.

The company said its wholly owned subsidiary, Jiangsu Linyang Solarfun Co Ltd, had signed an agreement with the government of Jiayuguan City, Gansu Province, to build the plant.

[Wind Power Raises \\$2.3 Billion in Hong Kong](#)

China Longyuan Power Group, the country's largest wind-power producer, raised HK\$17.5 billion (\$2.26 billion) in the world's third-biggest initial public offering by an alternative energy company, Bloomberg News reported.

[Clean Energy May Hire Nomura for 2010 IPO, Double Wind Capacity](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Clean Energy Factory Co., Japan's fourth-biggest wind-farm operator, said it is in talks to hire Nomura Holdings Inc. to manage an initial share sale in late 2010 to help fund a plan to double capacity in five years.

The company known as CEF plans to raise as much as 10 billion yen (\$115 million) and list the shares on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, President Hiroyuki Kamata, 49, said in an interview at his Tokyo office.

[Saudi Corp to Seek Bids for Desalination Plant, Awsat Says](#)

He also said that the plant will produce 2,400 megawatts of electricity and 1.02 million cubic meters of desalinated water when it is finished in 2013, Asharq Al-Awsat reported.

He expects that the initial cost for the project to be around \$9 billion, the newspaper reported.

[Christmas Giving Is 'Orgy of Value Destruction,' Waldfogel Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Christmas is a waste of money because people who give presents overestimate how much recipients will enjoy their offerings, economist Joel Waldfogel said.

"The way we celebrate Christmas around the developed world is with an orgy of value destruction that vaporizes \$25 billion per year," he said in a lecture in London yesterday. "People value the items they receive as gifts 20 percent less per dollar spent than the items they purchase for themselves. These are items that are not well-suited for their tastes."

[Carbon Capitalists Warming to Climate Market Using Derivatives](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Across Uganda, thousands of women warm supper over new, \$8 orange-painted stoves. The clay-and-metal pots burn about two-thirds the charcoal of the

open-fire cooking typical of East Africa, where forests are being chopped down in the struggle to feed the region's 125 million people.

Four thousand miles away, at the Charles Hurst Land Rover dealership in southwest London, a Range Rover Vogue sells for 90,000 pounds (\$151,000). A blue windshield sticker proclaims that the gasoline-powered truck's first 45,000 miles (72,421 kilometers) will be carbon neutral.

That's because Land Rover, official purveyor of 4x4s to Queen Elizabeth II, is helping Ugandans cut their greenhouse gas emissions with those new stoves.

[United Nations to probe climate e-mail leak](#)

LONDON – The United Nations will conduct its own investigation into e-mails leaked from a leading British climate science center in addition to the probe by the University of East Anglia, a senior U.N. climate official said Friday.

[Penn State prof welcomes climate flap inquiry](#)

Mann said he welcomed the inquiry.

"They are just reviewing the facts and (looking) into whether there is any validity to the specious claims, in my view, that are being made," he said in a phone interview Wednesday night. "That's exactly what they should be doing, and I am fully in support of that."

[Climate email mess hits Australia](#)

The Australian data comes in for particular criticism as the programmer discovers World Meteorological Organisation codes are missing, station names overlap and many co-ordinates are incorrect.

At one point the programmer writes about his attempts to make sense of the data. "What a bloody mess," he concludes. In another case, 30 years of data is attributed to a site at Cobar Airport but the frustrated programmer writes: "Now looking at the dates. something bad has happened ... COBAR AIRPORT AWS [automatic weather station] cannot start in 1962, it didn't open until 1993!"

In another he says: "Getting seriously fed up with the state of the Australian data ... so many false references ... so many changes ... bewildering."

[Chill: A reassessment of the global warming theory](#)

In his book *Chill*, natural scientist Peter Taylor, warns that the world is cooling and that solutions proposed at Copenhagen ignore the risks of starvation, resource depletion, threats to ecosystems and a possible return of the Ice Age.

Here he explains his thinking:

Like a magician who fools themselves but not audience, the Anthropomorphic Global Warming (AGW) lobby have identified the wrong problem and the wrong solution. Global cooling threatens disaster for humanity in the developed and developing world alike, yet the media & the scientific consensus ignores this peril.

[Global-Warming Watchdogs to Emit CO2 Gas Equal to 200,000 Cars](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The 17,000 people visiting Denmark for global talks on reducing greenhouse gases will release as much carbon dioxide during the two-week event as about 200,000 U.S. passenger cars do in the period.

[Nepal holds Cabinet meeting at Mount Everest](#)

SYANGBOCHE, Nepal - Nepal's top politicians strapped on oxygen tanks Friday and held a Cabinet meeting amid the frigid, thin air of Mount Everest to highlight the danger global warming poses to glaciers, ahead of next week's international climate change talks.

The government billed the stunt as the world's highest Cabinet meeting. The ministers posed for pictures, signed a commitment to tighten environmental regulations and expand the nation's protected areas, and then quickly flew away.

[Rich / Poor Rift Dents Hopes For U.N. Climate Talks](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - After two years of work, and 12 years after their last attempt, 190 nations gather in Copenhagen from Monday to try to avert dramatic climate change -- what one minister called "the most difficult talks ever embarked upon by humanity."

Already the sheer size of the measures needed, and splits between rich and poor about who should pay, mean that a historic U.N. pact to fight global warming and ease dependence on fossil fuels may be put off in favour of a less binding "declaration."

[Warming rescue plan doomed, report warns](#)

THE world has little chance of avoiding at least two degrees of global warming this century - the projected threshold for unpredictable and accelerated climate changes - if

the emissions targets proposed by rich nations are locked in at next week's Copenhagen summit, an analysis has found.

A report by German-based consultants Climate Analytics says wealthy countries will arrive in Denmark with proposals that would lead to a joint cut in greenhouse gas emissions of between 13 and 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020.

['Adapt or die' becomes mantra against warming](#)

With the world losing the battle against global warming so far, experts are warning that humans need to follow nature's example: Adapt or die.

That means elevating buildings, making taller and stronger dams and seawalls, rerouting water systems, restricting certain developments, changing farming practices and ultimately moving people, plants and animals out of harm's way.



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