



Drumbeat: December 22, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on December 22, 2009 - 9:10am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[As US Crude-Oil Reserve Fills, Questions Abound](#)

In coming days, a 500,000-barrel delivery of crude oil will push the U.S. government's emergency stockpile to capacity. What happens to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve beyond that is far from clear.

Federal law passed in 2005 requires expansion of the rainy-day reserve by 38% from near 727 million barrels now to one billion barrels of capacity. That was enacted when the government forecasted a decades-long surge in oil demand requiring steadily rising imports.

The Energy Department in 2005 saw U.S. oil use rising 40% to 28 million barrels a day in 2025 from 20 million barrels a day in 2003, with imports meeting 68% of demand. Now, DOE sees oil use stable at 19 million barrels a day through 2035 and biofuels contributing the needed four million barrels a day of extra fuel. Improved fuel mileage and increased efficiencies will cut reliance on imported oil to about 45%. That suggests the current size of the reserve would provide adequate insurance against supply disruptions until 2035.

"There is no doubt that the Obama administration does not have an interest in spending capital on an expansion of the facilities," said John Shages, an Energy Department SPR official for 22 years before retiring two years ago. "Even if SPR had empty capacity...there is no way that the Congress would appropriate funds for oil acquisition. So expansion is out for the foreseeable future," he said.

east 40 years.

Large companies with electricity demand above 5 megawatts per month and apartment complexes with demand exceeding 2 megawatts a month must reduce their usage by 20 percent from the same period a year earlier or face fines, according to a government resolution published today in the Official Gazette.

Venezuela began to ration water and electricity in November after a drought caused by the El Nino weather pattern cut water levels to almost record lows in reservoirs and rivers that power hydroelectric plants. President Hugo Chavez is asking residents to take 3-minute showers and accept rolling blackouts to prevent a total collapse of the electricity system.

[Study: Risks, Benefits to Israel of Increasing Reliance on Natural Gas](#)

Israel is running out of capacity to meet its electricity demands. Its power grid is not connected to that of any other nation, making it an electricity "island." Partly for reasons of supply security, Israel has relied heavily on imported coal supplies to fuel its electric-power-generating plants. Now, given how long it takes to build new electric-power plants, Israel faces the need to make expensive, critical decisions on investing in new baseload-generating capacity in the near future.

[Method makes refineries more efficient](#)

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Refineries could trim millions of dollars in energy costs annually by using a new method developed at Purdue University to rearrange the distillation sequence needed to separate crude petroleum into products.

[Peak Climate And New Energy](#)

Energy trader perception of the Copenhagen summit is easy to forecast: oil substitution is now delayed, possibly sine die, so oil prices will be bid up along with natural gas and uranium prices, these two fossil energy sources being the most able to combine mainstream industrial use, relative abundance, and apparent "low carbon" performance. Coal prices might also gain, but less surely and with fewer high ground pro domo one-line statements by star traders. The long-predicted "gas bulge" is now arriving, and could last 5 years depending how fast natural gas burning is ramped up. Along with windfarms, natural gas will be the default choice for new electric power capacity in nearly all countries and world regions, probably including developing and emerging Asia, and perhaps several African countries.

[Sustainability](#)

"There's been a lack of understanding in the business community of just how much increased profitability can be realized through simple energy savings. And this is not a sector-specific opportunity – every business in the world that uses energy is a potential retrofit client." Greenscape's list of new clients – \$30 million of new business in B.C. over the past month – includes parking facilities, a tourist lodge and an auto dealership.

While it never did make sense to operate inefficiently, the cost of doing so in some industries has been low. With carbon taxes, peak oil and global energy insecurity placing new pressures and potential risks on companies, those costs could rise. All of which makes it a great time to think about getting lean. It just happens that this also means "going green."

[A dark Arctic tale set after the ice melts](#)

It's hard to imagine a world in which polar bears don't exist in the wild. Alun Anderson, former editor-in-chief of New Scientist magazine, asserts that it most likely will occur in our lifetime.

