



Drumbeat: December 12, 2009

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Degrowth Seminar, Copenhagen Klimaforum09 - Speech by Miguel Valencia](#)

Economists introduced the idea of a world without boundaries and limits, unbridled exploitation of nature and the legitimization of big risk activities; in those days, modern states lost the notions of scale, size, proportion and limit and began to nurture industrial activities, international trade. In that century, the fundamentals of our legal system were created in order to protect pirates, bankers, corporations; and then, science and technology became the most important partners of economy. From this epistemic revolution evolved creeds of our modern thinking; nowadays everybody is deeply involved in only one dimension of life: the economic dimension.

The One Dimensional Man, denounced by Herbert Marcuse in the '60s, is now present everywhere in the world. Techno-scientists presently conduct high risk experiments using nuclear energy, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, robotics, in such a manner "to make humans an endangered species," according to Bill Joy, the great American computer scientist. The global economy has conquered the mind of modern man and commands his life, needs, desires, and beliefs. The idea of scarcity, essential to economic thinking, saturates contemporary thinking. Nowadays, because of economic ideas, multinationals and states face a Shakespearean dilemma "to grow or not to be" -- as economy implements the ugliness, gigantism, and accelerated change that now subdue the modern world.

of the Middle East and the lawless Horn of Africa.

"We are a failed state," said Abubakr Badeeb, a leading member of the opposition Socialist Party. "Yemen can no longer protect the rights of its citizens."

[Analysis: Jackups are Backbone of Red Sea Drilling](#)

As early as the 1860s, the Egyptian government began drilling for oil. In 1911, Shell started up operations at the Hurghada field on the Red Sea. Today, drilling activity is mostly confined to the shallow waters of the region as jackup rigs are actively drilling at multiple locations in the region, but there are no floaters currently deployed in the region. The jackups deployed in the region today are all independent leg cantilever units and most have a maximum water depth capability of 250 feet or more.

[PIW Again Ranks Saudi Aramco No. 1](#)

NEW YORK -- Petroleum Intelligence Weekly (PIW) has released its annual list of the rankings of the world's 50 largest oil companies, and in what has become a 21-year streak, Saudi Aramco is No. 1.

That hold on the top spot seems unlikely to loosen, as mega-projects in a 2-million-barrel-per-day crude-oil-capacity expansion program are at or near completion. On top of that, expansion continues in the refining, gas and petrochemical sectors, according to a latest report carried by Saudi Aramco's Web-site.

[The Missing Element: Why an aging Canadian nuclear reactor could keep U.S. patients from getting the care they need](#)

The National Research Universal (NRU) reactor in Chalk River, Ontario, supplies about one-third of the world's supply and about half of the U.S. supply of the molybdenum isotope that decays to form technetium. The reactor, built in 1957, is operated by the government-owned company Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. The reactor was first shut down for safety only a year after it opened, when a nuclear fuel rod caught fire, and it has suffered sporadic accidents and outages ever since. In 2007, after the reactor was shut down for a safety upgrade, the Canadian government, due to fears of an isotope shortage, ordered it open again over the objections of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

Canada's Natural Resources Ministry, which oversees the nuclear power industry, never intended for the NRU reactor to still be operating. Construction of two new reactors, known as MAPLE 1 and 2, began in 1996 after it became clear the NRU reactor was nearing the end of its useful life. The MAPLES were supposed to have become operational in 2000, but after numerous construction delays and unresolved safety issues and hundreds of millions of dollars spent, they were finally scuttled by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government in 2006.

[Lack of cooking gas threatens daily life](#)

Gaza City: The gas shortage in Gaza has grown ever more dire, as filling stations for cooking fuel have been closed for over a month, according to Mahmoud Al Shawwa, who heads the committee to oversee gas stations in Gaza.

"At least 60 per cent of the bakeries here have run out of cooking gas," he said.

[Mexican company quantifies lithium](#)

The newly discovered lithium deposit in Mexico holds at least 143,140 tonnes of the metal used in laptop and electric vehicles batteries.

[Double digit economic growth and empty plates](#)

The economic trend in Ethiopia has got different views from the economic analysis and claims by the government. At a time where economic growth claims are diminished by looming famine, Ethiopian government officials are trying to hide the facts on the ground as millions of starving Ethiopians could not afford staving off hunger on a daily basis.

[Authors say climate crisis a perfect storm for disaster](#)

"Planet Earth, creation, the world in which civilization developed, the world with climate patterns that we know and stable shorelines, is in imminent peril. The urgency of the situation crystallized only in the past few years. We now have clear evidence of the crisis.... The startling conclusion is that continued exploitation of all fossil fuels on Earth threatens not only the other millions of species on the planet but also the survival of humanity itself -and the timetable is shorter than we thought."

