



Drumbeat: December 31, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on December 31, 2010 - 10:00am

[John Michael Greer: The haybox factor](#)

Just prior to the shutdown of the “Life After The Oil Crash” forum, Savinar posted a series of increasingly irritated comments about the number of people on it whose obsessive concern about the prospect of a catastrophic future stopped well short of doing anything to prepare for it. I know the feeling; this blog and the Green Wizards forum have attracted a lot of people who are actually doing something about their future, but I’ve had plenty of run-ins elsewhere with people who apparently believe that (a) insisting that some technology they’re doing nothing to develop or deploy will bail us out of our predicament, (b) displaying their doombat machismo by imagining a future more godawful than anybody else’s, or (c) finding somebody to blame and showing Jung a thing or two about how to project the shadow, are useful responses to the end of the industrial age.

Unproductive as these habits may be, there’s an understandable logic behind them, and behind all the attempts to paint the future in glowing colors of one sort or another – be those colors the syrupy hues of a Thomas Kinkade cottage painting or the purer if less comforting tones of a thermonuclear fireball. All of these portraits are ways not to think about the future that’s actually bearing down on us, a future that might best be summed up by pointing out that nearly all of us here in America will be poor – not “can’t afford the latest Xbox this month” poor, by the way, but “may not be able to put food on the table” poor – for the rest of our lives.

[Korea: Energy `attention` warning issued amid rising oil prices](#)

Rising high oil prices and the cold spell in Korea mean energy is in short supply.

The Knowledge Economy Ministry in a “crisis evaluation meeting” Thursday issued an “attention” warning according to the emergency energy crisis manual.

Depending on the price of oil per barrel, the energy crisis is categorized into “attention” (90-100 U.S. dollars); “caution” (100-130 dollars); “warning” (130-150 dollars); and “danger” (more than 150 dollars).

[Natural Gas Heads for Fourth Monthly Gain on Colder Weather in U.S. East](#)

Natural gas futures rose for a second day as forecasts showed below-normal

temperatures in the eastern U.S., boosting demand for the heating fuel.

Gas advanced as much as 1.2 percent as weather will be colder than normal east of the Mississippi River from Jan. 4 to Jan. 8, according to the National Weather Service. Today's gain won't keep the futures from their third straight yearly decline amid record stockpiles and higher production.

[Persian Gulf gasoil supply tightness in 2011 may push up premium](#)

Singapore (Platts) - The premium for 500 ppm sulfur gasoil loading from the Persian Gulf could rise next year on higher regional demand as well as more cargoes moving to Africa and the Red Sea area, trading sources said this week.

With Saudi Aramco switching to cleaner fuels in Gizan, in the Red Sea area, the supply of the 500 ppm sulfur gasoil grade is expected to tighten as the refiner pulls in term barrels, they added.

[Mexico: Plan for New Tuxpan Port Project Unveiled](#)

The new Tuxpan Port project involves the construction of a new green-field 51,520 m2 cargo terminal container facility with the capacity of 90,000 TEUs, and a liquids terminal providing liquids through-put for Pemex. They already have the concession, the land, the EIA, and SEMARNAT Approval, and the experience (API Acapulco, fleet of 50 vessels of different sizes, etc.).

[Analysis: Oilfield Service Providers Seek to Restructure Businesses](#)

The recent boom in shale gas capital expenditures (CAPEX) in the U.S. and similar boom in oil sands activity in Canada has not been enough to compensate for the decline in upstream CAPEX in other areas. As a result, oilfield service providers have restructured their businesses in a variety of ways over the past decade, from changing their country of incorporation, including moving corporate headquarters outside the U.S., and establishing new manufacturing and research and development facilities in countries outside the U.S.

[What Norway's Statoil did, that Saudi Aramco could not do](#)

After 77 years Saudi Aramco still imports technologies. Why? And why did they stop building schools when people were waiting for them to build a university or an institute outside their camp? When I heard of the multibillion projects that were planned by Saudi Aramco, I opened next day's Saudi newspapers hoping to see a number of job openings for Saudis. In the East, when a billion dollar project is announced, there is an accompanying news items about the new jobs associated with the mega project. Otherwise public will have no interest in such news.

