



Drumbeat: October 19, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on October 19, 2010 - 9:10am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

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Other states, particularly Nigeria, are looking for the organisation's acquiescence in higher output.

[.com/article/detail/energy/100404280-1-interview-oman-crude-may-become-asia.html">Oman crude may become Asia sweet, sour benchmark](#)

SINGAPORE - Oman crude futures traded on the Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) will become the main benchmark for Asian markets of both sour and sweet grades, says DME shareholder CME Group.

Middle East producers of sour crude have for years sought alternatives to dwindling Dubai output as a price reference for their exports to Asia Pacific, where local benchmarks have also lost the confidence of regional traders of sweet grades. Some say adopting European marker Brent may be just a temporary fix.

[French jets in fuel crisis filling up at Manchester Airport](#)

Planes from Paris are stopping at Manchester to take on fuel – because of a shortage in

France.

[Fuel imports into France surge as protests imperil transportation](#)

Fuel continues to flow into France -- increasingly, from refineries out of the country -- as the nation deals with the ongoing effects of strikes that have affected car, train and plane travel throughout the European nation.

[Running on fumes? Ampride almost ran out of diesel during beet harvest](#)

So why were diesel supplies down? Melbye said he checked with a Cenex Harvest States representative who pointed west to North Dakota, currently home to an oil boom. The big drills that keep boring down into the earth use the diesel as a lubricant, he said he was told, and the last thing anyone involved in the North Dakota oil industry wants to do is stop drilling for any period of time.

"So they suck all the diesel from the area to keep the drilling going," Melbye said.

[Hurricane Threat to U.S. Gulf Oil and Gas Fades to Almost Zero](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The hurricane threat to oil and gas development areas in the Gulf of Mexico is fading and may almost be over for the year, meteorologists said.

[Russia prepares a new oil tax regime from 2012](#)

(Reuters) - Russia is preparing to introduce a new profit-based tax on oil from new fields starting 2012, which will also be subject to reduced export duties and tax on mineral extraction, a Deputy Finance Minister said on Tuesday.

[US Offshore Drilling Chief Calls Anew for More Workers](#)

The top U.S. offshore drilling regulator Monday called anew for bulking up the agency by adding more in-house expertise, putting at as many as 200 the number of additional engineers and other workers the agency hoped to add.

"My hope is that we can add as many as 200 new inspectors, engineers, environmental scientists, and other key staff to support our agency in carrying out its important oversight functions," Michael Bromwich, the director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, said at an international regulators conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, according to the text of prepared remarks.

[Forgotten: Gulf of Mexico fishermen fear the future](#)

Six months after the largest maritime oil spill, Gulf of Mexico fishing communities fear for their very future while critics say response efforts have evaporated faster than the toxic crude.

[BP: Company to drill in deeper water, assess risk](#)

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) -- BP and the industry will drill in deeper waters and go farther in their search for oil reserves, and must understand the risks so they can mitigate them in the future, a BP executive said Tuesday.

[Mexico's Energy Reform and the Future of Pemex](#)

The ebullient celebration in Brazil over Petrobras' historic \$70 billion share-issue last month was bitterly received in Mexico City, where the state-owned oil company Pemex is mired in debt, inefficiency and ongoing political wrangling.

With little having changed since Mexican President Felipe Calderón sought to reform the country's energy sector two years ago, the contrast between Petrobras' successes and Pemex's failures has reignited discussion of Pemex's future and renewed the public's interest in the beleaguered Mexican oil giant.

[Petrobank boosts Canadian heavy oil assets](#)

Oil and gas explorer Petrobank Energy and Resources said it has bought 50% interests in Baytex Energy Trust's Kerrobert project, and Shell's Dawson project, increasing the company's heavy oil assets in Canada.

[Govt for land acquisition in Africa for agriculture](#)

New Delhi: The government has assured full support to Indian companies exploring opportunities to acquire agricultural land in Africa for cultivation of pulses in order to deal with its domestic shortage.

[Cash in on Pakistan's energy crisis](#)

The lights have been going out across Pakistan. From Islamabad to rural villages, residents regularly have to go without power for up to 15 hours a day.

