



Drumbeat: September 21, 2010

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Oil producers must tap a new vision as world order changes](#)

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ny has previously thought it would yield.

[US Becoming Oil Products Net Exporter: GS](#)

SAN FRANCISCO -- Robust overseas demand has lead the U.S. to become a net exporter of petroleum products -- which includes refined products such as gasoline and diesel -- for the first time ever, analysts at Goldman Sachs said in a research note earlier this week. The shift contributed last week to the first decrease in crude oil inventories after 14 weeks of increases, the analysts at Goldman said.

[Oil firms seek alternatives as reserves dwindle](#)

Petroleum companies are considering alternative forms of fuel as global oil reserves are expected to run out in the next four decades.

According to the statistics published in BP's statistical review in June, the world has about 40 years of oil reserves remaining at current projected consumption rates.

[ANALYSIS - US offshore drilling delays may persist after ban](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Before BP's record Macondo oil leak, U.S. regulators approved about a dozen permits a month to drill in the shallow waters off the Gulf. Since then, they've barely managed one a month, even though a six-month moratorium only affected wells in much deeper waters.

Now, with only two months or less until operators are able to resume drilling new wells in one of the most prospective oil frontiers in the world, many fear that the newly tightened reins of regulators may choke investment for months longer.

[Charity running \\$100M BP fund for Gulf rig workers affected by moratorium says interest low](#)

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — There have been far fewer applicants than expected for money from a \$100 million fund BP PLC set up to help deepwater rig workers after a federal moratorium on drilling prompted by the massive oil spill.

With nine days left to apply, a spokesman for the charity running the program told The Associated Press on Tuesday that only 356 people have come forward. Up to 9,000 people had been expected to seek grants of \$3,000 to \$30,000.

[Putin Confident in Nord Stream Despite Polish Concerns](#)

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin expressed confidence that his favorite brainchild, a gas pipeline linking Russia directly with Germany, will go ahead despite latest objections from Poland.

[Piracy, row cause oil shortage in Kenya, Uganda](#)

NAIROBI, KENYA - Kenya last week experienced a biting fuel shortage following a dispute between market leader KenolKobil and the industry regulator, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

Most filling stations in the country credited as the region's economic hub admitted that their pumps had run dry even as manufacturers called on the government to find a quick solution.

[Pakistan pushes to get Turkmenistan pipeline moving](#)

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) - Pakistan will push hard for quick implementation of a long-delayed trans-regional gas pipeline from Turkmenistan in a bid to ease its mounting

energy crisis, the petroleum minister said on Tuesday.

[Deregulation of oil pricing](#)

KARACHI: It is not likely that there will be any major change in the pricing mechanism soon as the deregulation of oil pricing is a complex procedure especially when local refineries and oil marketing companies (OMCs) are working separately unlike international practices which operate under one roof, analysts said.

The government was initially supposed to introduce this policy in the last budget but due to lack of consensus among major players in oil industry the decision was postponed, they said.

[Petroleum ministry not seeking revision of refineries' margin](#)

KARACHI: There seems to be no respite in sight to the financial woes of crude oil refineries because the petroleum ministry has no plans to seek revision in margins of midstream petroleum industry.

[PSO taking lead to cater 52pc of petrol requirement](#)

Karachi —The closure of PARCO and suspension of road communication due to flood devastations were the root cause of fuel shortage in Punjab and Balochistan where the energy starved consumers were reportedly buying petrol even at a cost of Rs200 per litre it is learnt. Despite closure of PARCO which is one of the major reasons for fuel shortage, the affected roads marooned under the deluge consequently disrupted fuel supplies. The State owned PSO has taken a lead to meet 52 percent of petroleum requirements of Punjab which consumes an average of 110,000 MTs a month.

[China, Pakistan in talks on new nuclear plant](#)

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan on Tuesday implicitly confirmed it is holding talks with China to build a new nuclear power plant in the energy-starved South Asian nation.