If Statoil can do for the Norwegians what they did with 2 million barrels per day, Saudi Aramco should do more for Saudis with about 10 million barrels per day.

[Nepalis lose electricity for 11 hours a day as rivers dry up](#)

The state-run Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has decided to increase power blackouts throughout the country from the current 56 hours a week to 74 hours beginning Wednesday because of a rapid decrease of water levels in rivers.

[PG&E's low-level users get 1st boost since '01](#)

Starting Saturday, some Pacific Gas and Electric Co. customers will pay a little more to light their homes, while others will pay a little less.

Residential customers who use relatively little power will see their electricity rate go up 3 percent in the new year, PG&E reported Thursday. Those who use large amounts of electricity - typically, people with big homes or residents of California's hot interior valleys - will get a 2.6 percent rate cut.

[India, Iran have not yet resolved oil payments impasse - sources](#)

(Reuters) - India and Iran have not yet resolved an impasse over settlement of payments, three Indian industry sources familiar with the matter said on Friday, contradicting reported comments by Iran's deputy oil minister.

The talks will continue, all three sources said.

[How will India and Iran settle their payments impasse?](#)

(Reuters) - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said payments for trade with Iran should be settled outside the Asian Clearing Union (ACU), prompting fears in India that oil imports from the OPEC member could dry up without an alternative.

[ANALYSIS - More Iran steps seen tougher sell to new U.N. council](#)

(Reuters) - India and South Africa join the U.N. Security Council on Saturday, bolstering a bloc of countries on the powerful panel that may be reluctant to support new sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program.

However, barring any shocking revelations about Tehran's nuclear program, some analysts suggest that Washington might forgo pursuing new U.N. steps against Iran in 2011. That may be good news for oil markets, since Western diplomats say Iran's

energy sector would be the next logical area to sanction.

[Running On Empty](#)

We've allowed environmentalist ideology to make us dependent on foreign oil, while simultaneously hollowing out our infrastructure to the point where a gas crunch could bring chaos far beyond anything we've experienced thus far. Barack Obama's complete transformation into Jimmy Carter will do more than bring back expensive gas you have to wait in line to buy, on alternate days, based on whether you've got an even- or odd-numbered license plate. Nearly everything depends on energy prices, from the cost of food to running our battalions of computer devices. The "green" future is a dark one of rolling blackouts, and cars you either can't afford to buy, or can't afford to fuel up. Prosperity depends upon freedom, including the freedom of movement. Your freedom of movement is not simply eroding naturally. Barack Obama is taking it away, very deliberately.

[Texas Spared EPA Takeover of Carbon-Emission Rules as Court Weighs Move](#)

A federal appeals court temporarily blocked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from taking control of Texas's carbon-emission rules while it considers the state's bid to fend off federal intervention.

Texas filed a petition with the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington yesterday, saying the EPA didn't give adequate notice or allow for comments on a proposed federal takeover of the state's air permitting program on Jan. 2. Last night, the court ordered the agency to hold off on its plan while the court considers whether to delay the move until the case is resolved.

[State of Washington Might Tax Alternative Fuel Vehicles](#)

The State of Washington is out with a plan to maintain current infrastructure and other needs due to the decline in gas tax revenues. Owners of alternative fuel vehicles may not be happy with what's proposed.

[Ukraine reduces stock of dangerous uranium](#)

(CNN) -- The U.S. Energy Department announced Friday the shipment of 50 kilograms -- or 111 pounds -- of highly enriched uranium from Ukraine to Russia.

The removal of the uranium, which can be used in nuclear weapons, is part of a public commitment made by Ukraine at the Nuclear Security Summit in April to get rid of its entire supply within the next two years.

[Oil is Not Food but Food is Oil: The Imminent Crisis of Food Production Dependence on Oil](#)

Sadly absent from public discourse on oil-related issues is the impact of declining oil reserves on the production of food and the complete lack of interest of Western governments in pursuing alternate methods of feeding the world.

[Oil Will Shoot Past \\$100 Per Barrel In 2011](#)

Everyone is making predictions for 2011, most of which won't come true. In a couple of weeks, no one will care anyway, as they don't affect our day to day lives in any meaningful way outside of a select few.

Here is a prediction for 2011 that will come true and will affect all of us and potentially crimp the global economic recover: higher oil.