The economy is being crippled and there is a very simple reason for it: for some months

now, the country's power stations have been unable to afford to import the oil and gas that is needed to power the generators. And with the country's own production of oil and gas going into decline, this problem is only going to get worse.

But there is a ready solution - coal.

[Venezuela-Russia nuke deal a new headache for U.S., IAEA](#)

CARACAS, Venezuela (UPI) -- Russia's agreement to build a nuclear power station and a research reactor in Venezuela has handed the Obama administration and the International Atomic Energy Agency with a headache that won't go away easily.

The problem isn't so much the introduction of nuclear energy to the Latin American country, which has growing electricity needs, but the unpredictable policies of populist President Hugo Chavez.

[Eastern Europe Worries About the Next Toxic Time Bomb](#)

"Hungary is a wake-up call," says Herwig Schuster of Greenpeace Austria. "The mining industry produces an enormous amount of waste and the inefficient way in which mining was carried out under the Soviet system has resulted in a large number of toxic deposits across the region." An E.U. report from 2004 highlighted 260 polluted sites in Hungary, and Romania's Minister of Environment recently said in a statement that Romania has "an inventory of over 1,000 contaminated sites."

[Gazprom agrees to buy CERs from Chinese wind project](#)

(Reuters) - Russian energy company Gazprom's trading arm Gazprom Marketing & Trading (GM&T) has agreed to buy U.N.-backed carbon credits from China's Datang group, it said on Tuesday.

[Local opposition kills C\\$5 bln Canadian dam plan](#)

CALGARY, Alberta (Reuters) - TransCanada Corp and Atco Ltd have abandoned plans to build a C\$5 billion (\$4.85 billion) dam on the Slave River in northern Alberta after a local native group refused to back the project.

The planned dam was a run-of-river project that would have generated 1,200 to 1,300 megawatts of electricity from the Slave, an undeveloped river that carries more than two-thirds of Alberta's waterflow north to Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories.

[Unrestrained Capitalism Can't Solve Our Problems](#)

Our entire planetary economy is based on one assumption: oil will always be cheap and plentiful. A corollary to this is that if it was not cheap and plentiful, market forces would effortlessly find a substitute for it. Yet this is nonsense. Oil exists in finite quantities, at some point its production must begin to decline inexorably. Its price must concomitantly, rise equally inexorably. Burning coal reserves might provide a brief respite at the cost of tipping the planet into a hothouse equilibrium 10 or more, degrees, Fahrenheit, warmer. Goodbye to coastal cities, reliable climate for agriculture, reliable rainfall for drinking etc. Then coal goes into decline.

[A step-by-step guide to greening your local council](#)

If you already have a low-impact lifestyle and want to step it up a level, turn your attention to your local council. Here's how to get the authorities in your area to act.

[Bill McKibben: Policy reform to 350](#)

Let's imagine for a moment that we're at 2100, and the atmospheric CO2 level is slowly subsiding back toward 350, and the worst is over. Let's try to figure out how we got there—reverse-engineer a century of halting but ultimately decisive progress.

[12 steps to save hundreds on your energy bill](#)

So you've swapped your incandescent light bulbs for CFLs, turned down the thermostat, and only wash clothes on cold. Then why are your utility bills still so high? Air leaks are likely culprits, but so are "phantom" power suckers, such as flat-screen TVs, which draw energy even when they're off.

[Living off the grid](#)

Army veteran Juan Beltran broke his neck in 2003 after his Apache helicopter crashed in Iraq, leaving him a paraplegic. Beltran, who is confined to an electric wheelchair, can move his arms, but has no motor skills in his hands, and can't walk.

Despite a handicap that would have slowed the aspirations of many people, Beltran and his wife, Gabriela, have held on to their optimism and their goal of living off the grid.

[A Nobel Pursuit](#)

The 2010 Physics prize went to Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov for

“groundbreaking experiments regarding the two-dimensional material graphene”. Graphene is a material that is one atom thick, completely transparent, impossibly strong and has better conductivity than copper. If we can scale it up, a process in which huge funds are being invested, it is thought that it could help solve the energy crisis. This would involve effectively piping renewable electricity across vast chunks of land with an insignificant energy loss compared to the incredibly inefficient transfer of energy via copper wire.

