



## Drumbeat: February 24, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on February 24, 2010 - 9:07am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Michael T. Klare - Avatar: The Prequel](#)

#### 2144 in 3-D

Imagine them, then, on a future, energy-starved planet. In fact, I can easily picture such a future, so let me take one more step and offer myself to Cameron as a technical consultant on his prequel. Admittedly, I wouldn't be the person to write the film's plot or script -- I know my limits -- but when it comes to charting future resource wars, I think I could be useful. Drawing on Cameron's clues in *Avatar* and my own books, including *Resource Wars*, *Blood and Oil*, and *Rising Powers*, *Shrinking Planet*, let me just sketch out the prequel scenario I envision:

It's the torrid summer of 2144, just a decade before *Avatar* begins. (That movie takes place in summer 2154, after a flight from Earth that, we're told, involves six continuous years of sleep, which helps us backdate Jake Scully's Venezuelan combat tours.) As it has been for decades, the world is at war, with competing power blocs fighting bitterly over a diminishing pool of vital resources.

Three great power centers dominate the global resource struggle, all located in the northern latitudes where the climate still remains tolerable and the land still receives sufficient rainfall to support agriculture. The first of these, in whose legions both Scully and Quaritch fight, is the North American Federation, founded after the United States, facing desertification in its southern half, invaded and absorbed Canada. The second, Greater China, incorporating northern China, the Korean peninsula, and eastern Siberia (seized from Russia in a series of wars), dominates what's left of Asia; the third, the North European Alliance, encompassing Germany, Russia (west of the Urals), and Scandinavia, relies heavily on Arctic resources. As in the world portrayed by George Orwell in 1984, these powers continually jockey for dominance in shifting alliances, while their armies face one another in the torrid, still relatively resource-rich parts of the planet. In this neo-Orwellian world, warfare and the constant pressure of resource competition are the only constants.

d drive prices lower.

### [Imperial May Extend Cold Lake Field's Life by Decades](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Imperial Oil Ltd., the Canadian energy producer majority-owned by Exxon Mobil Corp., plans to extend production from its biggest oil field by several decades.

Imperial expects regulatory approval by the end of June for a 20 percent expansion of output at an oil-sands operation known as Cold Lake, the Calgary-based company's largest asset, said spokesman Pius Rolheiser. Most of Cold Lake's 150,000 barrels of daily output is piped to refineries near Chicago and other U.S. Midwest cities.

### [Hummer to close after collapse of Chinese deal](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney.com) -- General Motors' deal to sell its Hummer brand to a Chinese automaker fell through Wednesday and the company said it now plans to shut down the brand.

GM did not give any details about why the agreement to sell Hummer to Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machines Co. Ltd. could not be completed, saying only that it was disappointed it was unable to close the deal.

### [The new wave: Harnessing the power of the ocean](#)

(CNN) -- Producing electricity using the power of the oceans could start a new wave in renewable energy. But some fear that "wave farms" could damage the livelihoods of fishermen by rendering coastal waters off limits.

### [Study: Can Hurricanes Cause Climate Change?](#)

Back in the Pliocene era, between 5 and 3 million years ago, the average global temperature was about 7°F warmer than it is today, yet atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were about the same. If carbon dioxide were the sole factor in warming, that wouldn't make any sense. It isn't, of course; there are several other contributors, including the brightness of the sun and the location of the continents (whose positions dictate, among other things, where ice caps can form), but these were all pretty much the same in the Pliocene as well.

So, what accounted for the higher global temperature? According to a new paper in *Nature*, one possible factor is hurricanes. Scientists have long suspected that global warming could make hurricanes more intense in some way, but the new study suggests the effect works both ways: tropical cyclones could help drive up temperatures in response. "We're suggesting that hurricanes could have created a permanent El Niño condition," says Yale's Alexey Fedorof, lead author of the study.

