



## Drumbeat: January 4, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 4, 2010 - 9:25am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Kunstler: The Futility Economy](#)

Reality is taking us out of that familiar, if sordid, realm, whether we like it or not. Our destination is an everyday economy where you rarely travel far from the place you live, where you have to make provision for you own health, your own old age, your own income, your own diet, your own security, and your own education. If you're really fortunate, some or all of these necessities can be obtained in conjunction with your neighbors in the place where you live -- but don't expect an increasingly mythical federal government to supply any of it. Expect a new and different way of organizing households based on extended families and kinship groups. Be prepared for agriculture to return to the foreground of everyday life, where farming is back at the center of the economy. Think about how you will cultivate your best role in a social network so the things you do will be truly valued by the other people who know you. Learn how to make your own music and write your own scripts. Try to study history. Resist cults. Keep your mind clear and your senses sharp.

Even if you have a dim sense that this is where we're headed, most of you probably want to stay where you are. The investments we've made in the current mode of existence are so monumental that we can't imagine letting go of them. This will be the theme of American life for the next couple of years as we struggle mightily to escape the confining armor of the Futility Economy and move closer to ways of life that have more of a future. Right now, all the power and authority in our culture has dedicated itself to remaining inside that old armor.

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But critics say that such deals would weaken the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the international agreement that aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, which India has not signed.

### [LED Signals Seen as Potential Hazard](#)

CHICAGO — Last April, the driver of a pickup truck approaching an intersection in the far western suburb of Oswego went past a red light obscured by snow and struck a 34-year-old woman turning left in her car.

The woman died and four other people were injured in the accident, which was among

the first to raise concerns here and around the Midwest about a relatively new driving hazard related to inclement weather: traffic signals, like those in Oswego, that use light-emitting diodes, known as LEDs.

The new lighting is part of a fast-growing trend in environmentalism. LED bulbs use less energy, last longer and are more visible than their predecessors. They are also known to require less maintenance. But they do not emit nearly as much heat as conventional bulbs, allowing snow and ice to accumulate more easily in certain conditions.

### [Path From Climate Summit Unclear for Many](#)

When presidents and prime ministers departed the U.N. climate conference in Copenhagen last month, they left behind a vast legal tangle that experts have barely begun to unravel.

A half-dozen edicts that world leaders handed down -- dealing with everything from verifying carbon emission cuts to mobilizing billions of dollars for poor nations -- require formal enactment rulings from the parties to the U.N. climate conference. But by the time the global summit came to a close on Dec. 18, nations had made none of the necessary follow-up rulings.

### [Nitrogen Deficit to Worsen Warming](#)

Usually when we worry about global warming, carbon is all we think about. But it turns out we have a new element to worry about: nitrogen.

Specifically, the lack of it.

### [A Step Beyond Anthropology](#)

MOST people see sustainability as pertaining to the physical environment, and the need to preserve it for coming generations. But in academe, sustainability can have as much to do with social science as science science.

Goucher College, the liberal arts college in Baltimore, is extending the concept: to preserving the traditional values, as well as the arts, dress, customs and cuisines, of communities threatened by globalization and modernization, whether inner-city neighborhoods or third-world villages. Goucher calls it cultural sustainability, and is offering a Master of Arts.

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### [Power pact lauded](#)

Jeff Rubin, chief economist and chief strategist at CIBC World Markets for two decades before stepping down last March, says the proposed deal to sell NB Power to Hydro-Québec will bring the province "up to par" with the rest of North America.

"New Brunswick is singularly disadvantaged relative to other places in North America until it can wean itself off oil," says Rubin, author of the book *Why Your World Is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller*, which says oil scarcity in the coming decade will spur the end of globalization.

In a sweeping interview from his home in Toronto last week, Rubin says oil prices will begin a long ascent in 2010.

### [Public spending to help Saudi economy grow by 4% this year](#)

High public spending will ally with rising bank lending to boost Saudi Arabia's economy by nearly four per cent in 2010 after recording one of its lowest growth rates in 2009 over the past eight years, a local study said yesterday.