[Iran's tactics oil play may prove to be risky](#)

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[Saudi Arabia says easy oil is not over-Naimi](#)

RIYADH (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia's oil minister said on Monday the age of easy oil was not over as the kingdom still holds at least 88 billion barrels of oil in its largest oilfield.

"I am sorry to disappoint people, easy oil is not over," Ali Al-Naimi told reporters in Riyadh on the occasion of OPEC's 50th anniversary.

"How can you say that easy oil is over, when we still have over 88 billion (barrels) in the Ghawar field...You can dismiss that notion that easy oil in Saudi Arabia is gone," he added.

[Crude Oil Extends Declines After China Raises Interest Rates](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Oil dropped after China raised its benchmark interest rates, potentially crimping demand in the world's biggest energy user, while traders bet that U.S. crude stockpiles swelled to their highest levels since June.

[Oil Supplies to Rise on Refinery Slowdown, Survey Shows](#)

U.S. crude-oil inventories probably rose to the highest level in more than three months as refineries idled units to perform seasonal maintenance, a Bloomberg News survey showed.

[France taps oil reserves amid refinery blockade](#)

France is using its emergency fuel reserves as supplies are hit by strikes over state pension reforms, the International Energy Agency has said.

France, like other members of the body, were obligated to keep at least 90 days of oil imports on hand as emergency reserves, it said.

[France Pension Protests Crimp Fuel, Transport](#)

(Bloomberg) -- French refineries remained shut, trains were on half service, schools closed and gas stations ran dry as unions held their fourth strike in two months against President Nicolas Sarkozy's plan to raise the retirement age.

Government ministers said France has enough fuel to last several weeks and that they'll continue to use police to break up barricades at oil depots as about a fifth of the country's 12,000 service stations carried signs saying they'd run out of fuel. The Senate is set to vote on the pension measure this week, giving final parliamentary approval to a plan to eliminate the retirement-system deficit by 2018.

[French retirement protests take violent turn](#)

PARIS – Masked youths clashed with police officers and set fires in cities across France on Tuesday as protests against a proposed hike in the retirement age took an increasingly radical turn.

[Iran says European nations refusing to fuel planes](#)

TEHRAN (AFP) – Iran said on Tuesday some Western companies were refusing to refuel its planes in Europe and warned it would "confront" such measures, which it deemed illegal under international law.

[Chavez in Iran for talks on boosting oil, gas ties](#)

TEHRAN, Iran – Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was holding talks Tuesday with Iranian leaders expected to focus on boosting cooperation between the countries' oil, gas and petrochemical industries.

[Norway oil fund hits \\$500bn](#)

Norway's oil fund has hit Nkr3 trillion (\$513 billion) for the first time in its 14-year history, the country's central bank said today.

[Cheapest electricity since 1998 set for Abu Dhabi](#)

Abu Dhabi's next big power plant will generate the emirate's cheapest electricity since 1998.

The Dh5 billion (US\$1.36bn) Shuweihat 3 project will reduce financial pressure on the capital's subsidised electricity sector.

It also shows Abu Dhabi still has enough cheap natural gas to support at least one more major power project after almost tripling generating capacity in 10 years.

[PetroChina, Cosco to Apply for Licence to Sell Marine Fuels in Singapore](#)

A joint venture between PetroChina Co. and China Ocean Shipping (Group) Co. plans to apply for a license to sell marine fuels in Singapore to capture rising demand in the world's biggest bunkering port.

[Iraq to auction gas fields despite uncertainties](#)

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Energy companies face tough terms, shaky security and local opposition when they fly to Baghdad this week to take part in a gas bidding round.

Iraq's plan to auction three gas fields on Wednesday has generated little interest from international energy firms eager to tap the country's vast reserves, compared with Iraq's two oil bidding rounds held last year, analysts said.

[Brazil May Allow Petrobras Raise 2010 Investment Spending to \\$51 Billion](#)

The additional 6.4 billion reais would allow Petrobras to buy a floating production, storage and offloading vessel and production equipment for the Barracuda and Caratinga oil fields and invest in the Urucu-Coari-Manaus gas pipeline.