[Castro lives to defy another pundit](#)

"I believe we will see the outbreak of civil disturbance at many levels in 2010," wrote James Howard Kunstler, author of *The Long Emergency* (2005) and guru to the gloomy. Leftist radicals. Rightist nuts. All sorts of scary, violent types will "come out of the woodwork," Kunstler wrote in the last days of 2009.

Some of the signs at Tea Party rallies had nasty things written on them, and the crowds at Justin Bieber concerts got, like, totally out of control, but it's still safe to say that Kunstler's dire vision didn't pan out. No matter, though. Kunstler's got plenty more dire visions to share and you can be sure his legions of fans will find them just as frightening as all the other things he predicted that did not happen.

[Protests intensify in Bolivia over gasoline prices](#)

LA PAZ, Bolivia – Protests against a sharp increase in fuel prices intensified and turned violent in Bolivia on Thursday, as thousands of demonstrators demanded President Evo Morales' government repeal the hike.

Demonstrators filled the streets in La Paz and other cities to protest the higher prices, which were announced suddenly on Sunday. Gasoline prices immediately soared by 73 percent and diesel prices went up by 83 percent, leading to a rapid increases in transport and food prices in the Andean country.

[Oil Heads For Highest Annual Close Since 2007](#)

Oil, little changed in New York, headed for a second yearly advance and its highest year-end close since 2007, as evidence the global economic recovery is gaining momentum stokes demand for raw materials.

[Oil at \\$90 brings small OPEC supply rise: survey](#)

LONDON (Reuters) – OPEC output has risen slightly in December as Nigerian supply has increased, a Reuters survey found, indicating the group has yet to boost production substantially in response to prices at a 26-month high.

Supply from the 11 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries with output targets, all except Iraq, has averaged 26.75 million barrels per day (bpd) this month, up from 26.70 million bpd in November, according to the survey of oil companies, OPEC officials and analysts on Thursday.

[OPEC December Oil Output Rose to Four Month High, Bloomberg Survey Shows](#)

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' oil output climbed to a four-month high in December, led by increases in Nigeria and Iraq, as rising oil prices encouraged production, a Bloomberg News survey showed.

[Iran sees global demand for OPEC oil in new year](#)

(Reuters) - Iran's OPEC governor said on Friday the global demand for OPEC oil will increase in the new year, oil ministry website SHANA reported.

[Gas prices: Bracing for more pain at the pump](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Drivers may be bracing for more pain at the pump in 2011 as gas prices continue to head higher.

The price for a gallon of gas has risen 3% over the past 11 days and last week, prices crossed the \$3 mark for the first time since October 2008. At \$3.072 a gallon, gas prices are still 25% below their peak of \$4.114 set in July 2008.

[Blame High Gas Prices on Laziness and Greed](#)

Just as the U.S. economy seems about to recover, oil speculators are again ratcheting up gas prices. Don't let them get away with it.

[Commodities Beat Stocks, Bonds, Dollar in 2010](#)

Commodity prices beat gains in stocks, bonds and the dollar this year as China, the biggest user of everything from cotton to copper to soybeans, led the recovery from the

first global recession since World War II.

[Hyundai Heavy Says Orders to Jump 54% Next Year on Ship, Offshore Demand](#)

Hyundai Heavy Industries Co., the world's largest shipyard, expects to boost orders 54 percent next year as growing global trade and increasing oil exploration spur demand for vessels and offshore equipment.

[Is the Peak Oil Debate Really Dead?](#)

Will the old peak hold? Or are we headed for a new all-time high in production levels? Maybe it's time for a new five-year bet: \$200 by 2015? Was Simmons wrong—or just early?

[In defense of doom and gloom in an oil-price bet](#)

In peak-oil debates, Cornucopians cite improving technology that will extract fossil fuels more economically. New deposits will be found; new methods will retrieve more from existing reserves; new ways will emerge to affordably process less-than-sweet crude, such as Canada's tar sands.

But how far can we take such optimism? We all have faith that technology gets better, based on past experience. But does that belief justify policy decisions that affect lives years and decades from now? If the world today lived as if fossil fuels were abundant and affordable, would we bother conserving energy or investing in solar and other renewable sources? And if we chose the partying route, and our abiding faith in technology turns out to be wrong, what then? Will we have burned through our supplies and painted ourselves into an energy corner? The odds that we have hit peak oil may be low, but the consequences are huge if we don't pay attention to that risk.