### [2010: Powerless to change](#)

2010 is likely to be the year when Malta finally admits it has a serious energy crisis on its hands. Raphael Vassallo on why we will pay a high price for Enemalta's strategic failures... and not just in utility bills, either.

### [Pakistan: Move to avert petroleum crisis](#)

Islamabad—With a view to averting the expected petroleum products shortage crisis after January 15 in the wake of warning from refineries to close their operations because of liquidity crunch, Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani is to convene the meeting of all stakeholder in energy sector during the current week to resolve the issue of Rs 60 billion refineries dues, senior official sources at Ministry of Finance told Pakistan Observer.

### [Qatar gas cheaper than Iran: Sardar Assef](#)

Lahore — Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Sardar Assef Ahmad Ali has said that if Pakistan imports gas from Qatar, it will be cheaper than the gas which will come from Iran. "Iranians are sticking to terms and conditions of the agreement and they would never compromise on the price issue," he said. He was speaking at a seminar on "Improvement on energy sector," organised by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Pakistan (IEEEEP) at a local hotel late Saturday.

### [OGDC blamed for oil, gas output decline](#)

ISLAMABAD: The oil and gas production in the country has significantly declined over the past two years mainly because of the inability of the state-run Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) to meet its drilling targets, resulting in increased outflow of foreign exchange for imported fuels, informed sources told Dawn on Sunday.

### [Surprising resilience in Singapore's oil-storage market](#)

Singapore's independent oil-storage market has not exactly shrugged off the effects of a sharp increase in capacity, at a time of troubled economies worldwide – but its resilience has surprised many.

### [Venezuela may close metal operations due to drought](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) - Venezuela may be forced to close aluminum, steel, bauxite and gold mine operations in the south-east of the nation due to a drought and electricity shortfall, a minister was quoted as saying on Monday.

## [On The Way To Copenhagen We Added A World Food Crisis](#)

Does the following analysis sound familiar?

*"A weakening U.S. dollar is putting upward pressure on oil prices. The shock produced chaos in the West. In the United States, the retail price of a gallon of gasoline rose 50%, consumption dropped by 6.1% from September to February. Underscoring the interdependence of the world societies and economies, oil-importing nations in the noncommunist industrial world saw sudden inflation and economic recession. The energy crisis led to greater interest in renewable energy and spurred research in solar power and wind power as well as increased interest in mass transit."*

If you said it sounds like 2008, when it took \$5.00/gallon gasoline to get Americans to agree to offshore drilling and give up their last Arctic Wilderness, *you would be wrong.*

*It was 1973*, when the Arab oil embargo and long gas lines got Americans to authorize the 800 mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline through some of the most pristine country in Alaska.

What would our economy and climate change look like today if we had not chosen to build, build, build the Alaska Pipe Line?

## [Ethanol giant shifts focus](#)

"Corn ethanol has been the best thing that has happened to the farmers since the invention of the combine," said the 61-year-old Fagen, who grew up in the tiny community of Maynard near Granite Falls. "It gives them another market for their corn."

But the U.S. ethanol building boom is over.

"It all came to a screeching halt when our friends on Wall Street manipulated the commodity market," Fagen said, commenting on the volatility of corn and oil prices. Others would argue that it was ethanol's friends and enemies in Washington and state capitals who did the manipulating over subsidies and mandates. The Environmental Protection Agency last month, for example, postponed a decision on a proposal backed by the ethanol industry that would increase the amount of ethanol blended into gasoline from 10 to 15 percent.

Regardless, Fagen has been retooling his business model. The company will finish one more U.S. ethanol plant in Pennsylvania, but Fagen's attention already has turned to other forms of renewable energy -- biomass and wind. Going forward, Fagen said he thinks his business mix will be about 60 percent biomass projects, 25 percent wind energy and the remaining share coming from building other types of industrial facilities.