"We have an ongoing civil nuclear cooperation agreement with China which is according to our respective international obligations for peaceful purposes under the IAEA safeguards," foreign office spokesman Abdul Basit told AFP, referring to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

[LHC strikes down suspension of trains](#)

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered immediate restoration of six trains that had been suspended in June following financial losses.

[Drought, weak infrastructure fuel Tanzanian hunger](#)

Climate change is thought to be playing a key role in worsening droughts across east Africa. But drought by itself does not cause disasters, experts emphasize. It is a lack of preparedness for problems and a lack of means to deal with them that turns drought into hunger, they say.

[A Chinese stake in GM? Bravo!](#)

FORTUNE -- The drumbeat in the blogosphere began about a millisecond after the news broke on Monday that Shanghai Automotive Industrial Corp. was considering buying a piece of General Motors when the US Treasury Department floats its shares in an IPO sometime later this year. "The U.S. government should block such a deal from ever occurring," wrote one outraged commentator at Yahoo News. "Major U.S. companies like GM should be owned by American investors, not by any company run by a foreign government; particularly a foreign government that is hostile toward the U.S. This deal would jeopardize U.S. national security and should be rejected."

[Thousands to Converge in DC to Call For End to Mountaintop Removal](#)

WASHINGTON - More than a thousand people are expected to converge in D.C. on Sep. 27 for 'Appalachia Rising,' the largest national protest to demand the end to mountaintop removal coal mining. Appalachia Rising is being led by citizens of conscience from the states directly impacted by mountaintop removal who are calling for the abolition of the controversial mining practice and protection for America's waters from all forms of surface mining. Concerned Americans will bring to the White House the message that mountaintop removal coal mining is destroying health and communities and has no place in a clean energy future. The march and rally will follow a weekend summit, Voices from the Mountains, and will include non-violent civil disobedience for individuals who choose.

[Oil producers must tap a new vision as world order changes](#)

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[Russian jets buzz US frigate](#)

MOSCOW: Russian aircraft have buzzed a US Navy frigate in the Arctic Ocean in a Cold War-style show of force as the Kremlin steps up its campaign to claim much of the resource-rich region.

[China tells U.S. to keep out of South China Sea dispute](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) – China told the United States not to interfere in a regional dispute over claims to the South China Sea, saying it would only complicate the matter.

Japan's NHK TV reported last week that the United States and southeast Asian countries may announce a joint statement on September 24 that obliquely presses China over its recent activities near disputed isles in the South China Sea.

China has been increasingly strident in asserting its territorial claims, especially maritime ones.

[Risk insurance costs to soar for deepwater oil rigs](#)

OIL companies face a sharp rise in the cost of insuring deepwater oil rigs at the start of next year in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon explosion in the Gulf of Mexico.

The explosion triggered the biggest oil spill in American history. Following the disaster - one of the largest losses ever to hit the energy market - global energy premium rates have gone up from 10 to 30 per cent, according to Lancashire, a large insurer of energy risks.

But insurers warn that the full impact will not be felt until after January 1 when the bulk of reinsurance is bought. The disaster has also fuelled demand for insurance, as regulators take a tougher stance on the cover needed by oil and gas companies. BP was self-insured.

[PG&E posts 100 riskiest Bay Area gas pipes](#)

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. on Monday posted a list of the 100 riskiest natural gas pipeline

segments in the Bay Area and their locations.

Eleven are in Silicon Valley. One of those is near Highway 237 and Ranch Drive on the San Jose-Milpitas border and was ranked seventh among the 100.

[Huhne sees nuclear, renewables in energy mix](#)

(Reuters) - Nuclear and renewables both have a part to play in meeting Britain's future energy needs, Energy Secretary Chris Huhne said on Tuesday, adding it was not a choice between one or the other.

Huhne's statement is in line with the coalition agreement but he made it to delegates at the Liberal Democrat conference, challenging sceptics in his own party who oppose nuclear power.

[NZ climate change warning](#)

Melting ice sheets, warming oceans and disappearing glaciers could mean New Zealanders have to cope with sea level rises more than triple the international estimates, scientists say.