[Michael T. Klare - Avatar: The Prequel](#)**2144 in 3-D**

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Three great power centers dominate the global resource struggle, all located in the northern latitudes where the climate still remains tolerable and the land still receives sufficient rainfall to support agriculture. The first of these, in whose legions both Scully and Quaritch fight, is the North American Federation, founded after the United States, facing desertification in its southern half, invaded and absorbed Canada. The second, Greater China, incorporating northern China, the Korean peninsula, and eastern Siberia (seized from Russia in a series of wars), dominates what's left of Asia; the third, the North European Alliance, encompassing Germany, Russia (west of the Urals), and Scandinavia, relies heavily on Arctic resources. As in the world portrayed by George Orwell in 1984, these powers continually jockey for dominance in shifting alliances, while their armies face one another in the torrid, still relatively resource-rich parts of the planet. In this neo-Orwellian world, warfare and the constant pressure of resource competition are the only constants.

[China oil buys from Saudi, Iran drop; Libya, Angola up](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - China imported less crude oil from Saudi Arabia and Iran in January from a year earlier, but raised purchases from African exporters such as Angola and Libya and smaller MidEast producers Kuwait and Iraq, customs data showed.

But traders familiar with Saudi and Iranian supplies to China said the data could be skewed due to the Lunar New Year holiday and warned against interpreting them as evidence of weakening Chinese demand.

[Insurance costs for oil projects in the Gulf decline by 30%](#)

The cost of insuring hydrocarbon projects in the GCC – both upstream and downstream – has come down by as much as 30 percent in certain cases during the past two years,

industry insiders said.

### [Norway cuts Ormen Lange size estimate by quarter](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate on Wednesday reduced by about a quarter its resource estimate for Royal Dutch Shell's Ormen Lange gas field which supplies up to 20 percent of British gas needs.

After two disappointing appraisal wells drilled in the still undeveloped northern part of the field, the NPD cut Ormen Lange's official recoverable reserves estimate by 103 million cubic metres of oil equivalent from an earlier 395 mcm view.

### [Is oil refinement all dried up?](#)

The refinery sector in France is at a critical juncture. A study recently published by the French Institute for Petrol revealed that "in 2008, the financial crisis took a heavy toll on the petrol refinery industry." According to Jean-Louis Schilansky, president of the French Oil Industry Association (UFIP), the 12 oil refineries have lost as much as "150 million euros a month" since March 2009.

In 1975, there were 24 active refineries in France. Now, less than half remain with six of them owned by Total. According to the French Institute for Petrol, the levels of refinery in Europe as a whole dropped by two-thirds between 2008 and 2009.

### [Review of "Eastern Canadian crude oil supply and its implications for regional energy security"](#)

This graph clearly illustrates the stunning decrease in imports from the North Sea (UK and Norway), which provided almost two-thirds of eastern Canadian supply in 2000. North Sea decline has forced eastern Canada to increasingly rely on Algeria, Angola and Iraq to fill the gap, all countries with political stability risks.

Hughes' analysis of the drop in export capacity of key "safe suppliers" fits nicely with the work of Jeff Brown, Robert Hirsch, Jeff Rubin, and Paul Stevens, all of whom have addressed the impending threat of oil export decline. Hughes' analysis appears to be unique insofar as he has applied the export decline syndrome to the energy security of a specific import-dependent region.

### [Canadian Oil Sands plans Syncrude expansion](#)

Canadian Oil Sands Trust said today it is formulating plans to boost production at Syncrude Canada by more than expected by 2020.

### [TNK-BP: More Drama Or Business As Usual?](#)

On the surface, it might seem like a new round of mystery and intrigue might be enveloping Russian oil, particularly involving BP's joint venture there, TNK-BP. The Financial Times recently suggested Russia was moving closer to stripping TNK-BP of its license for the big Kovykta gas field.

But this sort of thing always precedes big energy deals in Russia, and the way the AAR Group of Russian shareholders in TNK-BP sees it, everything is under control.