## [A Brave New, Profitable 2010 ...](#)

**Question #2: Will the severe supply restrictions in many of the world's natural resources suddenly disappear in 2010, creating an oversupply instead?**

I don't think so.

If anything, with less capital and credit available today, the supply constraints in many natural resources are bound to get worse, not better.

We still face the prospects of peak oil. Peak water. Peak gold. Peak seafood. Peak copper. Peak rare earth metals. And more.

Not just because Mother Earth has limited supplies of these commodities. But also because the financial crisis has forced many natural resource companies to put new exploration projects on hold. Mines, too, have been shuttered over the last two years.

And keep in mind, it's a lot easier to shut down a mine or an oil well than it is to crank them up again.

### [Vanguard of a natural gas revolution](#)

T. Boone Pickens was saying that the U.S. is the Saudi Arabia, except with natural gas. I'm not sure that he's right. The reserve recovery rates might be way, way lower than what the major companies had predicted they would be. The wells are falling off quicker than expected, things like that.

...I think peak oil is a very real concept. Exxon has put a note out that by 2030 there will be a 35-per-cent increase in energy requirements. That's massive. I'm not sure our industry can provide that. [Technology has] improved our ability to bring marginal reserves on. But remember, now they're drilling marginal reserves. Where do they go after this?

### [2010 — Grim Economic Predictions For What May Be the Tipping Point Year](#)

The Federal Budget for 2010 anticipates a \$1.5 trillion deficit. I believe the Obama administration will pull out all the stops to boost the economy before the 2010 elections. This means more spending. The 2010 deficit will be closer to \$2 trillion. The bond market and foreign buyers will choke on this amount of debt. The result will be much higher interest rates. Ten year Treasuries will start the year at 3.8 percent. By year end, rates will exceed 5 percent. As the world loses confidence in the American economy and leadership, the dollar will fall to new all-time lows falling by another 15 percent. A falling dollar will result in a surge in gold and silver. Gold will break \$1,500 an ounce, with silver breaking \$20 an ounce. As world demand increases and peak oil becomes acknowledged, oil prices will exceed \$100 a barrel further depressing the U.S. economy.

### [Food action plan gets money to study sustainability](#)

North Thompson Sustainable Watershed Committee is getting a three-year contract with Interior Health to develop a food security action plan for the valley, according to committee member Ted Richardson.

"I really think sustainability planning is going to be of increasing importance, in light of peak oil, the economic downturn and climate change," he said.

The action plan would be an extension of the work the committee is doing to develop an on-line atlas of the valley and should lead to specific projects to improve the valley's food security.

### [Innovation breeds optimism](#)

There will be high expectations and key milestones for clean technologies in 2010, which kicks off a decade that will witness large-scale transformation of the world's energy sector.

### [The decade ahead](#)

Climate change will become more widely accepted as corporations realize that it can lead to consumption and profits when little else can. If we are unlucky, the green "movement" will become a boom. We will finally realize that peak oil has past, perhaps around 2006. Climate change will be very real. It will not be as apocalyptic as some have predicted, but major changes will be in the works. We should expect more major natural disasters, including a tragic toll on human life.

### [Renewable energy faces difficulties](#)

"Here's the world's dirty little secret; oil is the perfect fuel in many ways," said Dr. Robert Kaufmann, director of Boston University's Center for Energy and Environmental Science. "Other than environmental externalities, it's a great fuel. It won World War II."

Kaufmann makes clear he does not enjoy sounding like an oil advocate. But as a scientist, he admits that no renewable technology can currently compete with fossil fuels.

"I don't like it, but I understand why it's so difficult to displace," Kaufmann said. "With oil, you have a liquid, so you can pour it to fill a tank. You have high energy density, so you can use it to fly. And you have a high rate of energy return on your investment."