The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Changes (IPCC) report projected a sea level rise this century of between 18cm-59cm, unless there is dramatic loss of Greenland and/or Antarctic ice.

But international researchers have now upped the ante with some noted academics picking rises of three times that, and some expecting the oceans to lift as much as 2.2m, according to an "emerging issues" paper released today by New Zealand's science academy, the Royal Society.

[Weather disasters mirror climate models: NOAA chief](#)

PARIS (AFP) – The flurry of exceptional weather disasters in recent years is completely consistent with scenarios about an aspect of climate change, the head of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said on Tuesday.

[Safety in oil exploration is vital, even if it means costs must rise](#)

Humankind must treat this calamity as a wake-up call and a chance to consider the true cost of oil. For years, oil companies have been treated with impunity because spills have occurred off countries such as Ecuador and Nigeria, where the people have not had a voice. This latest tragedy is a timely reminder that the world's thirst for cheap oil

carries a terrible risk. As we pass “peak oil” and concerns mount about energy security, tighter regulations and credible assurances are required so that, for example, the “blowout preventer” lives up to its name. Given the size and profitability of the industry, the initial improvised, seemingly amateurish, response to the blow-out was shocking.

If making this industry safe makes oil more expensive, so be it.

[Crude Falls, Retracing Yesterday's Advance Before Energy Department Report](#)

Oil fell in New York, retracing part of yesterday’s 1.6 percent gain, before a government report that may show refineries in the U.S. operated last week at their lowest rate in five months.

An Energy Department report tomorrow will probably show that refineries operated at 86.8 percent of capacity, down 0.8 percentage point from the previous week, according to the median of 14 analyst estimates in a Bloomberg News survey. It would be the lowest utilization rate since the week ended April 16. October futures expire today and are cheaper than November, a condition known as contango.

“We’re seeing a step-back from yesterday’s surge,” said Thorbjørn Bak Jensen, a Global Risk Management analyst based in Middelfart, Denmark. “The large contango signals that inventories remain high. But we think the \$70 to \$80 range will hold.”

[Oil Supplies Hit Five-week Low in Survey on Enbridge Halt](#)

U.S. crude-oil supplies probably fell to a five-week low after an Enbridge Energy Partners LP pipeline, the largest linking Canada and the U.S. Midwest, shut for eight days following a leak, a Bloomberg News survey showed.

Inventories slipped 1.6 million barrels, or 0.4 percent, in the seven days ended Sept. 17 from 357.4 million a week earlier, according to the median of 14 analyst estimates before an Energy Department report tomorrow. Thirteen forecast a drop and one a gain. It would be the third consecutive decrease.

[Cairn Energy claims Greenland oil discovery](#)

LONDON (AFP) – Cairn Energy, renowned for a major oil find in India, said on Tuesday that it had discovered pockets of oil and further evidence of gas in offshore Greenland.

[OPEC: a look to the future](#)

The organization is facing an uncertain situation during the current phase: Prices have

been stable at a reasonable and acceptable range for some time now. But at the same time, the rate of commitment to the production quotas by member states, according to al-Badri, is about 53 percent, a rather low rate which, should it continue to be so, will lead among other things to the increase of commercial oil inventories kept by international companies. Indeed, these inventories in the United States have reached their highest level since the early nineties.

[TransCanada's Oil-Sands Pipeline Would Create 12,000 Jobs, Girling Says](#)

TransCanada Corp.'s 2,000-mile pipeline linking Alberta's oil sands with Gulf Coast refiners may add at least 12,000 jobs and provide a stable fuel source for the U.S., Chief Executive Officer Russell Girling said.

Efforts to stop the \$7 billion Keystone XL project because lawmakers say developing tar sands may release more greenhouse gases than other types of oil production will result in the crude being redirected from the U.S., Girling said.

[Gazprom: Japan firms on Sakhalin 3 project list](#)

TOKYO (AFP) – Russia's state-owned natural gas monopoly Gazprom has hinted it may invite Japanese firms to participate in the Sakhalin 3 project if foreign support is deemed necessary, a local paper said Tuesday.