### [Kazakh backing keeps energy network alive](#)

ROGUN, Tajikistan - Since the Central Asia winter energy crisis two years ago, when freezing temperatures lasted for several weeks, cooperation dynamics within the region have witnessed rapid change. Upstream Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which rely on electricity imports during winter, were hit particularly badly in the crisis as they were unable to supply the population with enough electricity and gas. Consequently, Tajikistan was forced to declare a humanitarian crisis.

The crisis revealed the poor management of energy resources on the part of Central Asian governments and their failure to build effective regional energy cooperation. To make matters worse, last December Uzbekistan left the regional electricity network that linked all the Central Asian states. Tashkent's decision affected Dushanbe's ability to transmit its own electricity through Uzbek territory. While the regional electricity network was built during the Soviet period, Uzbekistan was able to leave the regional system by constructing its own energy plants.

### [Steep rise in coal imports required to power India](#)

India's coal imports for power production are likely to rise to 48 million tonnes (mt) in the next fiscal, sharply higher than the expected imports of 28mt for FY09-10. Both private and public power utilities are likely to contribute to this high figure. Despite India being a coal-rich country, delay in mining activities at captive coal blocks, inferior quality of coal and hindrances in domestic coal transportation has increased power utilities' dependence on imported coal.

### [Floating LNG unit on way to tackle gas crisis](#)

Bangladesh is set to deploy a floating liquefied natural gas (LNG) unit this year to stem shortage of gas, officials have said.

The government is in talks with service companies for launching an LNG import facility and also with LNG suppliers including Qatar to import the fuel, Shahidul Abedin,

director of Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation, said in Singapore recently, a report revealed Monday.

### [32 dams will be constructed throughout country: Pervez Ashraf](#)

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Water and Power Raja Pervez Ashraf on Tuesday informed Senate that as many as 32 small and medium dams will be constructed throughout the country to bridge the gap between supply and demand of electricity.

### [Power rentals only shortcut to overcoming energy crisis: Ashraf](#)

ISLAMABAD: Rental power generation is the only shortcut to overcoming the existing power crisis, Water and Power Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf said on Tuesday.

### [Venezuela: Heavy consumers deem it unfeasible to lower electricity demand by 20 percent](#)

The leeway of retailers and industrialists in Caracas has almost finished. Although both sectors have reported declines in sales and production due to the energy crisis, they must save more energy to avoid government's penalties.

### [Reopen the Bataan Nuclear Plant](#)

We have been brainwashed into believing that the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) in Morong town posed a grave danger to the population because of the possibility of a leak.

What most of us don't know is that the unfounded fear was foisted on us by then President Cory and her subordinates who were on a vengeful spree against ousted dictator Marcos.

All the things Marcos and his wife Imelda built must be destroyed, according to their mindset, because they were the fruits of an evil regime.

### [Uranium Mining Begins Near Grand Canyon: Thousands of Claims Threaten Public Health & Sacred Lands](#)

Grand Canyon, AZ — In defiance of legal challenges and a U.S. Government moratorium, Canadian company Denison Mines has started mining uranium on the north rim of the Grand Canyon. According to the Arizona Daily Sun the mine has been operating since December 2009.



## [Energy Secretary Chu Says U.S. Must Decrease Energy Use](#)

U.S. energy secretary Steven Chu said Wednesday that the U.S. must decrease its energy use to allow developing nations the room to grow, while emphasizing that prosperity doesn't have to come with a large carbon footprint.

## ['Consumer Reports' still likes Prius as top eco-friendly car](#)

Toyota Motor's Prius retained its title as Consumer Reports magazine's top pick for eco-friendly vehicle two weeks after the automaker recalled 437,000 hybrids to fix a brake software flaw.

The carmaker's \$76,572 Lexus LS460L was named best overall vehicle among more than 280 autos tested for the list of best vehicle by product category, CR said Tuesday. The Prius won best "green" car for the seventh year in a row.

