



Drumbeat: September 6, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 6, 2010 - 9:00am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Taming the Arctic: How to govern the spoils of climate change](#)

A small clique of northern countries currently governs the Arctic Circle. But as the Polar Ice Cap melts, external powers have expressed an interest in the energy-rich region, raising eyebrows among the Arctic nations.

...Territory is not the only thing at stake. Abundant resources also lie in the depths of the Arctic Ocean. As the globe warms and Arctic ice melts, a fortune in oil and gas could become accessible. The US Geological Survey has reported that 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of its undiscovered natural gas sits in the Arctic Ocean.

Mexico's most dangerous badlands, the world's seventh-largest oil producer has become another casualty of the drug war.

[Oil Falls for Second Day on Speculation Fuel Demand Will Drop](#)

Oil fell for a second day in New York on speculation that fuel demand will decline as the U.S. summer peak consumption season ends and amid concern that the global economy will be slow in recovering.

Today's U.S. Labor Day marks the end of the peak driving season. Traders are betting more on falling gasoline prices rather than rising for the first time in almost four years. Crude inventories in the U.S., the world's biggest oil consumer, are about 5 percent higher than a year ago.

[A Burning Debate Over Natural Gas Drilling](#)

Homeowner Stephanie Hallowich is like many in western Pennsylvania who have watched their once-pristine neighborhood become an industrial site. Sprawling plants with flares that reach high into the night, noxious smells, trucks, and containment ponds with unknown chemicals are among the complaints of people who live in areas where natural gas companies have descended.

Hallowich believes three natural gas-drilling operations bordering her property turned her well-water black, forcing her to purchase a tank of fresh water every month.

[Kunstler: In The Headlights](#)

It's all a mystery in Washington. Nobody can figure out what happened to their green-eyed champion called *Growth*, that savior who rights all wrongs and insures our eternal exception from the sad fates of other less-blessed empires. Isn't there a book of conjures somewhere in the Harvard Business School that guarantee perpetual growth -- even if there are different tomes around the campus that describe the essential tragic nature of life, viz., that there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to everything. And while this might not be the end of the human project in North America, it is certainly the end of the cheap oil *abbondanza*, and everything spun off of it in the way of mass consumer luxury, with air-conditioning and a cherry on top.

[Oil book offers a must-read on the industry](#)

"The Prize" sat on a shelf in the library just out of sight. It was big, being nearly 800 pages long. That was intimidating. There are a number of unread history books on the shelf of equal size.

But finally, this summer, just as gasoline prices finally settled in at the \$2.50 to \$2.70 mark, I took the book off the shelf. Then I couldn't put it down. I bought an updated paperback copy for a friend, Dan Bahl who claims the book is absolutely enthralling.

[Taming the Arctic: How to govern the spoils of climate change](#)

A small clique of northern countries currently governs the Arctic Circle. But as the Polar Ice Cap melts, external powers have expressed an interest in the energy-rich region, raising eyebrows among the Arctic nations.

...Territory is not the only thing at stake. Abundant resources also lie in the depths of the Arctic Ocean. As the globe warms and Arctic ice melts, a fortune in oil and gas could become accessible. The US Geological Survey has reported that 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of its undiscovered natural gas sits in the Arctic Ocean.

[Report slams Transocean 'bullies'](#)

Offshore managers at contract drilling giant Transocean's UK unit have been accused of bullying, aggression, harassment, humiliation and intimidation in a report issued by the country's safety regulator.

The revelations come a day before the managing director of the company's UK unit is to be quizzed by parliamentarians in an inquiry into deep-water drilling off the UK.

[Hedge Funds Turn Gasoline Bears First Time in Four Years](#)

Hedge-fund bets against gasoline exceeded wagers that prices will rise for the first time in almost four years as the fuel fell in the final week of the U.S. driving season.

Net-short positions held by money managers in gasoline futures and options increased to 1,169 contracts the week ended Aug. 31, the first time speculators have been bearish since November 2006, according to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's weekly Commitments of Traders report. Hedge funds cut bullish bets for four straight weeks.

[Saudi Arabia Raises Prices of Crude Oil Sold to All Customers in October](#)

Saudi Aramco, the world's largest state-owned oil company, raised official selling prices for all crude grades for customers in Asia, the U.S., Northwest Europe and the Mediterranean Sea for October.

The formula price of Arab Super Light crude rose the most among grades to Asia, increasing by 75 cents a barrel to a premium of \$1 above the benchmark Dubai price assessment published by Platts, a person familiar with the rates said.

[Magnate with more in sight than oil in his homeland, Iraq](#)

The battered inhabitants of the brave, new, democratic Iraq must be wondering what could hit them next.

Nearly six months after their enthusiastic participation in national elections, Iraq still has no legitimate government.