In his book, "After the Ice: Life, Death, and Geopolitics in the New Arctic" (HarperCollins, 2009), Anderson takes a close look at the complicated past, present and future of the Arctic region, the area of Earth that he says is certain to feel the effects of global warming first and most powerfully.

Anderson traveled extensively in the Arctic to tell the story of a place that few are familiar with.

[Iowa firm seeks to block Jefferson ethanol plant sale](#)

An Iowa company that seeks to become a producer of ethanol fuel has filed a court motion to block the sale of Renew Energy LLC's ethanol plant in Jefferson to a unit of Valero Energy Corp. for \$72 million.

In a press release, ALL Fuels & Energy of Johnston, Iowa, said its ALL Fuels-Jefferson LLC subsidiary was one of four qualified bidders at the Dec. 11, auction of the Renew Energy ethanol plant. All Fuels claims it bid \$77 million for the company, an offer that was announced as a bid of \$72.1 million, based on a discount formula, after Valero Renewable Energy Co's bid of \$72 million.

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[Pemex Bonds Are a Buy on Spreads, Higher Oil Prices](#)

Mexican oil production declined 25 percent to 2.602 million barrels of oil a day in October since peaking in December 2003, prompting Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings in the past month to lower the country's credit rating one step to the second-lowest investment grade.

Concerns about the output decline and the ratings cuts have been overblown, and a more than doubling in oil prices since mid-February has helped Pemex's sales, Suarez said.

[NZ Methane Hydrates May Soon Be Developed](#)

A gas industry using frozen gas hydrates below the seabed off the East Coast could be developed in the near future thanks to rapid global technical developments.

George Hooper, executive director of the Centre for Advanced Engineering, told a recent Oil and Gas conference in Wellington that exploitation of methane hydrates could transform New Zealand's energy market.

[The Green Movement's People Problem: Environmentalists need to stop being so misanthropic.](#)

The movement needs to break with the deep-seated misanthropy that dominates green politics and has brought it to this woeful state. Its leaders have defined our species as everything from a "cancer" to the "AIDs of the earth." They wail in horror at the thought that by the year 2050 there will likely be another 2 or 3 billion of these inconvenient bipeds. Leading green figures such as Britain's Jonathan Porritt, Richard Attenborough and Lester Brown even consider baby-making a grievous carbon crime--especially, notes Australian activist Robert Short, in those "highly consumptive, greenhouse-producing nations."

Yet a slower population growth--while beneficial for poor, developing countries--can lead to a dismal, geriatric future in already low-birthrate nations like Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, South Korea and Russia. And although birth rates are dropping in most developing countries, particularly those experiencing rapid economic growth, it will likely be decades before population stops increasing in most of the developing world.

[Balance of power shifts to the east](#)

The current recession is only part of a potential triple crunch also involving an energy crisis and climate change. Industrial capitalism has proved resilient over the last 250 years: faced with these challenges it will need to be.

[Big oil, social responsibility and American capitalism](#)

Oil extractors (be they private, public, or parastatal/quasi-public) have long made it their business to try to understand what their own collective future might portend. And with the passage of time, the data on global oil discovery and consumption rates has only become more accurate. The jury is now in: since the 1980s, the world has gradually been consuming more cheap oil than it has been discovering, and the disparity between these rates of discovery and consumption has been increasing steadily. Broadly speaking, discovery rates presage production rates (i.e., you can't produce what you've not yet discovered). The conclusion: trends in oil discovery/consumption ratios imply that Americans have been living on borrowed time.

[The big bonfire: The U.S. already has a de facto climate policy](#)

My daughter Ren celebrated her 25th birthday last summer. She's a member of what I call Generation B, where B stands for "bonfire." Since her birth, more than half of all the fossil fuel consumed in human history has been burned, and more than half the greenhouse gas emissions humans have ever produced has gone skyward.