That opening paragraph of James Hansen's book tells the danger of climate change on Earth. The rest of the book gives scientific proof to his prediction and offers some ways out of the crisis, if humanity acts fast enough. He is the scientist who first brought global warming to international attention in the 1980s, and is a Columbia University professor and head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

[Thelma, Louise and Six Degrees](#)

I've got to stop and wonder whether comfort and distraction have been confused with joy, fulfillment and meaning. I acknowledge that it's possible to find moments of comfort and happiness even in prison. That doesn't mean we're not in prison. I view this as our deepest denial, the denial of the truth of our own life experience, the denial kept in rigid place by our desperate story of The American Way. As David Edwards says in his interview with Derrick Jensen,

What prison could be more secure than one we're convinced is "the world," where the boundaries of action and thought are assumed to be, not the limits of the permissible, but the limits of the possible? Democratic society, as we know it, is the ultimate prison, because who's going to try to escape from a situation of apparent freedom? It follows, then, that we must be happy, because we can do whatever we want.

[Canada fiercely opposes proposal to extend Kyoto](#)

Canada's Copenhagen nightmare may be coming true.

A draft proposal published at the climate-change summit Friday for the countries in the Kyoto Protocol, the only international greenhouse-gas reduction treaty, calls for five years to be added to Kyoto, taking it to 2017. Canada fiercely resists any extension of the treaty.

[Iraq awards oil deals, but no boon for U.S. invaders](#)

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - The United States spent blood and treasure on an Iraq invasion critics said was for oil, but U.S. oil majors were largely absent from an Iraqi auction of oil deals snapped up instead by Russian, Chinese and other firms.

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[Iran Needs Up to 15 Nuclear Plants - Foreign Minister](#)

MANAMA (Reuters) - Iran needs up to 15 nuclear plants to generate electricity, its foreign minister said on Saturday, underlining Tehran's determination to press ahead with a programme the West suspects is aimed at making bombs.

Manouchehr Mottaki, addressing a security conference in Bahrain, also cast further doubt on a U.N.-drafted nuclear fuel deal meant to allay international concern about the Islamic Republic's atomic ambitions.

"First I think we could just totally abandon the whole thing or we could propose

something more moderate, a kind of middle way ... Iran has done that," he said.

[Iraq oil capacity 'to reach 12m barrels per day](#)

Iraq's oil capacity could reach 12 million barrels per day (bpd) in six years, the country's oil minister says.

Hussein al-Shahristani told reporters in Baghdad that oil producers would not necessarily operate at full capacity, but would take into account demand.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, has a capacity of 12.5m bpd.

[FACTBOX - Fees, output targets agreed in Iraq's oil auctions](#)

(Reuters) - Iraq has awarded international companies with contracts to develop 10 of its oilfields after conducting two rounds of bidding in its first oil auctions since the 2003 U.S invasion.

The 20-year service contracts pay oil companies set fees for each barrel of oil produced.

The combined plateau production targets for all contracts in the pipeline is 11.14 million barrels per day (bpd). Current Iraqi oil production is around 2.5 million bpd.

[Crude calculations: Will a new auction of fields to foreign firms get Iraq's oil flowing freely?](#)

A COUNTRY with a shaky economy that sits on huge oil reserves would usually be reckoned wise to pump as much as possible out of the ground as quickly as it can. Western oil companies, desperate for crude that is cheap to produce and refine, should be ready and waiting to help. But arranging such a deal in Iraq is no easy matter. Iraq's second round of auctions for the rights to develop its oil fields concluded on Saturday December 12th. The first round in June, a televised extravaganza, resulted in the embarrassing outcome that just one of the eight contracts on the block found a taker. By the middle of the day on Friday two big oil fields had attracted winning bids from foreign companies.

[Alaska revenue official says oil future stable](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Prices for Alaska's main money source — oil — have stabilized following a volatile year, and a state official predicted a smaller drop in revenues than expected.

"What a difference a year makes," said Revenue Commissioner Pat Galvin, who released

the 110-page revenue forecast.

Galvin on Thursday said oil prices are expected to be in the \$67-per-barrel range in the 2010 fiscal year that ends June 30.

[China's Hu arrives in energy-rich Central Asia](#)

Chinese President Hu Jintao arrived in Kazakhstan on Saturday, the first leg of a regional visit which highlights Beijing's growing influence over Central Asia's strategic energy resources.