## [California Bill Takes Aim at Basic Right: Free Parking](#)

SAN FRANCISCO -- For many drivers in California, the right to free parking is as fundamental as freedom of speech or the right to bear arms. Politicians who challenge the California car culture do so at their own peril.

But that hasn't stopped state Sen. Alan Lowenthal from pushing legislation to reduce the amount of free parking available in California cities. Not that it's free everywhere -- downtown Los Angeles and San Francisco, for example, charge high rates like most large cities do. And most cities have parking meters in congested areas.

## [California's high speed rail dream](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- California's high speed rail plan is eye candy for anyone who likes big, fast shiny things.

If built, it would connect Los Angeles to San Francisco via one of the fastest trains in the world. Traveling along its own separate track, proponents say the bullet train would hit speeds exceeding 220 miles per hour, stopping periodically to pick up passengers in a network of sparkling steel and glass stations.

## [Austin Energy seeking more wind farm land](#)

Austin City Council members will decide Thursday whether to add another 4,664 acres to Austin Energy's growing stockpile of potential wind farm land.

If approved, the 30-year lease would bring the utility company's total West Texas holdings to 22,000 acres. A spokeswoman for the group said other contingencies must be resolved before turbines actually hit the ground, but construction could begin as early as 2013. The city would pay about \$50,000 a year for the land.

### [A change of mind on Cape Wind](#)

Eight years ago, I was strongly opposed to the wind farm on Nantucket Sound. I didn't think it was worth it to trade the aesthetic and spiritual values of a beautiful natural environment for a limited contribution to our nation's energy problems. Today, I strongly support Cape Wind.

Back then, based on my research about our energy needs, I believed that only an Apollo-type project with full support of the government would make sense to solve our energy problems. Fortunately, we have evolved over these years and now there does exist a national consensus to move forward in a comprehensive way to keep us safer in this politically volatile world and protect us from severe climate change.

### [An Interview with Mike Small of the Fife Diet](#)

#### **What were the challenges you encountered?**

Well, funnily enough it wasn't sourcing the food – that was relatively easy to do. Fife's been blessed with good arable land and access to some seafood and quite good meat, though not very good dairy. The challenge was our time and preparing unprocessed food from scratch. So one of the things the project revealed was that we're all time-poor, over stressed and over worked. I think it was kind of a revelation to us that this isn't about getting local food – which is relatively easily done, this is about our society which has developed so that we're latched to mortgages that we can't afford, so we've all got to work too much and then we need convenience food.

### [Saudi Arabia to export solar power soon, US says](#)

Riyadh: US Energy Secretary Steven Chu expects that Saudi Arabia will emerge as a major exporter of solar energy and this could reach the current level of the kingdom's oil exports.

He also dismissed fears of a looming crisis caused by dwindling oil production.

Chu, a strong backer of alternative energy, said that there is big scope for Saudi Arabia to tap into its vast solar energy sources.

"The kingdom's drive to invest a portion of its oil revenue on scientific and technical



research will enable it to strengthen diversification of energy sources and promote renewable energy programmes.

"This will contribute to achieving remarkable growth in its industrial output and increasing productivity potential," he said.

...Speaking to reporters with regard to oil supply, Chu said the market would adjust even if supplies were to decline. "I don't see any peak in oil," Chu said, dismissing the idea that global oil production was at or near a peak and is expected to slide because depletion was outrunning new discoveries. "I see a transition to more expensive forms of oil like that produced from harder-to-access fields and secondary recovery schemes.

### [Crude Declines as European Equities, U.S. Stock Futures Drop](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Crude oil declined, erasing earlier gains, as European stock markets fell and before a U.S. government report expected to show crude inventories advanced last week.