[Stuart Staniford: Deutsche Bank: \\$125 oil spike in 2012](#)

This morning I read the Deutsche Bank report *The End of the Oil Age: 2011 and beyond: a reality check*. This is by analyst Paul Sankey and coauthors. Overall, the report is a pleasure to read: smart, interesting, broadly researched, well balanced. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in how peak oil is really likely to play out. Their thesis is similar to mine in broad strokes: oil production/demand will not rise too much more, the world will stay heavily auto-focussed, but there will be a shift to increasing electrification of the vehicle fleet.

There are some differences in detail in their view, and one concerns their thinking about the next oil shock, where I think they are missing a key point. Their basic schema of the next oil shock is similar to mine: as demand rises particularly in China, the Middle East, and the rest of the developing world, OPEC spare capacity will be used up, and then there will be another price spike.

[OPEC Caught Lying: \\$200 Oil is Imminent](#)

Now that the Peak has passed, all sorts of interesting tidbits are emerging.

Take the December 13th *BusinessWeek* article that declared OPEC is cheating the most since 2004...

[Book Review – The Impending World Energy Mess](#)

The authors don't use the term "peak oil" because world oil production, they say, has been and is likely to stay on the current fluctuating world oil production plateau for a few more years before the onset of production decline.

So what's the problem you ask? We have hoards of alternatives? According to the authors, the realities of these alternatives are that they are "very costly and insufficient to satisfy our overall energy needs, let alone our liquid fuel needs." The energy sources they discuss are numerous including biofuels, solar, wind, nuclear, natural gas, hydrogen, electric vehicles, oil shale, coal to liquids, and more. But let's delve into this deeper using biofuels, more specifically, corn ethanol as an example.

[Nigerian president's adviser on Niger Delta quits](#)

ABUJA (Reuters) - Nigeria's presidential adviser on Niger Delta affairs has resigned to run in governorship elections next April, a setback for the government as violence in the oil region has resurfaced in the last month.

[Petrobras 2010 oil output seen record at 2 mln bpd](#)

(Reuters) - Brazilian state oil company Petrobras said Thursday its oil production in Brazil in 2010 would reach a record high, topping 2 million barrels per day (bpd) after several new wells came on line.

Daily average output in December was also a record, at around 2.120 million bpd, up from the previous record of 2.033 million bpd registered in April.

[Iran says payments impasse with India resolved: report](#)

(Reuters) - Iran said on Friday that an oil payments impasse with India had been resolved by changing the currency of settlement, according to its Fars news agency, which would preserve a trade in crude worth \$12 billion a year.

Central bank officials from Iran and India met in Mumbai on Friday in an effort to keep

the oil trade running, and forcing New Delhi to strike a delicate balance between its energy needs and its global diplomatic interests.

[US rig count down by 20 this week](#)

The number of rigs actively exploring for oil and natural gas in the U.S. declined by 20 this week to 1,694.

Houston-based Baker Hughes Inc. said Thursday 919 rigs were exploring for gas and 765 for oil. Ten were listed as miscellaneous. A year ago, the count was 1,189.

[Indonesia to Offer Geothermal Drilling Rights in Block Tender Next Year](#)

Indonesia will seek bids for 50 new oil and gas blocks next year through tenders and direct offers to help boost output, said Evita Legowo, director general of oil and gas at the Energy and Minerals Resources Ministry.

[Gas field size puts Israel as exporter: US firm](#)

JERUSALEM (AFP) – A gas field offshore from Israel holds an estimated 450 billion cubic metres (16 trillion cubic feet) of natural gas, positioning the Jewish state as an exporter, Noble Energy said on Wednesday.

The new estimates, announced by the US firm which has a major stake in the field, said the Leviathan gas field dwarfs Israel's next biggest offshore field, Tamar.

[Israel revels in gas find but faces export hurdles](#)

TEL AVIV (Reuters) – Israel can look forward to long-term energy security after the discovery of a huge off-shore natural gas field but obstacles lie ahead in exporting its output, experts said Thursday.

Israel will find it hard to secure foreign buyers as European gas consumption is weakening while competition is stiff in the expanding Asian market, they said.