### [Research Report Foresees No 'Armed Mad Dash for Resources' in the Arctic](#)

ScienceDaily — With climate change making the Arctic gradually more accessible, some observers have suggested that interest in Arctic natural resources and disputed marine borders could take on a military aspect. A new study by researchers of the Fridtjof Nansens Institute (FNI) in Norway refutes this view, finding that dispassionate diplomacy is a more likely and rational way of dispute resolution than military confrontation.

### [Oil, money and greed](#)

OIL AND geopolitics is a sexy subject, prime material for writers and historians with an eye on the underlying themes of the recent past. Daniel Yergin's *The Prize* set the standard almost 20 years ago and the author has updated his seminal story to account for the boom (and semi-bust) of the last decade.

Otherwise, books for the general reader have appeared only sporadically. This has changed. The obsession with energy supply, the apparent dwindling of resources, the worries about impending environmental catastrophe and the conflicts across the globe since 2001 are behind a surge in literature trying to make sense of it all. Biographer Tom Bower's new book *The Squeeze: Oil, Money and Greed in the 21st Century* is the pick of the bunch.

### [PetroChina says oil pipeline supply unaffected by spill](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - PetroChina's newly launched oil pipeline running from northwest to central China is running normally after the company shut off a branch line that spilled diesel into a river last week, company officials said on Monday.

### [Cause of fire at Indian atomic research center to be out soon: official](#)

NEW DELHI (Xinhua) -- India's Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Monday said that the exact cause of fire at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center in Mumbai last week, which claimed the lives of two scientists, will soon be out in the open.

### [Greener oil sands, greener planet](#)

Now that the noise and fuss of political posturing has faded, one key question emerges from the Copenhagen summit: Who will lead the evolution to a low-carbon future?

It must be Canada, the only energy superpower in the democratic world.

Canada's oil sands, if they can become greener, are a major part of the answer to stable and long-term hemispheric energy supply. Copenhagen made it all too clear that the planet needs a more sustainable energy platform to address the threat of climate change.

### [China blames freak storm on global warming](#)

BEIJING: Freak snowstorms and record low temperatures sweeping northern China are linked to global warming, say Chinese officials.

But, unlike the unseasonal snow falls that hit Beijing at the start of winter, the dump this week appears to have no link to the Government's relentless efforts to change the micro climate.

### [Only politicians, not judges, can right this injustice](#)

PETER SPENCER'S problem has nothing to do with Kyoto and everything to do with native vegetation laws. That's not to say the Federal Government should not do something for him and other farmers on moral grounds - after all, in terms of carbon reduction, farmers have carried the can for other Australians. But Spencer would still be about to lose his farm even if no one had heard of climate change.

NSW laws restricting the clearing of native vegetation began in 1995, two years before Kyoto. Their purpose was to preserve biodiversity, not to create carbon sinks. By preventing farmers from clearing land, they effectively nationalised parts of many farms. In principle, this was the same as if the Government had told all urban householders that any unoccupied bedrooms would now be used as storage space for their local libraries.

### [Canada Goes After Yes Men For Copenhagen Parody, Knocks Out 4500 Websites](#)

During the Copenhagen conference the Yes Men had some fun at the expense of Canada, creating a fake website, inventing press secretary Felix Charlebois, and promising a 40 percent reduction in emissions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The Canadian Prime Minister is not known for his sense of humour, and was not amused; Instead, Environment Canada went after the host of the parody website and demanded that it be taken down.

Germany's Serverloft did not ask for a warrant or anything else, it just shut them down, along with 4500 other websites that were in the same block of IP addresses, just to be extra safe. Now the Yes Men are outraged.

### [Low-Tech Magazine and No-Tech Magazine](#)

*Low-Tech Magazine* and *No-Tech Magazine* have some fairly well written/illustrated

articles about old and low technologies. The concept being, in a sustainable future due to environmental constraints, carbon taxes, Peak Oil, etc.. these old-school technologies might be used - in some places, in some form - instead of more energy intensive modern high technology.