[Top 10 most widely read stories of 2009](#)

1. Zenn and EESstor - Our coverage of stealthy EESstor continually snags your attention, but you were especially interested when Zenn Motor CEO Ian Clifford spoke to us about plans to incorporate ultracapacitors from EESstor into full-speed electric vehicles in 2010. Following third-party verification that EESstor passed its final technology milestone, Clifford shared details of the new timeline for technology deployment with the Cleantech Group in this exclusive piece (see Zenn CEO reveals details of EESstor's progress).

[Time to go nuke...or not?](#)

MANILA, Philippines – When Martial Law strongman Ferdinand Marcos pushed for the construction of the Philippines's first and only nuclear power plant in 1977, the reception was far from warm. Not only did the project entail large sums of foreign loans, it also involved a still-developing technology which was initially used as weapons of destruction during the Second World War.

Fast forward to the new millennium, nuclear energy is now being considered as a viable

and clean energy option. What was then considered as a dangerous energy source is fast becoming a strong alternative to minimize oil dependency and global warming.

[Group calls for wind turbines off Ocean City](#)

OCEAN CITY -- Citing a pending statewide energy crisis, an environmental advocacy group is calling for wind turbines to be built off Maryland's coast by 2014.

Environment Maryland released a report outlining the advantages of wind farms, and announced their findings Tuesday on the Boardwalk in plain view of where the turbine blades would spin on the horizon.

[EPA's Delay in E15 Ruling Means Jobs and Economic Opportunity Lost](#)

Why is the E15 ruling important? Aside from the immediate environmental benefits of reducing hydrocarbon and other notable airborne particulates, by increasing the market demand for alcohol fuel consumption the EPA could enable states to keep millions of fuel dollars in their local economies. By encouraging localized alcohol fuel and related co-product production communities, counties and states would be able to incentivize the creation of tens of thousands of direct and indirect non-exportable alcohol fuel-related jobs including the building of new cars and other transportation related solutions based on Flex Fuel design technology. Additionally, because alcohol fuel is less expensive to produce, local communities would be able to reduce the overall cost of fuel to its residents.

[MiaSole and Silicon Valley bank on green solar energy](#)

The greater Silicon Valley has lost 50,000 jobs in the past year, and its unemployment rate, almost 12%, is on par with the state, a rarity given Silicon Valley's highly trained workforce.

But at MiaSolé, there are 300 employees, up from 150 a year ago. Every employee, including the janitor, has stock options they hope will someday soar. CEO Joseph Laia faces the quintessential Silicon Valley conundrum: what to do with employees who work all night as MiaSolé pushes to commercialize a cheaper solar-panel technology. He's considering a "cot room" for catnaps.

[Fireman's Fund Insurance In Favour Of Copenhagen Climate Accord](#)

Fireman's Fund Insurance has said that it is in favour of the Copenhagen climate accord and remains committed to its climate change initiatives.

The company said that it is committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 25% by 2012. It has received a LEED-certification. It cut its energy usage by 36% in the last 10 years. It has also testified before the National Association of Insurance Regulators on new climate risk disclosure requirements.

[China attacks 'shirker' UK on climate change](#)

China has gone on the defensive after being accused of blocking agreement at the Copenhagen climate change summit by Ed Miliband.

Britain's energy and climate change secretary wrote in the Observer newspaper on Sunday that the UN Convention on Climate Change had not reached agreement on halving global emissions by 2050, or on 80 per cent reductions by developed countries, because of China.

[Time to rethink, coal chief Keith De Lacy tells 'mate' Kevin Rudd](#)

Now that the Prime Minister has come up in the world, Mr De Lacy has a message for him: the Australian coal industry was sold out in Copenhagen, and Kevin Rudd needs to drastically revise his climate change response.

[Leading Climate Scientist James Hansen on Why He's Pleased the Copenhagen Summit Failed, "Cap and Fade," Climategate and More](#)

We speak with the nation's leading climate scientist, James Hansen. He wasn't at the Copenhagen climate summit and explains why he thinks it's ultimately better for the planet that the talks collapsed. We also speak with with Dr. Hansen about his new book, "Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth of the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity" and much more.