[Discovery of giant gasfield sparks frenzy in Israel](#)

The Leviathan gas find may improve Israel's energy security but is no panacea for regional peace.

[Gazprom, Belarus Poised to Avoid Cut-Off of Gas Supplies on New Year's Day](#)

OAO Gazprom, which supplies a quarter of Europe's gas, will probably avoid the disruptions to deliveries that arose at the start of previous years because of disputes with Ukraine and Belarus.

"At least as of today we have agreements with all our key partners," Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said on Dec. 29. "Existing contracts that are signed and have been fulfilled so far."

[Direct supply could lower gas price for Germany -- Gazprom chief](#)

BERLIN (Itar-Tass) -- Direct supplies can lower the gas price for consumers in Germany, the Russian Gazprom gas company's head Alexei Miller said in an interview to the German weekly Spiegel.

"If we could supply gas directly to consumers, Germans would pay less," he said.

[Mexico finds 4 more illegal pipeline taps](#)

MEXICO CITY - Mexico's state-owned oil company says it has found four more illegal taps drilled into pipelines by fuel thieves.

[Apache, Woodside Halt Western Australian Oil Fields as Cyclone Develops](#)

Apache Corp. and Woodside Petroleum Ltd. halted oil fields off Western Australia because of a tropical low system forecast to become a cyclone. Inbound iron ore shipments to Port Hedland are also suspended.

Woodside stopped production at its Vincent and Cossack oil fields, Laura Hammer, a spokeswoman, said from Perth today. Apache has halted its Stag and Legendre fields, according to David Parker, a Perth-based company spokesman.

[Floods bring Queensland coal sector to a halt](#)

AUSTRALIA'S \$50 billion coal industry may miss large export contracts as a result of flooding in central Queensland.

Wesfarmers yesterday added its name to the list of coal producers that have suspended operations as the floods created the worst conditions in 50 years.

Wesfarmers said it had been forced to suspend work at its Curragh North mine.

"Following heavy rain from the aftermath of Cyclone Tasha, major flooding is occurring

in central Queensland," Wesfarmers told the stock exchange.

The company said some access roads to Blackwater had been closed, preventing many employees from returning to work following the Christmas public holidays.

Related: [Australia floodwaters cover area bigger than Texas](#)

[Another Setback for a West Coast Coal Port](#)

When my colleague Elisabeth Rosenthal wrote last month about the growth of coal exports to China from all over the world, she noted that the Port of Tacoma in Washington had nixed proposals for a new coal export terminal in the area.

Now the state government has blocked a proposed export terminal in the southwestern corner of Washington, which could have provided another outlet for coal companies like Peabody Energy, which have found in Asia a growing market for coal from Wyoming's Powder River Basin.

[Jindal Petroleum May Build First Oil Refinery at Georgia Site](#)

Unit Jindal Petroleum Ltd. may set up the refinery with a capacity of 1 million metric tons near fields it's exploring in Georgia to "test waters," Sushil K. Maroo, group chief financial officer, said in an interview in New Delhi yesterday.

Jindal Steel, controlled by lawmaker Naveen Jindal, joins Indian Oil Corp., the country's largest refiner, in seeking to build a processing plant overseas to sell fuels. The group has five oil and gas blocks in Georgia and one in Bolivia and is looking for more areas in and around Kazakhstan, Maroo said.

[Russia Starts Oil Pipeline to China as Putin Attempts to Diversify Exports](#)

Russia will start its first oil pipeline to China at midnight, increasing crude exports to the world's largest energy consumer.

OAO Rosneft, Russia's largest oil producer, and state-run pipeline operator OAO Transneft will sell China 15 million metric tons (110 million barrels) a year for 20 years through the East Siberia Pacific Ocean pipeline, known as ESPO, after China provided the companies \$25 billion in oil-backed loans to finance construction and development of deposits.

[Venezuela's Chavez devalues bolivar currency again](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) – Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's government devalued its

bolivar currency for the second time in 12 months on Thursday, abolishing the lowest exchange rate as the OPEC member fights to revive its economy.

Intended to spur local production in the largely import-dependent nation, the announcement followed a central bank estimate that the economy contracted 1.9 percent during 2010 -- Venezuela's second straight year of recession.