Gazprom deputy chief executive Alexander Medvedev told Japan's Nikkei business daily that his shortlist includes Japanese trading giants Mitsui & Co. and Mitsubishi Corp. as well as Royal Dutch Shell plc.

[Turkey Open to More Drilling Partners in Black Sea, After Chevron Deal](#)

Turkey is open to new partnerships for oil and gas exploration in the Black Sea, the head of the state-run oil company said after announcing a \$750 million deal with Chevron Corp.

"New partnerships for oil and gas exploration in the Black Sea outside those now existing are possible," said Mehmet Uysal, head of Turkiye Petrolleri AO. "In three years we plan \$4 billion in investments, large and small, to open close to 500 wells," Uysal said.

[Petrobras Debt Sinks on Concern \\$78 Billion Sale Not Enough: Brazil Credit](#)

Petroleo Brasileiro SA's borrowing costs are surging to a two-month high on concern the state-owned oil company will tap the bond market for financing even after it completes a

stock sale of up to 134 billion reals (\$78 billion).

[India: Oil companies to marginally up petrol prices - source](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) – Indian state-run oil retailers will raise petrol prices for the first time since the government ended price controls in June, an industry source said on Monday, but increases are likely to be less than 1 percent.

"The increase will be less than a percent," the source, who is not authorised to speak to the media, told Reuters.

[Rosneft, CNPC May Build Oil Refinery in China in Two Years, Novosti Says](#)

OAO Rosneft, Russia's largest oil producer, and China National Petroleum Corp. may build a refinery in China within two years, RIA Novosti reported, citing Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin.

[BP says oil spill compensation payout rate soars](#)

LONDON (Reuters) – BP said payouts to people affected by its Gulf of Mexico oil spill had dramatically increased since it surrendered authority for dispensing funds to an independent administrator.

[Greenpeace pair 'attached to drill ship anchor'](#)

Greenpeace has said two of its environmental campaigners have attached themselves to the anchor chain of a drilling ship off Shetland.

[Japan Says China Boat Row Shouldn't Fan 'Extreme' Nationalism](#)

Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan said Japan and China should act with due calm over the detention of a Chinese fishing boat captain that has sent bilateral relations to the lowest level in five years.

[US hails Iran sanctions, but experts doubt results](#)

WASHINGTON – The Obama administration says the latest round of sanctions appears to have succeeded in bringing additional pressure against Iran's nuclear program. But private experts question whether the penalties will achieve their goal of compelling Tehran to give up any nuclear ambitions.

[Sharon Astyk: Looking for a Job? ASPO-USA Needs an Executive Director](#)

I'm really excited about the ways that ASPO-USA is evolving. ASPO's role has been to raise awareness about Peak Oil, and it is serving to expose the issue in new ways. I joined the board of an organization that I'd once criticized publically for being elitist and dominated by old white guys because those same gentlemen challenged me to help fix the situation - and we are.

[Best Peak Oil Investments: Pure-Play Mass Transit Suppliers](#)

I'm attempting to bring this series on peak oil stocks to a conclusion in which I can choose five stocks that should benefit from rising oil prices. One sector I feel should be represented is suppliers to mass transit companies, but I only looked at the percentage of revenues coming from mass transit and rail when I brought you my list of nine mass transit stocks. From that list, the following companies get substantially all their revenues from mass transit, passenger rail, or rail freight:

[Gold As Currency](#)

While I don't believe literally in the peak oil theory, I believe it takes more effort and risk – as we've just learned – to go out and get more oil. It's not free. It's not going to just drop out of the sky. And the demand can run ahead of the supply for certain periods, so we certainly saw that. One of the things that happens with oil is that when you use it, you want to use more of it. Your first application of oil grows your economy, then when you have a larger economy, you need more oil. It's a virtuous cycle if you're measuring it in terms of growth; but it becomes a vicious cycle if you measure it in terms of oil scarcity.

[Energy prices and consumer behavior](#)

Back in 1989 or 1990 — I can't remember when, exactly — I saw an advertisement that read:

It wasn't the Exxon Valdez captain's driving that caused the Alaskan oil spill. It was yours.