[The 10 Countries With The Most Dwindling Oil Production](#)

Global oil production saw a 0.4% increase in 2008, according to the 2009 BP Statistical Review of World Energy.

But while the overall industry saw a rise in production, several countries saw oil production sink considerably.

As the threat of Peak Oil continues to rise, the areas of the world that are running low are increasingly in danger of seeing their bubble get burst.

We've compiled a list, based on the data released by BP, of the ten countries at the bottom of the barrel.

[OPEC Holds Production Quotas Steady for a Fourth Time This Year](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed to keep production targets unchanged for a fourth time this year, as expected.

The producer group maintained total production quotas at 24.845 million barrels a day, Saudi Arabia's Ali al-Naimi and other ministers said as they left their meeting today in Luanda, Angola. Nigeria, Iran and most OPEC members are now pumping more than their allotted targets.

[OPEC Focuses on Compliance With Output Limits](#)

LUANDA, Angola (AP) — OPEC held its output quotas unchanged Tuesday, several ministers said as the producer group called for greater compliance from some members whose overproduction could undercut efforts to support prices amid a fragile global economic recovery.

The announcement by delegates representing several of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' members reflected the producer group's cautious approach to balancing the market this year — at once dealing with weak demand and an oversupply while trying sustain the rebound in prices. In the end, the 12-member group decided that no action was the best action in a market where the pace of the world's recovery from its worst recession in decades remains uncertain.

[Crude Oil Drops After OPEC Decides to Maintain Output Targets](#)

Crude oil for February delivery dropped as much as 59 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$73.13 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It traded down 44 cents at \$73.28 a barrel at 12:19 a.m. London time.

Crude's 64 percent rise this year has encouraged some OPEC members to renege on their pledge in 2008 to reduce 4.2 million barrels a day of output. Members complied with 58 percent of cuts in November, down from 60 percent the previous month, according to the International Energy Agency estimates.

[Iraq to double oil supply to China to 300,000 bpd](#)

LUANDA/BEIJING - Iraq will more than double crude oil supplies to China next year to over 300,000 barrels per day, Iraq's oil minister said, as Chinese refineries boost output to new highs to feed strong recovery in demand.

[Saudi Arabia to Use Oil Storage Facility in Japan, Al-Naimi Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Saudi Arabia has some oil storage capacity in Japan which it may use to supply Asian countries, Saudi Arabia Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi said.

“Japan was kind enough to offer us storage for commercial use,” he told reporters today in Luanda, Angola. “We are using it. It’s free by the way.”

The storage facility can contain “millions of barrels,” though Saudi Arabia does not yet have any oil there.

[Total Plans to Develop China Gas With CNPC, Bid in Venezuela](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Total SA, Europe’s third-largest oil producer, is planning to expand cooperation with China National Petroleum Corp. by pursuing a multibillion-dollar project to extract natural gas in the northern Chinese Ordos Basin.

Total is also aiming to jointly bid with CNPC to develop a heavy-oil block in Venezuela’s Carabobo region, Chief Executive Officer Christophe de Margerie said in an interview with the Wall Street Journal. The comments were confirmed by Total spokesman Paul Floren, traveling with de Margerie in China.

[Oil flow from Iraq to Turkey to resume soon: official](#)

ANKARA (Xinhua) -- Turkish Energy Ministry said Tuesday that shipment of crude oil would resume within a week from Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

An official from the ministry was quoted as saying that oil flow in Iraqi side of the pipeline was halted two days ago after an act of sabotage.

"Iraqi executives said the damage could be fixed in 5 to 6 days," the official said.

[Russia to Receive Turkmen Gas After Nine-Month Halt](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia agreed to resume natural-gas imports from Turkmenistan in January, ending a nine-month halt in supplies from Central Asia’s biggest producer caused by a pipeline explosion and a slump in European demand.

