



## Drumbeat: January 22, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 22, 2010 - 9:09am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Should energy independence be a high priority in the US?](#)

The year is 2013, five years after peak oil. Gas is now over 11.00 a gallon. The average American no longer drives a car. Only the government and the military have access to large amounts of gasoline. It is a world none of us could have imagined.

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00 barrels a day in 2010, analysts including Jeffrey Currie said in an e-mailed report today. The country is the world's second-biggest fuel user.

### [Pakistan: Rise in fertilizer rates to cause Rabi yield decline](#)

LAHORE - The sudden raise in the prices of fertilizers after acute shortage of water in the country could lead to decline production of Rabi crops particularly wheat up to 20 to 30 per cent of the total production.

Experts said that the quantity of fertilizers is usually increased in case of water shortage.

### [Zambia: State to Plan Ahead for Indeni Maintenance](#)

MINISTRY of Energy and Water Development Permanent Secretary Teddy Kasonso has said that advance preparations in the face of routine maintenance closures at Indeni Oil Refinery will help address the fuel shortages in the country during the period.

In the past, the nation has experienced fuel shortages because of starting the preparations for sufficient fuel stocks at the last minute.

### [Ethiopia inflation soars to 7.1 pct y/y in Dec](#)

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) - Ethiopia's year-on-year inflation rose to 7.1 percent in December from 0.6 percent in November on the back of rising fuel, food and construction material prices, the statistics office said on Friday.

Inflation in the vast Horn of Africa nation hit a high of 64.2 percent in July 2008. It then entered a period of deflation from July to October last year.

### [Life getting harsher in North Korea](#)

Food shortages have been made more painful because "it's the elite that creams off the food produce," said Muntarbhorn, whose six-year term expires this year, at a press conference in Tokyo.

"There's also a shortage of medicines, particularly now the H1N1 flu has arrived," said Muntarbhorn, who said he had interviewed many refugees from North Korea but never been allowed to visit the isolated country.

### [Indonesia: Gasoline prices in Timika skyrocket](#)

This shortage of fuel had caused a two-kilometer long queue of hundreds of motorbikes and cars for gasoline at two fuel stations in Timika over the past week.

In response to the situation, Nawaripi fuel station's supervisor, Rifai, said the state oil company, Pertamina, just delivered him eight to 10 kilo litres a day over the past six days.

That supply was much lower than 29 kilo litres a day he normally received from Pertamina, he said.

### [Hawaii school bus service being cut back as costs soar](#)

Public school bus routes, which were cut back in November, will be reduced further next school year and the fare may climb to \$1 from 75 cents.

The Department of Education will eliminate more school bus routes on O'ahu next school year by increasing the distance students will be required to walk to school.

Walk distances for students were increased in November from 1 mile to 1.5 miles for secondary students, and the fare jumped from 35 cents to 75 cents for a one-way trip.

### [Asia Fuel Oil-India Essar offers second Feb cargo](#)

SINGAPORE, Jan 22 (Reuters) - India's Essar Oil has issued a tender offering up to 60,000 tonnes of February-loading fuel oil, its second cargo for the month, amid an improving market, tender documents showed on Friday.

### [Oil Caused Recession, Not Wall Street](#)

The take home from my work and that of Hamilton's is that the received wisdom may be wrong. Wall Street, sub-prime and regulatory failure are not the ultimate cause of the economic melt down. The root of this crisis is probably oil.

### [Are You Prepared for the 5 Deadly Emergencies?](#)

Oil prices are on the devil's own roller coaster, but the big picture is that we are still in a head-on collision with peak oil. What's more, the cheap, easy-to-pump oil is fast being used up.

To be sure, there were plenty of oil discoveries in 2009, especially in Brazil and the Gulf of Mexico. A whopping 10 billion barrels of oil was added to reserves, the highest rate since 2000. However, the world is consuming around 83 million barrels a day, which equates to 31 billion barrels a year. So, even in a good year, we barely replaced one third of the oil we consumed.

### [Biofuels: The New Alchemy](#)

At the World Future Energy Summit, some of the most influential people in the renewable energy industry will strategize for solutions to the global climate crisis. Read about some of these new technologies.