[U.S., Venezuela evict ambassadors in diplomatic spat](#)

WASHINGTON — Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez dared the U.S. to expel his ambassador in retaliation for his move to reject the U.S. envoy to the South American country.

On Wednesday, that's just what the Obama administration did.

[Transocean Challenges Agency Authority to Probe Blast](#)

A federal panel that investigated the fatal 2005 Texas refinery blast that resulted in a \$50 million fine for BP Plc hasn't got the authority to probe the company's April deep-water drilling disaster, according to rig owner Transocean Ltd.

Under federal law, floating rigs are exempt from oversight by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Rachel G. Clingman, an attorney for Transocean, said in a letter to the agency obtained by Bloomberg. Transocean owned the Deepwater Horizon that burned and sank after BP's Macondo well erupted April 20, triggering the worst U.S. offshore oil spill.

[Ken Feinberg Paying Stephen Gillers, NYU Professor, With Money From BP Oil Spill Claims Fund For Legal Ethics Advice](#)

NEW ORLEANS — A law professor being paid \$950 an hour with BP's money has declared that the czar of the \$20 billion claims fund for Gulf oil spill victims is independent of the oil giant.

Fund administrator Ken Feinberg said Thursday he has agreed to pay New York University professor Stephen Gillers for his advice. Since being hired, Gillers has written a letter stating that Feinberg is neutral and not subject to BP's direction or control.

[Oil spill clarifies road map for sea turtle recovery](#)

While nearly all the rescued sea turtles were visibly oiled, to our surprise, most of the dead stranded sea turtles had no observable oil on their bodies and were in good health prior to their death. Necropsies (autopsies on animals) on more than half of 600

carcasses point to the possibility that a majority may have drowned in fishing gear. The evidence is that natural causes of death were ruled out, and that shrimp and fish - not a natural part of turtle diets - were found in their digestive tracts.

[Improved fuel efficiency leads SUVs to a comeback](#)

Sport-utility vehicles and crossovers in November hit their highest share of new vehicle sales in eight years compared with sales of cars and pickups, a USA TODAY analysis shows.

The analysis of Edmunds.com data for November sales since 2002 shows an uptick for SUVs and crossovers (SUV-style vehicles on a car chassis) to 32.4% of new vehicle sales last month, up from 29% a year ago and 25.9% in 2008.

[Will 2011 be a stretch of bad road for autos?](#)

The other big story of 2011 will likely be what share of that volume is captured by the new wave of "electrified" vehicles, such as the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Volt. Both makers claim strong initial demand. But will it hold, considering the trade-offs in terms of range and price that go along with battery power? The coming months could begin the wholesale shift away from petro-power, or they could show that we will be dependent on oil for the foreseeable future.

[Electric Cars Get Charged for Battle](#)

The first serious contenders for a mass-scale electric car are on the road. They've already changed GM and Nissan; will they change the world?

[High-Speed Rail: Obama's High-Stakes Gamble](#)

The master builder Robert Moses had a legendary strategy for ambitious public-works projects: start now, and figure out how to finish later. "Once you sink that first stake," he liked to say, "they'll never make you pull it up." And that, in essence, is the Obama Administration's strategy for spreading high-speed passenger rail across the United States.

[Adapting for a brighter future](#)

SO , there goes 2010, and as 2011 rolls in we see petrol going over \$2.00/litre in town, which probably means \$2.50 up the Coast. This year the International Energy Agency referred to Peak Oil in the past tense, saying output will never again get to the "all-time peak of 70 million barrels per day reached in 2006". Global demand for oil is increasing exponentially and the cost of production is going up as the stuff gets harder to extract.

The good news is that while the New Zealand government has acknowledged the need to plan for life beyond cheap oil, so have a growing number of Gisborne people. Planning to adapt our lifestyles seems like a better strategy than having change forced on us.

[Peak Oil, International Trade And Population](#)

The question facing humanity is--- is there any energy source which humanity can use in the future which will permit international trade to continue once oil is no longer available to humanity?

[Healthy Ontario farms will help us as supplies decline](#)

John P. Oliver says our conventional supplies of oil, food and water will be surpassed by global demand by 2050. Peak oil — the point when the flow of oil has reached its maximum level and supplies begin to decline — is a commonly discussed scenario, but discussions surrounding peak water and peak food are less prominent. Peak water—lack of availability of clean, fresh water—may be 30 to 40 years away, Oliver says, but peak oil and peak food—a shortage of available food staples—are only five to 20 years into the future.