[China, Kazakhstan unveil natural gas route tapping into Central Asia's energy riches](#)

ALMATY, Kazakhstan (AP) — The leaders of Kazakhstan and China jointly unveiled Saturday the Kazakh section of a natural gas pipeline that will tap into Central Asia's vast energy riches and loosen Russia's influence over the region.

The pipeline, due to come online in days, is part of China's efforts to secure energy supplies for its booming economy.

The 1,300-kilometer Kazakhstan-China pipeline is the Central Asian nation's first export route that completely bypasses Russia.

[A Future That Looks Smarter](#)

When the Green Energy series was launched six months ago, the goal was to inform Torontonians of Toronto Hydro's many initiatives in conservation and operations improvement, as well as of the countless efforts of their fellow city dwellers in the move toward energy efficiency and a greener environment. As 2009 comes to an end, the National Post spoke with Anthony Haines, Toronto Hydro Corp.'s president and CEO, about the future and what the smart grid will bring to the city in the new year.

[Fitchburg protest to mark ice storm anniversary](#)

FITCHBURG, Mass.—Protesters are planning a demonstration outside the Fitchburg offices of Unitil Corp. on the anniversary of last year's deadly ice storm.

The protest is scheduled Saturday and is expected to draw area lawmakers.

Last month, the state Department of Public Utilities issued a report criticizing Unitil's performance during last year's ice storm that left thousands in Ashby, Fitchburg, Lunenburg, and Townsend without power for around two weeks.

[Brazil to Pitch Clean Cane Fuel to Schwarzenegger at UN Talks](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Brazil's ethanol makers are looking for a high-profile ally at the climate talks in Copenhagen to promote the use of biofuel made from sugar cane: California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

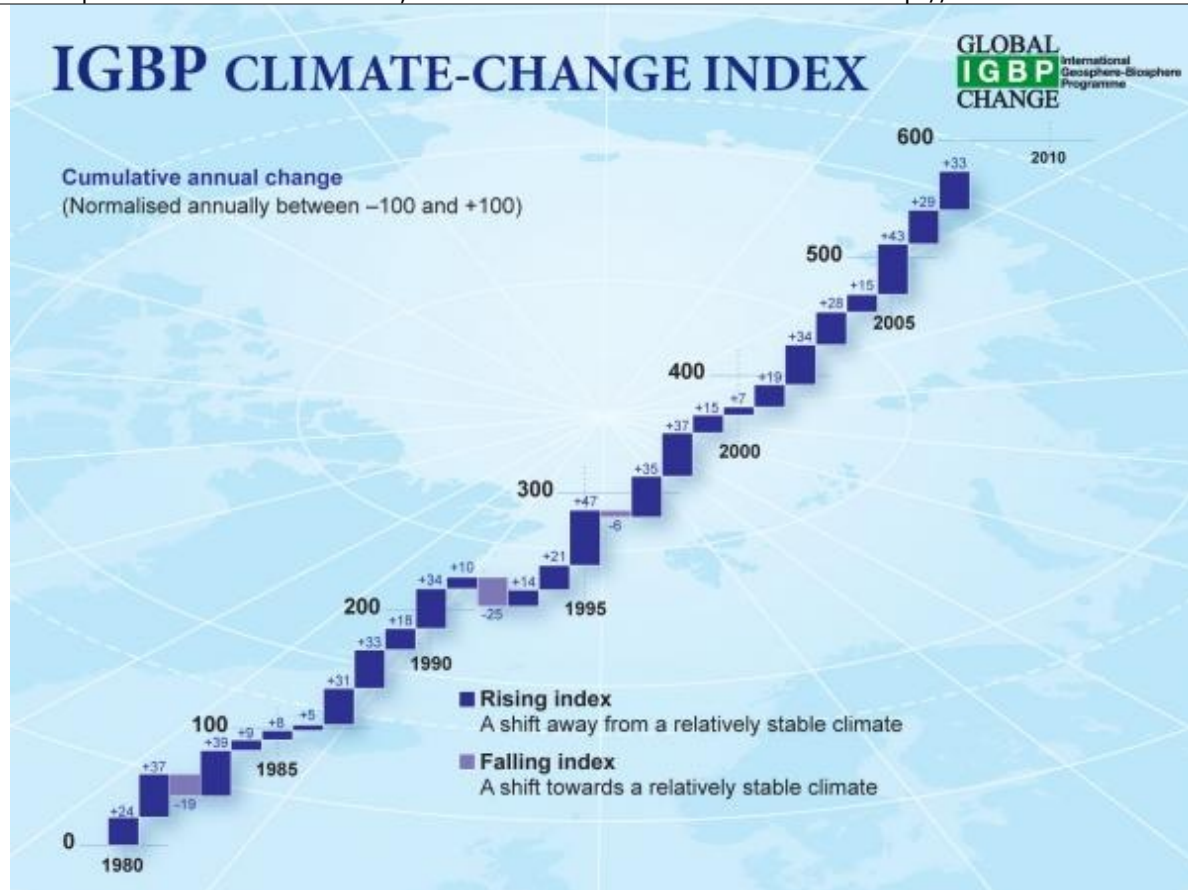
[A Hot Future for Geothermal](#)