...Turkmen gas shipments to Russia stopped in April following a blast on the export pipeline, which Turkmenistan blamed on Gazprom, saying the company abruptly cut the volumes it was importing. Gazprom, which denied causing the explosion, has suffered a 5 to 7 percent decline in gas demand this year in Europe, its main export market, the

company said last month.

The company and Turkmenistan will move to a pricing formula that “fully matches the terms of the European gas market,” Medvedev said. Gazprom controls Turkmenistan’s only gas route to Europe and the cut-off has hurt the country’s economic growth.

“Turkmenistan lost at least \$7 billion, or about 25 percent of annual GDP” as a result of the halt, Mikhail Korchemkin, an analyst at East European Gas Analysis, said in an e-mail. “Before signing a new deal, Russia needs to reimburse the loss of Turkmenistan, for instance by price discounts in Russian exports.”

[Total revs up in Algeria](#)

French giant Total has landed a 47% stake in the Ahnet licence, in south-western Algeria's onshore gas play.

[Gas 'gold rush' ignites in rural New York](#)

Environmentalists fear intense drilling could bring ecological disaster to the same pristine Catskills that also contain New York City's entire drinking water supply.

Many others, though, foresee an economic miracle that could turn an impoverished section of New York into "a Little Texas," as 56-year-old Graby puts it.

[Europe May Be Colder Than Average in First Quarter, WSI Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Northwest Europe may be colder than average in the three months through March, boosting demand for energy to heat homes and offices, forecaster WSI Corp said today in an e-mailed statement.

Temperatures will be at their lowest in February, falling as much as 4 degrees Celsius (7.2 Fahrenheit) below typical levels in the U.K. and Scandinavia, the company’s chief meteorologist Todd Crawford said in an interview yesterday, ahead of today’s statement. January will be 1 to 2 degrees Celsius colder than usual in northwest Europe, he said.

[Pakistan to Raise Power Tariff by 13.5% From January, Dawn Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Pakistan will increase power tariffs by 13.5 percent from January as part of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund, the Dawn newspaper reported, without saying where it got the information.

The government has decided to end subsidies to the so-called lifeline consumers, or those who use less than 50 units a month, and the agriculture sector, according to today's report by the newspaper.

[Obama has powerful tool to pressure Myanmar](#)

WASHINGTON – If talks with Myanmar over democratic reforms fail, the Obama administration could tie up large amounts of money that the country's ruling generals stash in international banks from the sale of natural gas.

[Macarthur Coal Bids A\\$656 Million for Gloucester Coal](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Macarthur Coal Ltd., the world's biggest exporter of pulverized coal used by steelmakers, bid A\$656 million (\$577 million) in cash for Gloucester Coal Ltd., adding two mines in Australia amid surging demand in Asia.

[Newcastle Coal Ship Queue Longest in Two Years as Exports Slow](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The queue of coal ships waiting at Australia's Newcastle port, the world's biggest export harbor for the fuel, stretched to its longest in more than two years as exports slowed for a second week.

Sixty ships, waiting to load 4.2 million tons of coal, were outside the harbor at 7 a.m. local time yesterday, up from 52 vessels a week earlier, Newcastle Port Corp. said on its Web site. The queue is the longest since July 2007.

[Tokyo Electric May Exceed Budget for Atomic Restart](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Tokyo Electric Power Co. may face higher costs to restart all nuclear reactors in the world's biggest atomic power station, which was shut in the aftermath of an earthquake in 2007.

Asia's largest utility got approval today to start full commercial output at the No. 6 and 7 reactors in the Kashiwazaki Kariwa power station about 300 kilometers (185 miles) north of Tokyo. The plant has five other units in need of strengthening work, and based on the cost for the No. 7 reactor, the total bill may exceed the 100 billion yen (\$1.1 billion) allocated, President Masataka Shimizu said in an interview in Tokyo yesterday.

[Next Stage on Iran Could Hold Real Peril](#)

LONDON — A little less than a month ago, one of the officials developing the allies' strategy to halt Iran's drive to make a nuclear weapon described their governments' discomfort about soon having to move beyond attempts to engage the mullahs.