['Harvesting History': Two local women cover rich ground in a new book on Amherst agriculture](#)

Near the end of the book, retired architect Chris Riddle describes the threat of climate change and "peak oil," the theory that reserves are diminishing and oil will become much more expensive, and sees an opportunity to enhance local agriculture.

"Will it be affordable or desirable for us to haul our strawberries and lettuce from the San Joaquin Valley, our tomatoes from Florida, our beef from Brazil, our cheese from Wisconsin and our apples from Washington state or Chile?" he asks.

[Compassionate Resistance - #3 - Don't Feed the Beast](#)

Start living as if peak-oil has already happened - because it has. The price of gasoline is going to continue to go up. Families are spending more and more of their income on filling up the gas tank. Don't wait until only the wealthy can buy gas to start planning your no-gas strategy. Let your local government know that this is NOT the time to be cutting back on public transportation and increasing fares. Investing money in building roads is insanity! If your family can manage on one vehicle, sell the one that uses the most gas and start monitoring how much unnecessary driving you might be doing. If you take a bike to a local farmer's market you will only be able to buy what you can take home on your bike - it really make you more conscious of what you're buying, and you'll get some exercise in the bargain. If you are looking for a place to live, be sure access to public transportation and walkability to stores, work and school are on your checklist.

[For energy, no more 'business as usual'](#)

Sustainability and “green” business have become common topics in many corporate boardrooms, but there’s one issue that most firms have all but ignored, at least publicly: the growing risk of an energy crunch. As we enter 2011, however, that’s an issue they can no longer afford to dismiss.

[A Last-Minute Choice by Texas and Vermont](#)

Vermont and Texas, the odd couple of nuclear waste disposal, are proceeding with a plan to allow 36 other states to use a dump site under development in west Texas, despite the misgivings of Vermont’s incoming governor, Peter Shumlin, about the move.

[U.S. helps Ukraine send enriched uranium to Russia](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a secret operation to secure nuclear material, the United States has helped Ukraine send to Russia enough uranium to build two atomic bombs.

This week's removal of more than 110 pounds of highly enriched uranium followed a pledge by Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich to get rid of all of his country's highly enriched uranium by April 2012. The material will be blended down in Russia, rendering it useless for bomb making.

[Utilities Seek Fresh Talent for Smart Grids](#)

GRANVILLE, Ohio — Speaking to a classroom of seventh and eighth graders at the middle school here, Lisa Magnuson shared a popular dictum from the power industry: if Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, could see how his technology had evolved over the last century, how would he react?

“He’d be amazed,” offered one student, mentioning that his cellphone can play music, display movies and send text messages.

And if Thomas Edison, the pioneer of power distribution, were to return?

“He’d probably go, ‘Wow, everything is still the same,’ ” said Ms. Magnuson, the director of marketing for Silver Spring Networks, which produces hardware and software to make the electric grid as smart as the phone network.

[A green technology wish list for 2011](#)

The green tech industry will fondly remember 2010. After enduring collapsing prices and lackluster demand in 2009, solar companies saw panel shipments grow by an

astounding 93 percent to 125 percent this year. Waiting lists for the new electric cars from Nissan and General Motors (GM) exceeded production quotas. Meanwhile, voters in California rejected a plan to suspend its carbon regulations while Washington extended tax credits and subsidies for solar, wind and biofuels for another year.

So what happens next?

[Christmas trees could make a great green fuel](#)

Once the tinsel and baubles have been removed, many of our Christmas trees end up in the trash. Soon they could be put to better use, however: a special roasting process could make it economically viable for power stations to burn large quantities of biomass, such as pine and spruce trees, instead of coal.

[New Year's ball sets energy example](#)

The ball, which drops 77 feet down a pole as New Yorkers count down the final minute to 2011, is lit by 32,256 Philips LEDs (light-emitting diodes), with each 48-diode module using just 22 watts of electricity. As a result, the lights consume about the same amount of energy per hour as it takes to operate two traditional home ovens.