Capturing energy from the earth's heat is pretty easy pickin's for geologically-active areas of the world like Iceland, Indonesia, and Chile. In some locations, hot fluids are so near the earth's surface that heat from naturally-occurring hot fluids can be directly circulated through buildings for heating. Iceland, in particular, takes advantage of this low-hanging energy fruit.

However, in most areas of the world where geothermal energy is captured, the heat is used to generate electricity.

Unlike some of the more common alternative energies — hydro, solar, and wind — geothermal is impervious to weather conditions. This independence means it provides excellent base load electricity.

[Dow Jones Index for Climate Change](#)



ScienceDaily — Some people still question whether Earth's climate is changing as rapidly and profoundly as the majority of climate scientists suggest. But, what if the complexity of the Earth's climate were distilled down to one number, in the same way that the Dow Jones Index condenses volumes of data into a single figure? What, then, would be the general trend?

The IGBP Climate-Change Index is a first attempt to do just that. It brings together key indicators of global change: carbon dioxide, temperature, sea level and sea ice. The index gives an annual snapshot of how the planet's complex systems -- the ice, the oceans, the land surface and the atmosphere -- are responding to the changing climate. The index rises steadily from 1980 -- the earliest date the index has been calculated. The change is unequivocal, it is global, and, significantly, it is in one direction. The reason for concern becomes clear: in just 30 years we are witnessing major planetary-scale changes.

[The real inconvenient truth:](#) *The whole world needs to adopt China's one-child policy*

The "inconvenient truth" overhanging the UN's Copenhagen conference is not that the climate is warming or cooling, but that humans are overpopulating the world.

A planetary law, such as China's one-child policy, is the only way to reverse the disastrous global birthrate currently, which is one million births every four days.

The world's other species, vegetation, resources, oceans, arable land, water supplies and atmosphere are being destroyed and pushed out of existence as a result of humanity's

soaring reproduction rate.

Ironically, China, despite its dirty coal plants, is the world's leader in terms of fashioning policy to combat environmental degradation, thanks to its one-child-only edict.

[China's November Crude-Oil Processing Rises to Record](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China's crude-oil processing volume reached a record in November, driven by economic recovery in the world's second-biggest energy user.

Refining volume climbed 21 percent from a year earlier to 33.4 million metric tons, or 8.1 million barrels a day, according to China Mainland Marketing Research Co., which compiles data for the government.

A \$586 billion stimulus package, record bank lending and incentives for purchases of cars and home appliances are supporting industrial production and boosting fuel consumption. China's factory output grew 19 percent in November from a year earlier, the biggest increase since June 2007, the statistics bureau said today.

The heaviest snowfalls in six decades in China also helped increase crude processing volumes last month, said Gordon Kwan, head of energy research at Mirae Asset Securities.

[Oil below \\$70 for first time since October](#)

Prices tumbled as the dollar gained strength and investors took a second look at paltry demand figures in the West.

The declines came even as the International Energy Agency predicted Friday that global oil demand will rise more than previously anticipated next year.

[Oil-Industry Lobbying Group Cuts Staff, Cites Push to Modernize](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The American Petroleum Institute, the oil industry's biggest lobbying group, let go 15 percent of its 250-person staff in an effort to modernize advocacy efforts, said Jack Gerard, the group's president.

The cuts of about 40 jobs will come from departments including lobbying, media relations, research and training, Gerard said in a phone interview yesterday. He said he will replace some of those whose "skill sets" are no longer in line with API's mission with more technology-savvy staffers.

[Lackluster start for Iraq oil field auction](#)

BAGHDAD - Iraq's hope of luring international oil companies with its mother lode of oil met with mixed results Friday, with only two deals struck as security fears appeared to weigh heavily on the country's second oil auction this year.

Of the eight fields on offer in Friday's bidding, only those located in the relatively stable southern region of Iraq attracted heavy interest, while five located in more restive regions were withdrawn and a sixth field drew only one bid. In all, 15 fields are being offered in the two-day round, covering roughly a third of Iraq's 115 billion in proven reserves of crude.