More than seven years after the US removed Saddam Hussein, the country's infrastructure remains in tatters and most Iraqis receive less than two hours of electricity a day from the national power grid – a situation that is sparking violent protests.

[Government Plans to Sell Part of Its Stake in Oil & Natural, Indian Oil](#)

India's oil ministry has decided to sell part of the government's stake in Oil & Natural Gas Corp., the nation's biggest explorer, and Indian Oil Corp., the second- biggest

refiner, to raise money to cut its budget deficit.

[Pipeline to pump crude from Russia](#)

After over a decade of negotiation and two years of construction, China will be able to tap directly into Russia's gas output with the completion of a pipeline next month.

The China-Russia crude oil pipeline starts from Russia's Skovorodino Transmission Station and ends at Daqing City, Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, home to one of the region's major oilfields.

[Tropical Storm Hermine Forms in Gulf of Mexico Off of Tampico, Heads North](#)

Hermine is expected to gain strength as it approaches northeastern Mexico or the south Texas coast early tomorrow, the hurricane center said. Heavy rainfall from Hermine and a storm surge “will raise water levels by as much as 1 to 2 feet above ground level along the immediate coast near and to the north of where the center makes landfall,” the hurricane center said.

The storm is in a similar location as Hurricane Alex, the first of the June through November hurricane season, which slammed into northeastern Mexico on June 30. Alex forced the evacuation of rigs in the Gulf and halted offloading at the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, which serves tankers in the U.S.

[Gazprom eyes bond issue](#)

Russia's gas export monopoly Gazprom has mandated JP Morgan and Calyon to organise a Eurobond issue worth around \$1 billion in November.

[Jonathan Risks Clashes in Oil-Rich Nigeria With Election Bid](#)

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan risks sectarian clashes when he announces whether he will seek election: in the Muslim north if he does, and in his native oil- rich Niger River delta in the south if he doesn't.

Unrest in the delta may jeopardize oil output in Nigeria, Africa's biggest producer and the fifth-largest source of crude to the U.S. At least 14,000 people have died in ethnic and religious violence since 1999, according to the Brussels-based International Crisis Group.

[Sasol to sell five fertiliser blending plants](#)

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - Petrochemicals group Sasol said on Monday it would sell five fertiliser blending plants to comply with a deal struck with the competition authority to help cut fertiliser prices in South Africa.

South Africa's Competition Commission agreed for Sasol to divest five of its fertiliser blending facilities and cease within 25 months all importation of ammonia other than for use in South Africa to help reduce prices.

[Estonia Aims to Cut 'Too High' Energy Subsidies, Minister Says](#)

Estonia's government wants to reduce subsidies for renewable energy producers to cut costs for consumers, Economy Minister Juhan Parts said.

The Economy Ministry will prepare a bill on amendments within a month, Parts said in a phone interview in Tallinn. "The order of magnitude" for the reductions will be 50 percent, while cuts may differ across energy sources. Proposals will be based on a study by the country's Competition Board, due to be presented "soon," Parts said.

[U.S. Plays Catch-Up on High-Speed Rail](#)

AUSTIN, TEXAS — Spanish trains whisk passengers from Madrid to Barcelona in little more than two and one-half hours. Japan has bullet trains. China is building a vast network of high-speed rail routes, including the recently opened line between Guangzhou and Wuhan, which covers 1,070 kilometers at the world's fastest average speed.

Soon, perhaps, the United States, with the world's largest economy will also clamber on board. So far, the United States — in spite of or perhaps because of its vast size — has virtually no fast trains capable of moving swiftly enough over a long distance to compete with airplanes.

[Australia: E85 Fuel & Energy Vulnerability](#)

Holden's imminent release of the so-called 'flex-fuel' VE Series 2 Commodore, which can run on 100 per cent petrol or petrol-ethanol blends up to E85, has — near enough — coincided with Caltex's roll out of its tongue-twisting take on E85. Called Bio E-Flex, the high-proportion ethanol fuel will be available in 32 city servos initially, and is set to expand to more than 100 stations within a year or so.

[Merkel Proposes 12-Year Nuclear Reactor Extension](#)

E.ON AG and RWE AG soared in Frankfurt trading after German Chancellor Angela Merkel's government agreed to extend the lifespan of nuclear power plants in exchange for payments to fund alternative energy projects.

[Asia powers on with its nuclear expansion](#)

When South Korea was selected late last year by the UAE Government to build four nuclear power stations, it represented the first time the north-east Asian nation had secured a contract to build reactors overseas.

However, these four reactors, which propelled South Korea into the international nuclear power big league alongside France, the US, Japan, Canada and Russia, are just the beginning.