### [Jeff Rubin: Hugo Chávez for premier of Alberta](#)

Is there heartache in the heartland? As Albertans shoulder the weight of a new \$4.5-billion budget deficit (not to mention the burden of equalization payments to the rest of Canada), despite the fact that they own the world's largest oil reserve open to private investment, some might suggest that something is seriously amiss in the heartland.

But instead of imposing painful health care spending cuts or equally unappealing personal tax hikes, maybe there is another, better way to go.

### [North Sea oil 'could last at least a decade'](#)

Britain's offshore oil and gas fields could still be delivering 1.5m barrels a day by 2020, enough to satisfy 35% of UK energy demand, according to industry trade body Oil & Gas UK – but only if high fuel prices and tax breaks combine to make viable a growing backlog of exploration and development projects in the North Sea.

Without renewed investment, production from already mature fields, currently meeting about two-thirds of Britain's energy needs, will drop to 0.5m barrels a day by the end of the decade, representing only 11% of energy demand.

### [Oman: Boost continues](#)

(MENAFN - Oxford Business Group) The Omani oil and gas sector's significant

investment in enhanced oil recovery (EOR) techniques has reaped rewards for the second year running, as newly released figures show the Sultanate's daily production rose once again in 2009.

Oil output increased to an average 812,500 barrels per day last year, a 7.4% hike on 2008 production. The figures represent the second year of sustained production growth in the sector, reversing a trend of decline which first set in during 2001 when Omani oil production hit its peak of an average 956,000 bpd. According to media reports, the government hopes to increase production in the sector once again in 2010, hitting a production target of between 860,000 and 900,000 barrels per day.

### [Green laws 'could hit Indonesia flows'](#)

Indonesia's oil production, which has slumped in recent years, could be hit by new environment laws in South-East Asia's biggest economy, director general of oil and gas Evita Legowo said today.

### [Total Expects Refinery Deal as Unions Urge Strike End](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Total SA, Europe's largest refiner, expects to sign an agreement with unions today to end a weeklong strike that's hobbled operations at its refineries in France.

Workers at the Provence refinery near Marseille voted at midday to suspend their walkout, Christian Coste, a representative of the main Confederation Generale du Travail union, said by telephone. Fuel shipments and the restart of refinery units will begin "very quickly," he said.

### [Iran says can deal with gasoline sanctions - report](#)

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran is prepared to deal with any sanctions on its gasoline imports that world powers might impose over the country's disputed nuclear activities, a senior oil official was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

Iran's hardline rulers have repeatedly shrugged off the impact of sanctions imposed on the country over its expanding nuclear work, which the West fears is a cover to build bombs. Tehran denies the charge, saying its nuclear programme is peaceful.

### [China's Refining to Rise, Boosting Crude Purchases, Poten Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China, the world's second-largest energy consumer, may boost refining capacity by more than 10 percent by 2014, leading to gains in crude imports, according

to calculations based on estimates by Poten & Partners.

China's capacity to convert crude into petroleum products may rise to more than 7.5 million barrels a day from less than 7 million barrels a day last year, according to a report by the U.S. energy consultant last week.

### [Falklands have right to oil, London says](#)

London said the Falkland government is "entitled" to explore for oil and gas within its waters. Chris Bryant, the British foreign minister charged with the Latin America portfolio, said it was abundantly clear that Falkland Islanders want to remain British.

"We're also clear that the Falkland Islands government is entitled to develop a hydrocarbons industry within its waters," he said in a statement. "We remain focused on supporting the Falkland Islands government in developing this legitimate business in its territory."

### [Argentina to take Falklands protest to the UN](#)

THE diplomatic row over the Falkland Islands has deepened dramatically after Argentina announced it would take its protests over British oil exploration to the UN today.

At the Rio Group summit in Mexico yesterday, Buenos Aires won unprecedented support from other Latin American states for its demand that Britain stop drilling in waters near the islands.