[Dragon Oil Says Planned Acquisition by ENOC Won't Take Place](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Dragon Oil Plc said the resolution to become a wholly owned subsidiary of Emirates National Oil Co., Dubai's government-owned refiner, was not passed by the required majority at a shareholders' meeting today.

ENOC had pressed ahead with a 1.1 billion-pound (\$1.8 billion) takeover of Dragon Oil, even as the emirate struggles to rebound from a debt crisis. The refiner, which owns 51.5 percent of Dragon, will drop the purchase and the company will remain a majority-owned subsidiary of ENOC, Dragon said.

[Obama's Troops surge, The Greater Game Part III](#)

China and Russia are emerging powers competing with US, and then there is Iran delicious minerals filled state but not obedient to US and west.

World's second largest oil and gas reserves are present in Central Asia, keeping Peak oil in mind, race is for oil reserves. In words of one of my friend, Mid East and Central Asia are two Weights of Power Dumbbell, where as Pakistan and Afghanistan is the rod joining the weights. Whoever holds this dumbbell holds it through Pakistan and Afghanistan. Whoever holds this dumbbell is the most Powerful in the world.

[Whatever Happened to Nazi Synthetic Gas and Oil Technology? Scarcity Scams Examined](#)

Still even if abiotic oil has little potential for future needs, there was the technology that existed in the early 1930s that allowed the Germans to produce its own synthetic gas and oil.

What happened to it?

[Other Voices: The World Energy Outlook and you](#)

We've been seeing increased coverage of peak oil in newspapers, magazines, and online in the past few years. Now, in late 2009, there have been some brand new indications that we're already farther down the rabbit hole than we thought.

Let's back up for a second. What is peak oil, what is the world energy outlook, and what do they mean to you, your business, and your family?

[The Cuts Won't Work- 2nd Green New Deal Report](#)

The second problem is that the first glimmers of recovery lead to a sharp increase in commodity prices – especially oil and industrial metals – and these in turn sow the seeds of the next downturn. Oil prices have doubled since the start of 2009 amid growing evidence that supplies of crude cannot keep up with demand. In the first Green New Deal report, we warned that the financial collapse was part of a triple crisis that had to be addressed. Peak oil and climate change were the other two legs of the stool; neither has been addressed.

[Don't let capitalism cost the earth](#)

People are right to worry about emissions of greenhouse gases by big business and the threat they pose to the future of the planet. However, climate change is not happening on account of 'human nature,' because people are naturally greedy. Growth is not the problem. The problem is unplanned capitalist growth, growth driven by narrow selfish profit calculation and unconcerned with any wider considerations. The problem is capitalism.

[Water, water anywhere?](#)

You've heard of peak oil, but what about peak water? A new book by Scottish journalist Alexander Bell entitled *Peak Water* (Luath Press) was launched in Dublin recently. Bell argues that peak water occurs when a region starts to extract more water than nature can replenish. It doesn't matter that there is lots of fresh water on the planet but that there will be very little in places where people live.

[Carbon-Permit Revenue Would Go to U.S. Taxpayers Under Measure](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Revenue from selling carbon-dioxide emission permits would be divided among U.S. taxpayers, and Wall Street companies would be barred from trading in carbon markets under legislation proposed today.

[AP IMPACT: Science not faked, but not pretty](#)

LONDON – E-mails stolen from climate scientists show they stonewalled skeptics and discussed hiding data — but the messages don't support claims that the science of global warming was faked, according to an exhaustive review by The Associated Press.

[7 Tips for Covering Climate Change](#)

So in this super-heated political environment, how should journalists go about reporting on this topic? You can find many answers in a new online learning course offered by Poynter's News University, Covering Climate Change. Here are a few tips, some taken directly from the course, and others in response to recent events.

[U.S., China trade barbs at Copenhagen](#)

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei Friday taunted the United States' chief negotiator, who had earlier expressed determination that Washington would not subsidize China as part of deal to send aid from developed nations to poor countries struggling to meet greenhouse gas emissions curb targets.

"I don't want to say the gentleman is ignorant," He told reporters, referring to Todd Stern. "But I think he lacked common sense or he's extremely irresponsible."

He's comments came after Stern had said, "I don't envision public funds -- certainly not from the United States -- going to China. That's just life, and the real world."

[Scientist: Copenhagen cuts 'clearly not enough'](#)

COPENHAGEN — A key scientist says greenhouse emissions cuts on the table at U.N. climate talks are "clearly not enough" to assure the world it will head off dangerous global warming.

Thomas Stocker, head of the U.N. scientific group studying the link between emissions and temperatures, told reporters Saturday meeting the required target "may be too much to ask at this stage."



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