[Study: Italy should get own nuclear energy](#)

CERNOBBIO, Italy—A study chaired by the chief economist of the International Energy Agency is making a strong case for the introduction of nuclear energy in Italy.

The study, presented Sunday at a business and policy conference on Lake Como, says Italy can diminish its dependency on foreign nations and cut carbon emissions.

[Enel Seeks at Least 10% Return on Nuclear Energy Spending, CEO Conti Says](#)

Enel SpA, Italy's biggest utility, expects to have a return of "at least" 10 percent on its investments in bringing nuclear energy back to Italy.

"The benefits of nuclear energy offset the costs," Chief Executive Officer Fulvio Conti told reporters at a conference today in Cernobbio, Italy. He said the investment for a nuclear plant with a capacity of 1,700 megawatts is 4 billion euros (\$5.2 billion) to 5 billion euros.

[Solar interest rises, but bottom could fall out](#)

The price of photovoltaics is falling. Panels are cheaper than ever. They're quiet and clean. They're green. Could it be time to consider investing in an array or two?

Experts in the field, including unabashed solar advocates, urge caution -- until Vermont stabilizes energy financing policies.

But don't let that stop you. Solar panels still are selling like hotcakes. And hundreds of professionals in the field are hoping you'll discover new ways to afford them.

[Row River farm tour offers an agricultural history lesson](#)

DORENA — A dozen onlookers watched in awe as Walt Bernard scooped up a bowl full of wheat seed Sunday afternoon and let it tumble gently into a contraption he bought from a farmer for \$50. It looked like something Willy Wonka might have used to make some kind of magical candy.

But “The Clipper” is an old farmer’s mill, heaving and squeaking as it blows chaff out of one end and lets clean seeds drop into a box with a screen in the bottom. It’s one of a dozen odd-looking pieces of machinery around the 70-acre Ruby and Amber’s Organic Oasis farm that Bernard and his wife, Kris Woolhouse, own in this bucolic stretch of the Row River Valley.

[Bhutan’s wise pursuit of wealth in happiness](#)

What is incredible is the thoughtfulness with which Bhutan is approaching this process of change, and how Buddhist thinking guides it. Bhutan is asking itself the question that everyone must ask: how can economic modernisation be combined with cultural robustness and social well-being?

In Bhutan, the economic challenge is not growth in GDP but in gross national happiness (GNH). I went to Bhutan to understand better how GNH is being applied. There is no formula, but, befitting the seriousness of the challenge and Bhutan’s deep tradition of Buddhist reflection, there is an active and important process of national deliberation. Therein lies the inspiration for all of us.

[Bee decline already having dramatic effect on pollination of plants](#)

A decline in bees and global warming are having a damaging effect on the pollination of plants, new research claims.

Researchers have found that pollination levels of some plants have dropped by up to 50 per cent in the last two decades.

The “pollination deficit” could see a dramatic reduction in the yield from crops.

[HSBC Says Low-Carbon Market Will Triple to \\$2.2 Trillion by 2020](#)

HSBC Holdings Plc says the global market for low-carbon energy and efficiency projects will triple to \$2.2 trillion by 2020.

The bank based its forecasts on the likelihood of meeting renewable energy, efficiency and carbon-dioxide emissions targets.

[U.S. Affirms 17% Climate Target; Envoys Cite Progress on 'Green Fund'](#)

The U.S. failure to pass cap-and-trade legislation won't change its target for 2020 to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by roughly 17 percent, climate negotiator Todd Stern said today.

[Tony Blair: 'Heavy price' for climate inaction](#)

World leaders may pay a heavy price in history if they fail to tackle global warming, Tony Blair has warned.

[Environment NH to release global warming report](#)

CONCORD, N.H.—Environment New Hampshire is releasing a new report Wednesday it says shows how global warming could lead to extreme weather in the future.

[Iron ore cargo ship takes Arctic route, makes history](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - The MV Nordic Barents is lugging 40,000 tonnes of iron ore from Norway to China on an Arctic Ocean shortcut through melting ice -- and making a little history in the process.

Steaming east along Russia's desolate northern coast, the ship departed on Saturday as the first non-Russian commercial vessel to attempt a non-stop crossing of a route that skirts the receding Arctic ice cap.

[Global warming to boost economic power of cities in the 'New North' which can unlock natural resources](#)

Global warming will make cities in northern countries like Canada and Scandinavia the next big global economic powers, a senior academic has predicted.

Rising temperatures will mean that previously frozen natural resources like gas, oil and water will be unlocked just as the rest of the world is facing dramatic shortages.

Professor Laurence Smith, a UCLA professor of geography and of earth and space sciences, claims that sparsely populated parts of world like the northern US, Greenland and Russia will become 'migration magnets' as people flock to the new centres of global

power.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/us/).