[Groups Call Government's Coal Ash Analysis Skewed](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency is planning for the first time to regulate the disposal of coal ash, the potentially hazardous residue of the burning of coal in power plants and other large industrial facilities.

The proposed rules are the direct result of a disastrous spill of hundreds of millions of gallons of coal ash two years ago this month, set off when the wall of a power plant's containment pond collapsed near Kingston, Tenn.

[Perry taking his rebellion national](#)

WASHINGTON — Gov. Rick Perry's anti-Washington rhetoric, which helped hand him a re-election landslide, is about to be put to the test as he girds for a series of states' rights clashes with the federal government.

The Lone Star State governor's drive to gain more control of clean air regulations, Medicaid health coverage for the poor, immigration and border security will sharpen the national attention on Perry just as he becomes the new chairman of the Republican Governors Association.

[More U.S. cities dimming the lights](#)

"It's a broad environmental issue, and it's also a safety issue," Parks says. "It's a pure waste of energy, dollars, and it contributes to greenhouse emissions. ... For every watt of electricity used needlessly, somewhere a coal power plant is generating that electricity."

[China urges more efforts for forest protection in next 10 years](#)

China announced Wednesday that it would continue and expand its forest protection program in the coming 10 years as part of an effort to safeguard the national ecological security and tackle climate change.

[U.S. Analyst: China May Be 'Likely Bright Spot' in Asia Climate Action](#)

The government is likely to include this in its 12th five-year plan from 2011 to 2015 and could outline fledgling market-based steps to curb carbon emissions from burning fossil fuels.

"It has begun to engage provinces and municipalities in strategies to achieve the target. This is very exciting and shows the level of focus of the government on reducing carbon intensity," Morgan said.

[Obama's Energy Power Grab](#)

The US EPA announced its intention to deliver yet another body blow to the power and petrochemical industries, piling on another layer of unneeded, unwanted and economically disastrous regulations to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in the United States. Before we consider the agency's latest move, let's take a moment to consider all that has been done and will be done in the name of fighting the non-existent problem of global warming. States and the feds are already moving forward with at least six major regulatory programs designed to reduce the use of fossil fuels and thus decimate the energy sector:

[E.P.A. Limit on Gases to Pose Risk to Obama and Congress](#)

WASHINGTON — With the federal government set to regulate climate-altering gases from factories and power plants for the first time, the Obama administration and the new Congress are headed for a clash that carries substantial risks for both sides.

[An Evangelical Backlash Against Environmentalism](#)

Some evangelists argue that Christians must resist the "Green Dragon" of environmentalism.

[Climate PR effort heats up](#)

Hey America! Are you ready to get wonky on global warming?

After a year that started with fallout from the “Climategate” e-mail release, saw the cap-and-trade bill die in Congress, and ended with a gang of Republican climate skeptics winning House and Senate seats, global warming experts are going back to basics.

[Why even skeptics should tackle climate change](#)

Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Joel Pett may have hit upon something with a cartoon he drew for last year's climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark. It shows a scientist addressing a large audience at a climate summit. A spectator at the left side of the panel asks his neighbor: "What if it's a big hoax and we create a better world for nothing?" The answer emerges on the right side of the panel where the following list appears on a chalkboard: energy independence, preserve rainforest, sustainability, green jobs, livable cities, renewables, clean water and air, healthy children, etc., etc.

There is indeed something for almost everyone in climate protection.

[Massachusetts Sets Targets to Slash Carbon Emissions](#)

Massachusetts officials on Wednesday announced a plan to curb heat-trapping gases emitted by homes, cars and businesses in the state by 25 percent below 1990 levels over the next decade.

The targets set by the plan are the highest allowed under climate legislation passed by the state in 2008 and among the most stringent in the nation, placing Massachusetts in the company of California, New Mexico and other states that have taken strong action to address global warming.

[Inuit lives and diets change as ice shifts](#)

Climate change is altering diets and lifestyles among Inuit people, according to a scientist who has studied the human face of global warming in the Arctic.

Barry Smit, a professor at the University of Guelph, Canada, has spent five years leading research projects into how melting ice and changes in wildlife habits are impacting the lives and livelihoods of far northern communities.

Among his most striking findings was that increasing difficulty in hunting for traditional food was leading to much more junk food in the Inuit diet.



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