[Woodside eyes China LNG deal](#)

Australian producer Woodside Petroleum may reach an initial agreement to supply liquefied natural gas from its Browse project to China by the end of the year, the head of its China unit said.

[Gunmen storm Chechen government buildings](#)

GROZNY, Russia – Insurgents stormed the parliament complex in Russia's volatile Chechnya region on Tuesday, killing at least two police officers and one parliamentary official, and injuring 17 others, authorities said. At least three insurgents were also killed, officials said, ending one of the most brazen attacks on the province's capital in months.

[New BP boss says staff bonuses linked to safety](#)

LONDON (AFP) – BP Chief Executive Bob Dudley told staff that fourth-quarter bonuses will be linked to their performance in terms of safety following the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster, the Financial Times said Tuesday.

Dudley, who started earlier this month after his gaffe-prone predecessor Tony Hayward was forced out over his handling of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, told staff in an email about the new bonus policy, the paper reported.

[BP waives \\$75M cap for some oil spill claims](#)

NEW ORLEANS – BP PLC informed a federal judge Monday that the company is waiving a \$75 million cap on its liability for certain economic damage claims spawned by the massive Gulf oil spill.

In a court filing, BP lawyers said the company is waiving the statutory limitation on liability under the 1990 Oil Pollution Act even though it denies engaging in any gross negligence in connection with the April 20 explosion on the Deepwater Horizon rig and resulting spill.

[Oil cleanup not over in Louisiana's Bay Jimmy](#)

Much of the Gulf Coast has returned to normalcy since the Macondo well 50 miles offshore of Louisiana was permanently capped last month, ending the worst marine oil spill in U.S. history. But in marshy areas such as Bay Jimmy, where the oil had some of its strongest impact, the fight against the crude onslaught continues, even as fewer workers fight it.

[Peregrine falcons checked for Gulf oil taint](#)

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas – Once nearly wiped from the wild in North America by widespread pesticide use, Peregrine falcons have rebounded across the continent. Now, scientists are studying whether the predators are running into trouble from BP's oil spill.

The research may also help determine the health of species lower down the food chain in the Gulf of Mexico.

[US oil spill hit a key tuna spawning site: agency](#)

PARIS (AFP) – Numbers of juvenile Atlantic tuna at a major spawning site in the Gulf of Mexico probably fell by at least a fifth this year as a result of the BP oil spill, the European Space Agency (ESA) said Monday.

[Natural Gas Outstrips Wind Energy](#)

Congress has historically used tax incentives as a proxy for a national energy policy. Twenty years ago, two separate but similar programs targeted new domestic energy sources: wind and “unconventional” natural gas.

Tax incentives for energy production reduced the investor's financial risk, effectively subsidizing research and development in these new areas. How has it worked out? What can the experience tell us about the merits and long term viability of each energy source?

[Medieval Italian town blows hot on wind power](#)

TOCCO DA CASAURIA, Italy (Reuters) – Wind has never been a commodity in short supply for the medieval town of Tocco da Casauria in Italy's central Apennine mountains.

Nestled between two of the country's highest mountain ranges, the Maiella and Gran Sasso, Tocco da Casauria sits in a natural wind tunnel and residents have decided to make it work for them.

[Amtrak chugs along nicely to record ridership](#)

In the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, Amtrak served more than 28.7 million riders, an

increase of 5.7% from 2009, according to a company statement. Ticket revenue grew 9%, to \$1.7 billion. Ridership on the Acela, Amtrak's higher-speed train, was up 6.6%. Manieri says the ability to stay connected by phone and Internet while traveling is just one reason she prefers the train over flying or driving.

"You can make phone calls, and you don't have to turn your laptop on and off," says Manieri, adding she also avoids the airport's long security lines and the highway's congestion.

Amtrak has benefited from the "remarkable lifestyle shift" caused by smartphones, laptops and iPads that let travelers work and communicate almost everywhere, says Joseph Schwieterman, a transportation professor at DePaul University in Chicago. "It's kind of a have-iPhone-will-travel kind of thing."