I always liked that because it really got at the root of the problem: consumer behavior.

[American car culture is wasteful and impractical](#)

If you own a car, I don't have to tell you how expensive it is. According to a Department of Labor study, the average consumer unit owns 1.9 cars and spends a whopping 17.6

percent of their average income on transportation including car purchase, fuel and other expenses. That's nearly as much as insurance, education and health care combined, which make up 18.4 percent. It is the single largest category apart from housing. If your new car costs about \$20,000, then you pay the original purchase price again in maintaining and fueling the car in a mere 2.3 years. Gas prices have become a huge burden on drivers and will only grow as we approach peak oil production and consumption continues to skyrocket. Even these high prices are kept artificially low by subsidies and externalizing various costs to the environment and government spending on technology, infrastructure, shipping, and most importantly military deployment to protect oil production and shipment. Those are your tax dollars. On the other hand, your tax dollars could go towards building a clean, convenient, and efficient system of public transportation, making your life easier and more affordable.

[Australia: Wasted years for Victorian infrastructure](#)

There is something rotten in the state of Victoria and it centres on infrastructure. Over the past decade the Bracks/Brumby government has wasted \$6.6 billion on new road projects (as well as \$7 billion on water).

Money spent on freeways and bypasses has added to pollution, reduced liveability and, in the long term, done nothing to relieve congestion - all objectives that could have been achieved by getting rid of the private franchisees who run public transport and reinvesting the savings in an integrated public transport system. Over the same period, the government invested only \$322 million on fixed public transport infrastructure.

[Bike Sharing Expands in Washington](#)

From just 10 stations and about 100 bikes downtown, one of the first municipal bike sharing programs in the country is ballooning by a factor of 10: 100 stations and about 1,100 bikes are to spread around Washington and across the river in Arlington, Va., by the end of October.

[Industry targets four million electric vehicles in five years](#)

A global alliance of leading car firms and state government yesterday announced that they are planning to outpace all current predictions for the roll out of electric vehicles (EVs), putting four million battery-powered cars and trucks on the world's roads by 2015.

[Pod Cars Start to Gain Traction in Some Cities](#)

Is the pod car finally ready for prime time? After almost 50 years of trial and error, these futuristic personal rapid transit systems, or P.R.T.'s, may be coming to airports

and city centers because of technological advances and a growing interest in sustainable transportation.

[BoltBus, RedCoach, other bus lines go for business travelers](#)

On your next business trip, stretch your legs, plug in your laptop and prepare for a leisurely ride — on the bus?

Bus companies are aggressively pursuing business travelers in a bid to give the airlines and Amtrak a run for their money. They're offering new coaches, rock-bottom fares and perks such as free Internet access so road warriors can work while they ride.

[Is the Tea Party a Modern-Day Renaissance?](#)

We have long listed the themes that the elite is having trouble promoting these days. (And that is not good for those who want increased centralization of power and authority.) Global warming, Peak Oil, central banking, the European Union, gold and silver (versus the dollar), the IMF, the United Nations, vaccinations, the war in Afghanistan — on and on ... almost everywhere we look we see these fear-based promotions foundering. And the realities they are supposed to establish crumble as well.

[Riverhead Energy Awareness Day](#) (Long Island)

The Town of Riverhead's Energy Advisory Committee and the North Fork Environmental Council are organizing a "Riverhead Energy Awareness Day" (R.E.A.D.) to be held on Saturday, October 2, to demonstrate how we can use the alternative energy of the sun and wind to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

"This is not just about finding ways to save money," said Ken Rubino, president of the North Fork Environmental Council. "It's about exposing the next generation to new ways of doing things, new career opportunities and a world of new possibilities."

[Plan Green](#)

No single technology will help cities evolve away from the auto era and into a 21st Century community with a denser, more vibrant, more urban mix of uses than the streetcar. Even without the 3C Concept (Clean-Corridor Coordination) the streetcar would help Portland achieve its peak oil and sustainability strategies. But Portland's 3C Concept would bring in two other "clean" technologies as streetcar tracks are laid: Green Streets and District Energy.