### [Solar Power: Sunshine's Cloudy Days](#)

After a period of rapid expansion, panel manufacturers today are reeling from a pronounced supply surplus, falling prices and stagnating sales. In 2009, industry revenue plunged by nearly 40% to about \$25 billion from \$40 billion the previous year, according to BankAmerica Merrill Lynch alternative-energy analyst Steven Milunovich. Solar-panel output far outstripped demand last year; manufacturers made 66% more product than they were able to sell, estimates research firm iSuppli located in El

Segundo, Calif. Some analysts believe the dismal conditions will persist into 2011, setting up marginal players worldwide for failure. "A large number of manufacturers will not survive," says Paul Semenza, an analyst with research company DisplaySearch, based in San Jose, Calif.

### [Cutting Carbon: Should We Capture and Store It?](#)

The potential impact of CCS is huge. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that CCS could contribute between 10% and 55% of the cumulative worldwide carbon mitigation effort over the next 90 years. The International Energy Agency says that CCS is "the most important single new technology for CO<sub>2</sub> savings" in power generation and industry, and will need to account for about one-fifth of the carbon mitigation effort this century — reducing carbon emissions as much as renewable energy sources will.

Though it requires up to 40% more energy to run a CCS coal power plant than a regular coal plant, CCS could potentially capture about 90% of all the carbon emitted by the plant. To solve the problem of climate change, we "need to use every option we can," says Nick Otter, head of the newly-created Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute (GCCSI) in Australia, which will fund pilot programs and network CCS efforts around the world. "And we've got to have some realism to the approach."

### [In Abu Dhabi, the Green Economy is in Rude Health](#)

The feeling among many conference-goers can be summed up like this: the politicians might have failed to act on climate change, but everybody else is going to push on regardless. Take Bill Gross, founder of eSolar, a California-based firm that builds solar power plants that use mirrors to concentrate sunlight and boil water that then turns a turbine. Gross has just cut a deal with a privately-owned Chinese power equipment manufacturer to build, over the next 10 years, solar power plants that will generate 2 gigawatts of electricity. To put that in perspective, that's about four times more power than what's produced by all the solar power plants in the world right now. There's interest beyond China, too. After a lunchtime presentation, would-be buyers from the Middle East and Europe milled around to talk to Gross about possible projects, as well.

### [Real People, Real Preparation, Part 6 With Faith Carr and Carolyn Baker](#)

Faith Carr, after working hunched over a desk for 35 years, ended up disabled. Exhausted after even more years of progressive political activism with no success, she turned her hand to her own backyard. The 25 square-foot herb garden turned into a homestead. Come the revolution, she'll bring the eats.

### [Pick-your-own vegetables to replace flowers in high street](#)

A Lancashire town is experimenting with using traditional floral displays, including hanging baskets and herbaceous borders, to grow slightly less colourful but more practical greens.

The idea taking shape in Clitheroe is to replace flowers with edible vegetables and offer a modest "pick-your-own" service of plantings to anyone passing by.

### [Growing Home—Urban Agriculture in Chicago](#)

"Well over 50 percent of the world's population lives in urban communities," says Orrin Williams, the employment training coordinator for Growing Home, as he explains the importance of urban agriculture.

"Urban agriculture is, in my mind, critical to the rebirth of cities and communities that have fallen on hard times," Williams says.

### [Oilrigs should be used for homes in areas at risk of flooding, report says](#)

Decommissioned North Sea oil platforms should be towed to the waterfronts of coastal cities at risk of flooding and converted into homes, shops and universities protected from rising sea levels, a study recommends.

Britain should not retreat from the waves but embrace them, adapting to climate change and consequent flooding by building new communities, either on stilts or floating platforms.

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### [Oil Falls to Lowest in a Month on Concerns Over Demand, China](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil fell for a third day, dipping below \$76 a barrel in New York to its lowest in a month, after a U.S. government report showed refineries in the biggest energy consumer cut processing in response to lower fuel demand.

U.S. refineries ran at 78.4 percent of capacity last week, the lowest rate outside the Atlantic hurricane season since at least 1989, according to the Energy Department. Oil is headed for a second weekly drop after U.S. President Barack Obama proposed restrictions on risk-taking at financial institutions while concerns grew that China may take more steps to curb price increases.