### [Kjell Aleklett: The Peak Oil Year 2009](#)

We stand at the doorway to a new year but also to a new decade and it is time to make a short summary. At the start of the 21st century Peak Oil was not an issue. During the 1990s the oil price fluctuated around \$20 per barrel and that the price would increase was unthinkable. The International Energy Agency (IEA), the US Energy Information Agency (EIA), the World Bank and others all had prognoses showing that the price would be around \$20 per barrel in 2020.

When in 1998 Colin Campbell and Jean Laherrère wrote their now famous article “The End of Cheap Oil” in Scientific American predicting that production of cheap oil would reach a maximum around 2005 there was no one that took them seriously. Instead, in March 1999 The Economist advanced the opinion that the world would be “Drowning in Oil”. Personally I took the warning signals serious and started to learn as much as possible about oil depletion.

### [Oil nears \\$81 on optimism of U.S. recovery](#)

NEW YORK - Oil prices climbed to near \$81 a barrel Monday on optimism that a gradual U.S. economic recovery in 2010 will boost demand for crude.

Cold weather in the eastern United States and gains by other currencies against the dollar also helped support prices.

### [Oil Rally May Falter at \\$82, MF Global Says: Technical Analysis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil's rally to a two-month high may sputter around \$82 a barrel as the commodity's relative strength index signals that gains have been excessive, according to technical analysis by MF Global Ltd.

Oil advanced for an eighth day in New York today, trading above \$81 a barrel for the first time since November, as freezing temperatures around the Northern Hemisphere bolstered the outlook for fuel demand. The surge will probably founder before it reaches last year's peak of \$82 a barrel, MF Global said in a report.

### [Belarus may cut electricity supplies to Russia - Ifax](#)

MINSK (Reuters) - Belarus may cut supplies of electricity to Russia's enclave of Kaliningrad, Belarus's state power company warned on Monday as a dispute over oil supplies deepened.

### [Russian Oil Supply to Belarus, Poland Are 'As Normal'](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russian oil supplies to Belarus and refineries in Poland are continuing as normal amid talks on future supplies, according to customers.

Russia is supplying oil to Belarus "as normal," Marina Kostyuchenko, a spokeswoman for the Belarusian oil company Belneftekhim, said by telephone from Minsk today. The Financial Times reported earlier today that Russia cut off shipments as talks with Belarus went over a Jan. 1 deadline.

### [Iran's Guards tighten economic grip](#)

BERKELEY, California - A move by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to withdraw US\$1 billion from the country's Foreign Reserve Fund to complete Phases 15 and 16 of the gigantic South Pars gas project could provoke a serious crisis in view of looming sanctions over Iran's nuclear program, according to analysts.

The IRGC cash grab reveals the military organization's power over Iran's economy and control over the country's sensitive oil, gas and nuclear industries.

### [India Oil Imports Rise for First Time in 3 Months](#)

(Bloomberg) -- India's crude oil imports rose 6.1 percent in November, increasing for the first time in three months after refiners produced more gasoline and diesel as vehicle sales climbed.

Crude oil purchases from overseas climbed to 10.48 million metric tons from 9.88 million tons a year earlier, according to provisional data from the oil ministry today. Imports in the April-November period rose 15 percent to 98.88 million tons.

### [Daqing sees output dip](#)

Oil output in PetroChina's Daqing oilfield, China's biggest, dipped slightly to 40 million tonnes in 2009 as the company works to shore up the ageing field, the Xinhua news agency reported on Friday.

### [Oman hits 810,000 bpd](#)

Oman has hit an average oil production rate of 810,000 barrels per day in 2009, up 7% from 2008, according to Economy Minister, Ahmad Mekki.

### [Russia-India ties sour in Central Asia](#)

Unsound strategy, mutual mistrust and opportunism are combining to frustrate the efforts of Moscow and India to blunt China's soft-power push into Russia's "near beyond" - the oil and gas-rich former Soviet republics that line the path of the ancient Silk Road from the Caspian Sea to China's doorstep at Xinjiang province.