The diplomat's remarks, quoted in a European newspaper, hardly created a stir, perhaps because they reflect an obvious truth: months of outstretched Western hands have brought nothing in return from Tehran.

[Pentagon Developing Options to Deal With Iranian Nuclear Program](#)

The United States' top military officer says the Pentagon must be ready with military options against Iran's nuclear program in the event the president calls for them.

In a document outlining U.S. military assessments and priorities, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, said he believes diplomacy offers the best chance to resolve the dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

The admiral added that military action remains an option but that it would have "limited results."

[US Military Aggression against Venezuela escalating](#)

Caracas – Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez revealed today on his Sunday television and radio program, *Aló Presidente*, that unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), also known as drones, have illegally entered Venezuela's airspace during the past several days. "A few days ago, one of these military planes penetrated Venezuela as far as Fort Mara," a Venezuelan military fort in the State of Zulia, bordering Colombia. The drone was seen by several Venezuelan soldiers who immediately reported the aerial violation to their superiors. President Chávez gave the order today to shoot down any drones detected in Venezuelan territory. Chávez also directly implicated Washington in this latest threat against regional stability by confirming that the drones were of US origin.

[Pricing Crude Oil in "Gulfos"? In Their Dreams](#)

A bloc of oil producing countries led by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and others (not OPEC; for some reason they left out Dubai) reported preliminary steps to establish a regional currency: The "Gulfo," in which to trade their oil in lieu of U.S. dollars. Is this a threat to the dollar hegemony?

Some would say yes, but I would say no. In fact I would go as far to say heck no.

[When Airlines Run Out of Fuel](#)

Mass air travel is incompatible with a sustainable economy. Air travel is energy and capital intensive, creates a gigantic carbon footprint, and is likely to remain dependant on the high energy density of fossil fuels much longer than surface transport. As such, it is a prime candidate for the short side of a clean energy portfolio.

[American Petroleum Institute sues Tennessee over renewable fuel rules](#)

The American Petroleum Institute is challenging a new state law aimed at providing Tennessee businesses with a greater opportunity to profit off renewable fuels.

The Tennessee Renewable Fuels Blending Act was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly this year and goes into effect Jan. 1. It requires petroleum refiners and suppliers to sell gasoline and diesel fuels that have not been blended with biofuels, but that are suitable to be blended with them.

According to a state fiscal analysis of the legislation, some major oil company suppliers began preventing Tennessee businesses from blending ethanol in 2008 and instead sold only pre-blended products. This “effectively shifted income and/or profits away from certain Tennessee petroleum wholesalers and to out-of-state suppliers,” the fiscal analysis states. There are federal tax credits associated with the blending of biofuels.

[First Solar, fund manager in tussle over cab fare](#)

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) – Solar power industry bellwether First Solar Inc and a fund manager who has wagered the company's stock will fall are locked in a tiff over a \$9 cab fare, after the bear manager was invited to a meeting in Times Square and then asked to leave.

[China considers compulsory green energy purchases by grid operators](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China's top legislature Tuesday discussed a legal amendment to require electricity grid companies to buy all the power produced by renewable energy generators.

The State Council energy department and the state power regulatory agency should supervise the purchases, said the draft amendment to the Renewable Energy Law, which was submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) for its second reading.

[Biofuels: can they fuel our lifestyle without taking food from the poor?](#)

Just in case you thought it was safe to stop thinking about biofuels, here comes another study – this time into the ethics. Can a new generation of biofuels ensure we don't

increase greenhouse gas emissions and take food from the poor to fuel our cars?

[Desert Vistas vs. Solar Power](#)

AMBOY, Calif. — Senator Dianne Feinstein introduced legislation in Congress on Monday to protect a million acres of the Mojave Desert in California by scuttling some 13 big solar plants and wind farms planned for the region.

But before the bill to create two new Mojave national monuments has even had its first hearing, the California Democrat has largely achieved her aim. Regardless of the legislation's fate, her opposition means that few if any power plants are likely to be built in the monument area, a complication in California's effort to achieve its aggressive goals for renewable energy.