Young adults especially view trains and intercity buses as extensions of the public transportation system, he says. They can hop on without ever disconnecting from the rest of the world, he says.

[New Tactic in California for Paying Pollution Bill](#)

STOCKTON, Calif. — Officials who have tried and failed to clean the air in California's smog-filled San Joaquin Valley have seized on a new strategy: getting millions of drivers to shoulder more of the cost.

Faced with a fine of at least \$29 million for exceeding federal ozone limits, the San Joaquin Valley's air quality regulators are proposing an annual surcharge of \$10 to \$24 on registration fees for the region's 2.7 million cars and trucks beginning next year. A decision is expected when the governing board meets on Thursday.

[Tony Windsor's Murray-Darling prescience](#)

It would be reckless to rely on cheap food imports bought on the proceeds of our present massive coal and minerals sales abroad. This bonanza will not last in a world of accelerating climate change and peak oil.

The present temporarily benign weather patterns in the MDB are no guide to the future policy environment. The reality of severe coming climate change must be factored into policy. Against a background of the inevitable desertification through climate change of most of the unirrigated MDB region, especially in the south, our irrigation communities should correctly be cherished, as places that will become like oases in the Arabian or Sahara Deserts.

[Australia's ANZ bank says carbon tax inevitable](#)

(Reuters) - Australia and New Zealand Banking Group's (ANZ.AX) chief executive said on Tuesday a carbon tax was inevitable.

"I think it is evitable. So it is best to do something that works for business," Michael Smith told a business lunch.

[James Cameron joins Prop 23 fight](#)

Avatar director James Cameron and Intel co-founder Gordon Moore have weighed in with huge donations for the 'no to Prop 23' battle over California's climate change law.

[Climate change treaty must address health issues: WHO](#)

New Delhi: The World Health Organisation (WHO) Tuesday said next month's climate change conference in Mexico must address health concerns in any legally-binding agreement on mitigating the impacts of global warming as it threatens human health.

[Killer of Aspen Slows, but Worries About a Beloved Tree Remain](#)

A sudden severe drought and heat wave early in the decade set off the decline, according to a paper co-authored by Dr. Worrall this year in the journal Forest Ecology and Management. Wetter, cooler seasons since then — more to the aspen's liking — have halted SAD's spread. Other evidence supports the weather as the cause. Although the aspen is the most widely distributed tree species in North America, the die-off struck mostly in the Southwest, where the drought beginning in 2002 was most severe. And lower elevations were affected more than upper ones, which tend to be cooler and wetter.

[Climate change leads to landslides in Nagaland: scientists](#)

Global climate change due to global warming, currently the most alarming environmental issue, has led to the natural calamities like landslides and heavy rains in Nagaland.

According to scientists of the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), New Delhi, there had been an increase in rainfall in the Himalayan range during the monsoon season in the last few years and this was due to the global climate change led by global warming.

[Lake Mead Hits Record Low Level](#)

"This is the place where the mega-dam began, and it may be the place where it ends," a policy analyst for an environmental group warns.

[Egypt's "hottest summer in years" drives up food prices](#)

"This year, Egypt had its hottest summer in years," said Mohamed Eissa, chairman of the Egyptian Meteorological Authority, adding the trend was set to continue.

Rising temperatures and poor harvests are driving up prices. According to the government's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), vegetable prices soared 51 percent and meat and poultry by 28.6 percent in September.

[UK crops to face water supply crunch, may relocate](#)

(Reuters) - Agricultural crops in Britain may need to be moved to new areas as the threat of both drought and flooding rises in the coming decades, a report commissioned by the Royal Agricultural Society of England said on Monday.

[NOAA: Year-to-Date Global Temperature Ties for Warmest on Record](#)

The first nine months of 2010 tied with the same period in 1998 for the warmest combined land and ocean surface temperature on record. The global average land surface temperature for January-September was the second warmest on record, behind 2007. The global ocean surface temperature for January-September was also the second warmest on record, behind 1998.

[In Kansas, Climate Skeptics Embrace Cleaner Energy](#)

Instead of talking about global warming, a nonprofit invoked patriotism, thrift and religion to persuade residents to save energy.



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