### [Nigeria's Jonathan Must Fix Oil Industry Investment, Security](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Nigeria's acting president, Goodluck Jonathan, faces two challenges in keeping crude output from shrinking in Africa's biggest oil producer: guns and cash.

Jonathan, appointed to the helm of Africa's most populous nation in place of ailing President Umaru Yar'Adua by parliament on Feb. 9, needs to calm a four-year-old insurrection in the Niger River delta and raise funds to expand the oil industry, according to analysts at Eurasia Group and PM Consultancy.

### [Basra exports halved on bad weather](#)

Oil exports from Iraq's southern Basra terminal fell by more than half today to 792,000 barrels per day from 1.728 million bpd on the previous day due to bad weather,

according to reports.

A sand storm made it difficult for some ships to berth at export terminals, a shipping source told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

### [Nabucco officials express optimism](#)

SOFIA, Bulgaria, Feb. 24 (UPI) -- Project backers scheduled a 2011 launch date for the construction of the Nabucco pipeline to transport Iraqi, Turkmen and Azeri natural gas, officials said.

Christian Dolezal, the spokesman for the Nabucco gas pipeline consortium, told an audience at an energy forum in Sofia that construction was scheduled for the end of 2011. Gas transits, he said, should begin in 2013.

### [Leaders meets for energy diversity talk](#)

The leaders of central eastern European states will meet today to discuss how to diversify energy sources and focus on the Nabucco gas pipeline and liquefied gas - alternatives to dominant regional supplier Russia.

### [Putin Warns Billionaires Prokhorov, Potanin on Power Investment](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Prime Vladimir Putin threatened four Russian billionaires with fines and penalties if they don't meet the investment commitments they made when acquiring utilities from the state.

### [UAE, US committed to stronger energy partnership](#)

ABU DHABI - UAE Minister of State for Foreign affairs, H.E. Dr. Anwar Gargash, and the US Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu , signed an implementation arrangement between UAE Foreign Ministry and US Department of Energy concerning information exchange and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy on February 24, 2009 in Abu Dhabi.

The Implementing arrangement establishes a framework via which US Department of Energy through its National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) would cooperate and support UAE competent authorities involved in the development of peaceful nuclear energy sector.

### [German 2011 Power Holds Steady Near Its Lowest Price in a Year](#)

(Bloomberg) -- German electricity for delivery next year held steady near its lowest price in almost 12 months on signs an economic recovery may be slow to materialize.

### [Iberdrola Net Falls on Lower Gains From Asset Sales](#)

The power company generates more than half its electricity outside Spain after expanding abroad to avoid relying on the domestic market, where demand dropped last year. Iberdrola is now carrying out a plan to sell assets worth 2.5 billion euros after purchasing U.S. utility Energy East Corp. in 2008 and Scottish Power Ltd. in 2007.

“Operating results increased despite the complex environment, affected by the deterioration of the business in Spain, the weakness in demand and prices,” Iberdrola said in a statement. Electricity demand in mainland Spain fell 4.6 percent in 2009, Red Elctrica Corporacion SA, the operator of the country’s power grid, said Dec. 30.

### [Stephen Leeb: A Long Term Look at Energy Demand and a Great Oil Bargain](#)

The two most important developments that came to light this past weekend both occurred within the energy sector, a sector which is also a key indicator of economic health.

On the global level, we had a report that oil consumption in the U.S. fell in January to its lowest level since 1998. We can interpret this drop in several ways.

Most of the recent decline came in the demand for distillates, including diesel fuel. Diesel fuel, which is used in trucking, railways, and other forms of mass transit, is particularly sensitive to economic activity. The more goods we produce, the more transportation fuel gets consumed and vice versa. In fact, UCLA has recently created a Pulse of Commerce Index based on real-time diesel consumption by the American trucking industry.

Diesel consumption has a very good record as an indicator of industrial production. Unfortunately, this means the drop in January's consumption figures suggests that industrial output is slowing as well.