[Japan eyes methane hydrate as energy savior](#)

TOKYO - Japan, the world's second-largest economy, may have found a way to reduce its almost total dependence on other countries for the oil that drives the industries on which the country's wealth is built.

Betting that Japan can extract and commercially exploit methane hydrate, the hoped-for alternative to oil, investors last week drove up the price of Japan Drilling, a company established in 1968 but only this month raising money by selling shares to the public.

[Upcoming oil shortage: part three](#)

Americans have been led to believe that the supply of oil is nearly limitless and for the next half century we will have more than enough crude to meet the growing needs of the global economy. The Republican party's national platform touts the availability of untapped reserves in Alaska and along our shores while the party currently in charge (the Democrats) seems genuinely unconcerned with future supplies.

But, as we go about our lives, guzzling gas at amazing rates and taking its presence for granted, the rest of the world is concerned about the long-term prospects for oil as the world's preeminent energy source. Along those lines, in early November the United Kingdom newspaper, the Guardian, dropped a bombshell, quoting two unnamed oil industry executives who said that the International Energy Agency was willingly overstating oil supplies.

[Alaska coast erosion threat to oil, wildlife](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (Reuters) - A portion of Alaska's North Slope coastline is eroding

at a rate of up to 45 feet (14 meters) a year, posing a threat to oil operations and wildlife in the area, according to a new report issued by scientists at the University of Colorado.

Warmer ocean water has thawed the base of frozen bluffs and destroyed natural ice barriers protecting the coast, causing large earth chunks to fall each summer, the scientists said.

"What we are seeing now is a triple whammy effect," study co-author Robert Anderson, an associate professor at the University of Colorado's Department of Geological Sciences, said. "Since the summer Arctic sea ice cover continues to decline and Arctic air and sea temperatures continue to rise, we really don't see any prospect for this process ending."

[Europe's Flora Is Becoming Impoverished](#)

ScienceDaily — With increasing species richness, due to more plant introductions than extinctions, plant communities of many European regions are becoming more homogeneous. The same species are occurring more frequently, whereas rare species are becoming extinct.

[African Leaf-Eating Primates 'Likely to Be Wiped Out' by Climate Change](#)

ScienceDaily — Monkey species will become 'increasingly at risk of extinction' because of global warming, according to new research, published this week. It reveals that populations of monkeys and apes in Africa that depend largely on a diet of leaves may be wiped out by a rise in annual temperatures of two degrees Celsius. The study by researchers from Bournemouth University, Roehampton University and the University of Oxford suggests that the species most at risk are the already endangered gorillas and colobine monkeys.

[Report: New Mexico's greenhouse gas emissions up](#)

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) -- An inventory of New Mexico's greenhouse gas production shows residents have reduced their average emissions from gasoline use over a seven-year period, but they're consuming more energy to heat, cool and power their homes.

Despite efforts by Gov. Bill Richardson's administration to address climate change and lower greenhouse gas emissions, a draft inventory prepared by the state Environment Department shows New Mexico's total direct emissions increased by about 4 percent between 2000 and 2007 to 80 million metric tons.

[Falling carbon price could result in higher bills, energy firms warn](#)

Electricity bills could go up as a result of the weekend's feeble agreement on climate change at Copenhagen, energy suppliers have warned.

The price of carbon – paid by heavy polluters such as power plant operators – plummeted yesterday by almost 10% on Europe's emissions trading market. This was in response to the EU scrapping a planned commitment to cut emissions by 30% by 2020 because other countries failed to show similar ambition.

E.ON and Centrica warned that they would not invest the tens of billions of pounds to build expensive new nuclear reactors and clean coal plants at today's carbon price, which is supposed to penalise dirty coal and gas plants.

[UN chief calls for new climate pact push](#)

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) – UN chief Ban Ki-moon appealed for world powers to make a new effort to secure a legally binding climate deal next year amid new diplomatic wrangling over the failure of the Copenhagen summit.