[Impending Oil Crisis Will Overshadow Global Climate Change](#)

BURLINGTON, ON /PRNewswire/ - Leading energy consultants Dr. Robert Hirsch and colleagues Dr. Roger Bezdek and Robert Wendling, co-authors of an infamous 2005 report for the U.S. Department of Energy on peak oil, predict an impending decline in world oil production may occur within the next five years and urge government, industry and the general public to address the issue, in their newly published book *The Impending World Energy Mess: What It Is and What It Means to You!*

Concerned by a lack of action and fearful that the subject of global warming may be distracting people from a more imminent issue, Dr. Hirsch and his colleagues decided to take action and write the book. They argue that oil production reached a plateau in 2004 and has remained relatively consistent ever since. They are concerned that a decline in world oil production is potentially two to five years away and will have significant economic consequences.

[Thieves Cart Off St. Louis Bricks](#)

Mr. Feemster, who gets around on an electric scooter, had to be carried out of the burning building, but today he considers himself lucky that the damage was contained to just two rooms.

“My neighbor’s house was completely destroyed,” said Mr. Feemster, 58. “I guess it was one of the crackheads in that vacant house.”

Perhaps. But the blaze, one of 391 fires at vacant buildings in the city over the past two years, may have had a more sinister cause. Law enforcement officials, politicians and historic preservationists here have concluded that brick thieves are often to blame, deliberately torching buildings to quicken their harvest of St. Louis brick, prized by developers throughout the South for its distinctive character.

“The firemen come and hose them down and shoot all that mortar off with the high-pressure hose,” said Alderman Samuel Moore, whose predominantly black Fourth Ward has been hit particularly hard by brick thieves. When a thief goes to pick up the bricks after a fire, “They’re just laying there nice and clean.”

It is a crime that has increased with the recession. Where thieves in many cities harvest copper, aluminum and other materials from vacant buildings, brick rustling has emerged more recently as a sort of scrapper’s endgame, exploited once the rest of a building’s architectural elements have been exhausted. “Cleveland is suffering from this,” said Royce Yeater, Midwest director for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “I’ve also heard of it happening in Detroit.”

[Report: Obesity hurts your wallet and your health](#)

Nearly 1 billion additional gallons of gasoline are used every year because of increases in

car passengers' weight since 1960.

[Wal-Mart plans for smaller, urban stores with fresh food](#)

Wal-Mart plans to expand into urban markets with smaller stores that carry fresh food.

[A Crop Sprouts Without Soil or Sunshine](#)

On the rooftop garden at St. Philip's Academy, a private school in Newark, students tend plots of everything from broccoli and beets to sweet corn and spaghetti squash.

But since August they have also been helping to farm arugula, chervil, fun jen and komatsuna in a machine installed in a fourth-floor science classroom that grows crops without soil or sunshine.

[Cows come home to Wolvercote village green](#)

A village green is often a good place for a picnic or a game of football with the children.

However, the people of Wolvercote have reclaimed their green for a more traditional activity.

"We're all commoners in this village and some of us have rights to graze cattle," Michael Buck told BBC Oxford.

Mr Buck has now exercised this right and purchased a cow and a calf. They are the first cattle on the grass in 60 years.

[Climate Change Denial - Default Mode](#)

Is either climate change or the end of cheap oil a potential catastrophe that needs emergency preventive action?

The broader presently non-existing discussion - and it should include everybody from David Spratt to Matt Ridley - should be: Are our actions today possibly (probably - potentially?) causing catastrophic consequences for future generations? And, if so, can and should we initiate effective mitigation today? And if systemic change is necessary for mitigation is such change possible within BAU, or, if not, how do we unblock so that systemic change is possible quickly?