### [GM Said to Not Win China's Approval for Hummer Deal](#)

(Bloomberg) -- General Motors Co. failed to win approval from Chinese regulators to sell its Hummer brand to Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machinery Co., said two people briefed on the deal.

A government agency indicated that it won't provide approval for Chengdu, China-based Tengzhong to purchase the Hummer line of sport-utility vehicles from GM in China, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the decision hasn't been made public.

## [What the Olympics Can Teach Us About the Price of Gas](#)

But the oil sands controversy at the Olympics is an interesting window into the increasingly complex questions of how will the world move itself around, and what really is the future of oil anyway?

Is oil a scarce geologic commodity on the verge of hitting an effective production peak, and soaring in price as a result of resulting scarcity? That's what the founder of the Virgin Group, Sir Richard Branson, warned the UK government. He thinks the crunch will come within five years. His opinion is shared by the CEOs of at least two oil companies, Total and Petrobras, even though recent oil finds by Petrobras are often cited by peak oil skeptics as evidence that no crisis is near.

## [Energy expert brings conservation message](#)

Amory Lovins has been preaching energy efficiency for decades.

..."Tonight, I invite you to re-imagine the world," Lovins said to start his talk.

His primary message: Saving fuel costs less than buying fuel.

And old-fashioned engineering and outdated ideas about power and transportation are costing the world lots of money.

## [After Fossil Fuels: The Great Transition Ahead](#)

Richard Heinberg, energy expert and senior fellow at the Post Carbon Institute, was in town last night as part of the 2010 Illahee Power and Change lecture series.

In a far-ranging presentation entitled "After Fossil Fuels: The Great Transition Ahead", Heinberg detailed what the audience already seemed to know – that life after fossil fuels will not be the same.

## [21st Century Breakdown](#)

There is no way to avoid this Crisis. It can't be bypassed. Just as the seasons must progress from Spring to Summer through Fall and into Winter, a Crisis must follow an Unraveling. History does not have a rewind button. Secular Winter has arrived and the country couldn't be less prepared for the challenges ahead. The government and the governed enter this highly dangerous period weakened and fragile. The short-sighted economic choices and deferred fiscal decisions will collide with peak oil and uncontrolled



globalization to inflict a horrific resolution to this Crisis. The gravity of our situation cannot be overstated. As politicians and the mainstream media play pretend games of recovery and false optimism, the country hurtles closer to the abyss.

### [Book Review – Future Scenarios, by David Holmgren](#)

The book begins with a discussion of four possible broad energy scenarios that are likely to occur over the next century: techno-explosion, techno-stability, energy decent, and collapse. These scenarios range from continued growth to doom and gloom, and Holmgren writes, “There is a desperate need to recast energy descent as a positive process that can free people from the strictures and dysfunctions of growth economics and consumer culture.” He continues, “This is now apparent to many people around the world and is far more fundamental than a public relations campaign to paint a black sky blue.”

### [Oil production set for discussion](#)

Energy Transitions Group - Northwest will give a presentation titled, "Wake Up Call: A discussion on energy transitions, economics, and the environment from a peak oil perspective" at 7 p.m. March 10.

### [Preparing for 2014-15 "Oil Crunch" Forecast by UK Industry Group](#)

What can cities, businesses and individuals do to prepare for such energy price volatility, buy hybrids? Actually, the report asserts, "there is real danger that the focus on technological advances in cars is making consumers and government complacent."

More urgent steps need to be taken by policymakers in particular to avert this impending crisis.

### [A Danish biotechnology company, Novozymes, says it has cultivated a new enzyme that could convert maize, wheat, straw and woodchips into ethanol for as little as 32 pence per litre.](#)

### ['Ecological disaster' looms as oil spill hits Po](#)

ROME — An oil spill that fouled a small river in northern Italy has reached the River Po and officials are warning that an ecological disaster is under way.