### [Commodities Have Further to Advance, Hermes Fund's O'Shea Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Commodities, as measured by the S&P GSCI Light Energy Index, may gain as much as another 10 percent this year, led by oil, sugar and coffee, according to Colin O'Shea, head of commodities at Hermes Fund Managers Ltd.

The index, which Hermes uses as a benchmark, advanced 15 percent last year, buoyed by Chinese demand for oil, copper and other commodities. The gauge has a 36 percent weighting in energy, 30 percent in agriculture and almost 18 percent in industrial metals, based on data from Jan. 21.

### [Russia Sees Oil, Gas Share of GDP Falling to 14%](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia, the world's biggest energy supplier, may see the share of oil and natural gas in gross domestic product fall to 14 percent within a decade from about 25 percent now, Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin said.

Oil prices may average less than \$70 in the course of the next 10 years, undercutting revenue and reducing the energy industry's share of GDP, Kudrin said at a conference in Moscow today. Budget revenue from the mineral extraction tax and export tariffs on oil and gas may drop as much 4 percent during this decade, Kudrin said.

### [Russia Considers Shift From Crude Oil Export, Extraction Taxes](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Russia is considering shifting from oil export and mineral extraction taxes to a levy on "excess profit," said Ilya Trunin, director of the Finance Ministry's tax and customs department.

### [Schlumberger Profit Falls as Customers Cut Spending](#)



(Bloomberg) -- Schlumberger Ltd., the world's largest oilfield-services provider, said fourth-quarter profit fell 31 percent after oil producers slashed spending during the global recession.

Net income dropped to \$795 million, or 65 cents a share, from \$1.15 billion, or 95 cents, a year earlier, Schlumberger said today in a statement. Excluding one-time items, profit was 67 cents a share, 3 cents higher than the average of 26 analyst estimates compiled by Bloomberg.

### [Venezuela's Planta Centro Generator Sputters Amid Energy Crisis](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Planta Centro, Venezuela's biggest fossil-fueled power plant, is operating at less than a fifth of its designed capacity, exacerbating a power crisis that has shuttered businesses from aluminum plants to shopping malls.

The plant operated at 267 megawatts of power on Jan. 20, or at about 13 percent of its 2,000 megawatt capacity, according to a daily report from Venezuela's grid manager, the National Electric System Administration Center, known by its Spanish acronym CNG. The plant hasn't produced at more than 26 percent of capacity in at least three months, according to CNG.

### [Venezuela rejects Junin 10, Mariscal Sucre offers](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) - Offers made by foreign companies to help develop Venezuela's Mariscal Sucre offshore gas field and its Junin 10 extra-heavy crude field "did not meet expectations," oil minister Rafael Ramirez said on Thursday.

### [Nigerian Court Tells Cabinet to Decide on Presidency](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Nigeria's Federal High Court said the Cabinet must decide within 14 days whether ailing President Umaru Yar'Adua is unfit to discharge his duties as leader of Africa's top oil producer.

Justice Dan Abutu issued the ruling today in one of three lawsuits seeking to force Yar'Adua to step down and hand power to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan.

### ['We can survive -- but we must change'](#)

Human population has been on overdrive since the Civil War, he said, and a sustainable level of human population may be no more than 1 billion people. That has created quite a predicament -- the long emergency. A group of 500 scientists gathered for an energy conference in Denver last fall agreed that the global rate of oil production peaked in July

of 2008. From that point on, oil will be increasingly expensive and harder to pump.

"Our governments are not prepared for peak oil any more than they were for the recent recession," Brownlee said.

The experts are telling us we need a 20-year crash program to prepare for and avoid the coming devastating consequences, but "it`s not even being considered yet. We`re likely to be caught short. Local communities will feel the pain."

### [Reliance Industries Q3 profit rises 15.8 percent](#)

MUMBAI — Indian refining and energy giant Reliance Industries announced its first profit rise in over a year on Friday as its performance was boosted by higher natural gas production.

Reliance, India's largest private sector company, said net profit rose 15.8 percent to 40.08 billion rupees (878 million dollars) in the fiscal third quarter to December from 34.62 billion rupees a year earlier.