[Political cowards love the sin tax](#)

In the past fiscal year, 11 states have increased cigarette taxes, while five states upped their gas taxes. (Yes, even driving is seen as a sin in some quarters today.) Earlier this year, Colorado stopped exempting sugary drinks and fatty snacks from a 2.9% sales tax, while Washington state hiked taxes on beer and soda. And the proposals keep coming: Californians will vote in November whether to legalize and tax marijuana, more than 130 Maryland General Assembly candidates have signed a pledge to vote for a 10-cent tax on all alcoholic drinks, and in Oregon, the Public Health Division is pushing for a soda tax.

[Energy states, Idaho leading comeback from recession](#)

Texas, North Carolina, Idaho and a handful of other states are leading the nation's crawl out of the worst recession since the 1930s, a USA TODAY analysis finds.

[Senators see new life for renewable-power bill](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – A bipartisan group of U.S. senators will introduce legislation on Tuesday that would require utilities to generate minimum levels of power from clean energy like wind and solar, after such a measure was stripped from a broader oil-spill bill in July.

[GOP May Rebrand House Enviro Committees](#)

If Republicans win control of the House in November -- which many political handicappers see as likely -- environmental panels like the Natural Resources Committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming might undergo some rebranding.

[U.S. Plans to Try Again on HFC With This Year's 'Biggest Climate Deal'](#)

The U.S. plans a second try with a greenhouse-gas proposal arguing that carbon trading isn't the best way to eliminate hydrofluorocarbon-23, an industrial waste product that traps 11,700 times as much heat as carbon dioxide.

[Soros Says Climate Talks 'Removed From Reality,' Urges Practical Action](#)

Billionaire investor George Soros said debate about tackling global warming is being overtaken by damage occurring from climate change and practical action is needed.

"The gap between what needs to be done and what's actually happening is getting wider," Soros, founder of Soros Fund Management LLC that oversees about \$25 billion in assets, said today at a New York panel discussion on climate change.

[Taiwan moves toward carbon offset scheme](#)

TAIPEI (Reuters) - Nearly 270 companies responsible for more than half of Taiwan's greenhouse gas pollution have agreed to supply emissions data to the government to help it launch a carbon offset scheme, officials said on Tuesday.

Taiwan's Environmental Protection Administration passed rules on Sept. 10 in which companies were requested to supply emissions data needed to launch a carbon trading platform by year's end, EPA officials said.

[Record Warmth Spawns Stronger Hurricanes Across Atlantic Ocean](#)

The four major Atlantic hurricanes that spun toward the Caribbean in the past month were fueled by record warm seas and formed in an unprecedented 20 days. With 10 weeks left in the hurricane season, more may be coming.

[Extreme Heat Bleaches Coral, and Threat Is Seen](#)

This year's extreme heat is putting the world's coral reefs under such severe stress that scientists fear widespread die-offs, endangering not only the richest ecosystems in the ocean but also fisheries that feed millions of people.

From Thailand to Texas, corals are reacting to the heat stress by bleaching, or shedding their color and going into survival mode. Many have already died, and more are expected to do so in coming months. Computer forecasts of water temperature suggest that corals in the Caribbean may undergo drastic bleaching in the next few weeks.

[Millions at risk from Arctic flood warns minister](#)

Almost a billion people could face disaster from rising sea levels caused by melting Arctic ice, President of the Russian Geographical Society and Russian Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoigu warned on Monday.

"More than 800 million people could end up living in a state of emergency if temperatures do not stop increasing," Shoigu said at a press conference ahead of a three-day Arctic forum in Moscow.

[Arctic Ice in Death Spiral](#)

UXBRIDGE, Sep 20 (IPS) - The carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels have melted the Arctic sea ice to its lowest volume since before the rise of human civilisation, dangerously upsetting the energy balance of the entire planet, climate scientists are reporting.

"The Arctic sea ice has reached its four lowest summer extents (area covered) in the last four years," said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center in the U.S. city of Boulder, Colorado.

The volume - extent and thickness - of ice left in the Arctic likely reached the lowest ever level this month, Serreze told IPS.

"I stand by my previous statements that the Arctic summer sea ice cover is in a death spiral. It's not going to recover," he said.



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