Milan regional officials say the cause of the spill was likely sabotage at a former refinery, and that an unknown amount of gasoline and oil spilled into the Lambro River near Piacenza.

### [Britain's Weather Office Proposes Climate-Gate Do-Over](#)

At a meeting Monday of 150 climate scientists, representatives of Britain's weather office proposed that the world's climatologists start all over again and produce a new trove of global temperature data that is open to public scrutiny and "rigorous" peer review.

### [Tackling climate change 'urgent,' Hu says](#)

China's highest leadership yesterday began considering proposals from the country's senior researchers in an attempt to help achieve the country's ambitious goal of cutting carbon intensity by 40 to 45 percent by 2020.

The move is a sign that China will roll out more economic and industrial policies to tackle climate change this year when drawing up the development roadmap for the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015).

### [UN talks on international climate change treaty to resume in April in Germany](#)

BONN, Germany (AP) — The United Nations says formal negotiations on an international treaty to control global warming will resume in Bonn in April, four months after the failed climate change summit in Copenhagen.

U.N. climate chief Yvo de Boer said Tuesday the negotiating schedule is being intensified in order to secure a global climate deal at the end of the year. After the Bonn meeting April 9-11, more talks are scheduled there for May 31-June 11.

### [UN Calls on Countries to Boost Emission Pledges](#)

BALI, Indonesia—Countries will have to significantly increase their pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions if there is any hope of preventing the catastrophic effects of climate change, according to a U.N. study released Tuesday.

### [New NASA Web Page Sheds Light on Science of Warming World](#)

ScienceDaily — Will 2010 be the warmest year on record? How do the recent U.S. "Snowmageddon" winter storms and record low temperatures in Europe fit into the bigger picture of long-term global warming? NASA has launched a new Web page to help people better understand the causes and effects of Earth's changing climate.

## [EPA Prepares to Take the Lead on Regulating CO2](#)

From the moment President Barack Obama took office, he has emphasized the importance of dealing with climate change. He's said that the right way to do it is to pass congressional legislation that would cap greenhouse-gas emissions. But eight months after the House of Representatives passed a cap-and-trade bill, similar legislation remains mired in the Senate, its chances of passage dimming by the day. With midterm elections not far off — threatening serious losses in Democratic seats in Congress — it's reasonable to wonder whether the carbon-capping bill will ever become law in the U.S.

But there is a Plan B. In 2007, the Supreme Court ruled that greenhouse gases like CO2 could be considered pollutants and gave the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the power to regulate them under the Clean Air Act. Although that authority went unused in the waning days of former President George W. Bush's Administration, the Obama EPA has spent much of the past year preparing the groundwork for regulation. In the absence of a climate bill, the EPA has the power — and is legally mandated by the Supreme Court — to step in and address carbon emissions.

## [EPA Chief Goes Toe-To-Toe With Senate GOP Over Climate Science](#)

U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson today defended the science underpinning pending climate regulations despite Senate Republicans' claims that global warming data has been thrown into doubt.

"The science behind climate change is settled, and human activity is responsible for global warming," Jackson told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "That conclusion is not a partisan one."

## [Belief In Climate Change Hinges On Worldview](#)

"Basically the reason that people react in a close-minded way to information is that the implications of it threaten their values," says Dan Kahan, a law professor at Yale University and a member of The Cultural Cognition Project.

Kahan says people test new information against their preexisting view of how the world should work.

"If the implication, the outcome, can affirm your values, you think about it in a much more open-minded way," he says.

And if the information doesn't, you tend to reject it.

In another experiment, people read a United Nations study about the dangers of global warming. Then the researchers told the participants that the solution to global warming is to regulate industrial pollution. Many in the individualistic group then rejected the climate science. But when more nuclear power was offered as the solution, says Braman,

"they said, you know, it turns out global warming is a serious problem."

And for the communitarians, climate danger seemed less serious if the only solution was more nuclear power.



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