### [The electric car revolution will soon take to the streets](#)

For years, the promise and hype surrounding electric cars failed to materialize. But as this year's Detroit auto show demonstrated, major car companies and well-funded startups — fueled by federal clean-energy funding and rapid improvement in lithium-ion batteries — are now producing electric vehicles that will soon be in showrooms.

### [Swiss pilots aim to circle world in a solar-powered plane](#)

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Bertrand Piccard is no conventional environmental activist -- he hopes to raise awareness about the potential of renewable energy by flying a solar-powered aircraft around the world.

"What we want to do is to fly day and night to show that, with renewable energies, you can have unlimited duration of flight, no restriction," Piccard told AFP at the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, where he had a booth to promote his venture.

### [British State May Have to Subsidize Nuclear Power, Auditor Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The British government may have to subsidize construction of nuclear power plants because it lacks a guarantee from Electricite de France SA that new stations will be built, the country's auditor said today in a report.



Economic considerations, including the price of carbon, difficulties getting plants approved and EDF's financial position may hamper the company's efforts to complete projects, the National Audit Office said.

### [NRC cites fire hazards at Alabama nuclear plant](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Federal regulators warned the Tennessee Valley Authority on Thursday about "apparent violations" involving fire safety at the utility's Browns Ferry nuclear plant in north Alabama.

Officials from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said the findings don't pose an immediate safety risk but are urging TVA to fix the three-reactor plant, which suffered a nearly disastrous fire in 1975 and later had to shut down for more than two decades due to problems.

### [Governments 'must tackle' roots of nature crisis](#)

Governments must tackle the underlying causes of biodiversity loss if they are to stem the rate at which ecosystems and species are disappearing.

That was one of the conclusions of an inter-governmental workshop in London held in preparation for October's UN biodiversity summit in Nagoya, Japan.

### [China-led group may discuss climate fund for poor](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - A meeting of four of the world's fastest-growing carbon emitters on Sunday ahead of a January 31 deadline for countries to submit their action plans to fight climate change may discuss a climate fund for poorer nations.

### [Senators Want to Bar E.P.A. Greenhouse Gas Limits](#)

WASHINGTON — In a direct challenge to the Environmental Protection Agency's authority, Senator Lisa Murkowski, Republican of Alaska, introduced a resolution on Thursday to prevent the agency from taking any action to regulate carbon dioxide and other climate-altering gases.

### [Protecting against climate change could cost nothing](#)

Fresh air is valuable stuff. Climate change mitigation measures needn't cost us a penny, because the clean-air benefits could more than repay the price, according to a new

study.

### [Low-cost carriers greener than full-service](#)

Ryanair has emerged as an unlikely model for sustainable travel in new research showing that low-cost carriers produce up to 35 percent less carbon emissions per passenger than their full-service counterparts, due to higher load factors and seat density, as well as newer fleets.

### [Global Warming Increases Flood Risk in Mountain Areas](#)

ScienceDaily — The world's mountainous regions are home to about 800 million people and the source of some of the world's major rivers. In these regions, runoff is strongly affected by temperature. This suggests that flooding could be quite sensitive to global warming, but there has been some lack of scientific consensus on the effects of temperature variations on floods.

### [Stronger Atlantic Hurricanes Seen Increasing, Damaging Property](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The strongest Atlantic hurricanes may almost double in frequency by the end of the century as the planet warms, U.S. scientists said in the journal Science.

Occurrence of the most destructive hurricanes may rise 81 percent over 80 years while the total number of storms, including weaker systems, is projected to drop by 28 percent, the researchers said. The net effect may be to increase property damage by 30 percent, Tom Knutson, a co-author of the study, said in a telephone interview from Princeton, New Jersey.

### [Temperatures in Past Decade Were Warmest Since 1880, NASA Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Temperatures in the decade that ended in 2009 were the warmest since record-keeping began in 1880, NASA said, backing up data from the U.K. Met Office and the United Nations' World Meteorological Organization.

For the past three decades, surface temperatures rose about 0.36 degrees Fahrenheit (0.2 degrees Celsius) per decade, said Gavin Schmidt, a climate scientist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York. Average global temperatures have increased by about 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit since 1880.

"It's completely unambiguous that the last 10-year period from January 2000 to December 2009 is very clearly the warmest decade in the historical record," Schmidt said yesterday.



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