Russia's unwelcome efforts to cobble together a Central Asian security bloc and claim a central role in a new, multi-polar Euroasian security structure have been the main stumbling block to advancement of its interests in the region.

### [France's Total in \\$2.25 billion U.S. natgas deal](#)

NEW YORK - The French oil company Total is moving into the U.S. natural gas market with a \$2.25 billion deal with Oklahoma's Chesapeake Energy.

Total said Monday it will pay \$800 million in cash for a 25 percent stake in Chesapeake's Barnett Shale assets, which hold vast quantities of natural gas in northern Texas.

### [Woodside's PetroChina Browse Gas Sale Accord Expires](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Woodside Petroleum Ltd.'s \$40 billion initial accord to sell liquefied natural gas from the Browse project to PetroChina Co. has expired, allowing the Australian company to seek a more lucrative replacement deal.

### [Commodities Back as Gurus Eschew Financial Assets](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Raw materials may return more than financial assets for the first time in three years as the global economy rebounds, according to Bloomberg surveys and 2009's most accurate commodity forecasters.

Oil, corn, gold and palladium will advance as much as 17 percent this year, the analysts said. The S&P GSCI Enhanced Total Return Index of 24 commodities will gain 17.5 percent, Goldman Sachs Group Inc. estimates. That'll beat the 11 percent jump in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index and the 2.8 percent return on the benchmark U.S. 10-year note, forecasts compiled by Bloomberg show.

### [Wesfarmers 'Watching' Griffin Coal After Bond Default](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Wesfarmers Ltd. is watching events at Griffin Coal Mining Co. after the rival supplier of fuel to Western Australian power stations defaulted on \$475 million in bonds and appointed an administrator.

### [Hong Kong to Investigate Claims of Dirty Sinopec LPG](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The Hong Kong government will investigate claims that dirty liquefied petroleum gas sold at filling stations operated by China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. has led to a spate of breakdowns by taxis and minibuses.

### [CNPC Says Fuel Spill in Yellow River Is Under Control](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China National Petroleum Corp. said it has stopped a diesel fuel leak that contaminated the Yellow River, the country's second longest and one of the main sources of drinking water in the north.

The situation remains "serious" and more than 700 workers have been deployed by state-owned CNPC and the government to prevent the leak from spreading and for clean up operations, China's largest oil company said today in a statement posted on its Web site. More than 100 metric tons of diesel spilled into tributaries of the river, China National Radio said today.

### [Kurt Cobb: The problem of induction and the blindness of fools](#)

The problem with the future is that it's not always like the past. In fact, were this statement not true, history would indeed be "bunk" just as Henry Ford once said. But, of course, history is a chronicle of what changed and therefore led to a future that was different from the past.

So, it is puzzling that such an obvious truism is so easily dismissed when it comes to the future of oil and energy in general. Enter one Porter Stansberry, an investment newsletter writer, who knows that "peak oil is an economic impossibility." In the linked interview he likens oil to copper. We have found substitutes for copper, namely optical fiber, so we will certainly find substitutes for oil in the quantities we need at the time we need them. He insists though that we won't need them for a very long time.

### [Sun, wind and wave-powered: Europe unites to build renewable energy 'supergrid'](#)

It would connect turbines off the wind-lashed north coast of Scotland with Germany's vast arrays of solar panels, and join the power of waves crashing on to the Belgian and

Danish coasts with the hydro-electric dams nestled in Norway's fjords: Europe's first electricity grid dedicated to renewable power will become a political reality this month, as nine countries formally draw up plans to link their clean energy projects around the North Sea.

The network, made up of thousands of kilometres of highly efficient undersea cables that could cost up to €30bn (£26.5bn), would solve one of the biggest criticisms faced by renewable power – that unpredictable weather means it is unreliable.

### [Shell accused of abandoning solar power buyers in the developing world](#)

Shell has become embroiled in a major row with the World Bank and green energy companies after allegations that it is unfairly refusing to honour warranties on solar power systems sold to the developing world.