China hit back at Britain over claims that Beijing had "hijacked" the Copenhagen negotiations while Brazil and Cuba lashed out at the US President Barack Obama.

[Bangladesh wants 15 pct of climate fund: minister](#)

DHAKA (AFP) – Bangladesh, one of the nations most vulnerable to global warming, will seek 15 percent of a 30-billion-dollar climate change fund committed at the Copenhagen summit, the environment minister said Tuesday.

Bangladesh, with a population of 150 million, makes up around 15 percent of the approximately one billion people estimated to be affected by global warming, Environment Minister Hasan Mahmud said.

[Lisa Margonelli: Copenhagen's surprising gain for climate](#)

(CNN) -- Two weeks ago, representatives from nearly 200 countries flew to Copenhagen to hammer out an agreement to limit the emissions that cause global warming.

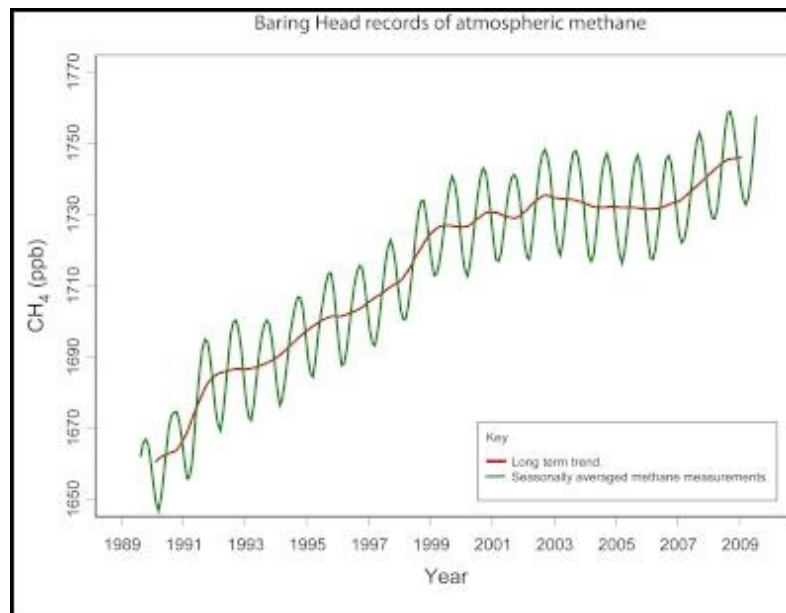
Now that the carbon-heavy contrails of the diplomats' jets have cleared from Copenhagen's airspace, it's clear that while they failed to make history, the modest three-page unsigned Copenhagen Accord is a surprisingly futuristic document.

[Owning the climate: Will geoengineering help combat climate change?](#)

"Geoengineering is plan B," says oceanographer John Shepherd of the U.K's Royal Society of plans to deliberately tinker with the planet's climate. "It's not to be adopted unless absolutely necessary."

After all, "geoengineering is technically possible," Shepherd adds. But "in most cases, it's still on the backs of envelopes and there are very many things to be concerned about, like environmental impacts."

[NIWA says greenhouse gas methane on the rise again](#)



NIWA has today released measurements from its globally significant Baring Head station showing that southern hemisphere atmospheric methane increased by 0.7% over the two-year period 2007–08. While this increase may not sound like much, it is about 35 times more than all the methane produced by New Zealand livestock each year.

This is significant in that it follows a three-year period of no growth, and accounts for more than half of the growth observed over the ten years 1999–2008 (1.2%). Methane is the second most important contributor to global warming behind carbon dioxide, though its abundance in the atmosphere is far lower. Additional methane traps twenty one times more heat over 100 years than the same mass of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

“The evidence we have shows that methane in the atmosphere is now more than double what it ever was during the 800,000 years before 1700AD” says NIWA Principal Scientist, Dr Keith Lassey. This is based on analyses of ancient air trapped in polar ice that has been extracted and dated.



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