A widespread breakdown of its equipment in Sri Lanka and elsewhere has left the oil firm accused of abandoning a responsibility to impoverished communities while damaging the prospects of the wider renewable power sector in a world desperate to reduce carbon emissions following the Copenhagen climate change summit.

### [Richard Heinberg: The Meaning of Copenhagen](#)

It was the pivotal international conference of the new century. Tens of thousands showed up, including heads of state, officials at all levels of government, representatives of environmental organizations, and ordinary citizens from nearly 200 countries. Scientists had warned that, without a strong agreement to reduce carbon emissions, the consequences for civilization and the world's ecosystems would be cataclysmic.

On the sidelines sat powerful forces (including pro-growth business interests and fossil fuel companies) that preferred a weak agreement or none at all. Their strategic public relations efforts ("by far and away the biggest public relations campaign that I've ever seen," according to PR veteran James Hoggan, cofounder of DeSmogBlog.com and author of *Climate Cover-Up: The Crusade to Deny Global Warming*) paid off when, only days before the meeting, thousands of private emails between climate scientists were hacked and released to the public; during the next few days, prominent right-wing commentators assured one and all that "climategate" completely undercut any scientific basis for thinking that human actions cause global warming. While nothing in the emails did in fact call established climate science into question, the desired and actual effect of the exercise was to destabilize public support for a strong agreement in Copenhagen.

On the streets were tens of thousands of mostly young activists and NGO campaigners, and even a few scientists, who were prepared to raise hell if world leaders didn't act boldly to reduce carbon emissions.

So, on the whole, heads of state still felt obliged to come up with some results—but nothing too radical.

### [Angry farmers rally outside Australian parliament](#)

(AP:CANBERRA, Australia) Angry farmers wearing broad-brimmed hats and cracking kangaroo-hide whips rallied outside Parliament Monday as one of their colleagues continued a hunger strike to demand compensation for Australian climate change policy.

The protest by 250 farmers and their supporters drew public attention to the plight of sheep farmer Peter Spencer, who they say is on the 43rd day of his hunger strike to protest that he is not allowed to clear vegetation from his 20,000 acre (8,000 hectare) farm.

### [Conservative skeptics battle clerics who believe in climate change](#)

"Environmentalism sees Earth and its systems as the product of chance and therefore fragile, subject to easy and catastrophic disruption," the group said in a recent statement. "The Biblical worldview sees Earth and its systems as robust, self-regulating, and self-correcting, not immune to harm but durable."

Land also believes that many climate scientists see humans as a threat to the planet. He and other skeptics disagree.

"Man comes first," Land said. "Not animals. Not the planet."

Robert Parham, director of the Nashville-based Baptist Center for Ethics, thinks Land and other skeptics should take another look at the Bible. Parham, who supports climate-change legislation, says that the Bible also has at least two stories about human-caused environmental disasters. The first is when human beings were cast out of the Garden of Eden, he said. The second came during the great flood.

### [Greenhouse Gases: Who's Cheating?: \*The amounts of carbon in the atmosphere are out of whack with predictions and reported output\*](#)

As the world gets serious about fighting climate change, a huge question looms: Are countries and companies really reducing their greenhouse gas emissions as much as they claim? The answer is crucial not just for the planet, but for business. The tighter the limits on emissions, the higher the price companies have to pay to pollute—and, conversely, the more profits some companies will reap by releasing less gas and monetizing the reductions under the umbrella of cap and trade. Considering the billions of dollars at stake, "can we really trust what's reported?" asks Pieter P. Tans, senior scientist at the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's Earth System Research Laboratory in Boulder, Colo.

Tans and many other researchers worry that the answer is no.

## [Climate change far worse than thought before](#)

NEW DELHI: Global alarm over climate change and its effects has risen manifold after the 2007 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Since then, many of the 2,500-odd IPCC scientists have found climate change is progressing faster than the worst-case scenario they had predicted.



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