



Drumbeat: January 17, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 17, 2011 - 10:18am

[Chile Energy Minister Aims To Ease Tensions Over Gas Price Rise](#)

SANTIAGO -(Dow Jones)- Chile's Energy and Mining Minister Laurence Golborne will try to ease tensions in the crisis in the nation's southernmost Magallanes region over a planned natural-gas price increase.

Unionized workers at state oil-and-gas company Empresa Nacional del Petroleo have threatened to walk out at the Aconcagua and Bio Bio refineries, the nation's largest, and to cut natural-gas supply to Canadian methanol producer Methanex Corp., if the government doesn't pull back from its controversial plan for a price increase.

Also, protests over the last week in the region's largest city, Punta Arenas, have practically paralyzed the city and left two women dead last Tuesday night.

[South Korea: Gov't orders heat off amid energy crisis](#)

Amid a record-breaking cold spell, the government yesterday announced a set of guidelines to save energy and ultimately prevent blackouts, including ordering government buildings to shut off their heat and asking workers to wear long underwear.

[Northern Iraqi Governor Cuts Baghdad Electricity](#)

(AP) BAGHDAD - A local governor in Iraq's oil-rich north cut the electricity going to Baghdad from a power station in his province Monday over a dispute with the central government that he said had left his constituents with little power in the cold winter months.

Tamim Gov. Abdul-Rahman Mustafa said residents in his province's capital city of Kirkuk only have three hours of power each day. He said failed negotiations with Iraq's Electricity Ministry to share power generated at a plant in Taza, located 25 kilometers south of Kirkuk, gave him little choice but to cut the electricity supply headed to Baghdad.

[Power ministry to directly import furnace oil](#)

ISLAMABAD: In an unusual development, the water and power ministry has decided to directly import furnace oil for generation companies on deferred payments on the back of sovereign guarantees after having failed to clear over Rs42 billion arrears of the state-run Pakistan State Oil.

The decision has been taken against the background of an intense controversy with public sector institutions accusing each other of not doing their job, acting beyond their statutory roles and being responsible for the acute energy crisis which is affecting almost every segment of national economy.

[Four-day industrial gas cut begins in Faisalabad](#)

FAISALABAD: Gas supply to industrial units of Faisalabad was suspended for four days, leaving hundreds of thousands of daily wagers and laborers jobless.

[Pakistan: Country faces serious energy crisis: Shahbaz](#)

LAHORE -- Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif says the country is facing a serious energy crisis which is badly affecting its agriculture, industry and other sectors.

Talking to French Ambassador Danial Jouanneau here on Friday, he said hydle, solar and bagasse were the cheapest sources of generation of energy and France should extend cooperation in this regard as a policy to provide relief to the masses.

[Kalabagh Dam: Our salvation](#)

In an interview with this newspaper, former Chairman WAPDA and a gifted engineer Shamsul Mulk has categorically stated that the only solution to our energy crisis lies in Kalabagh Dam. This sane counsel has, unfortunately, been senselessly turned down by the ANP and the PPP-led government, which being a popularly elected dispensation had a good opportunity to build consensus and make this national dream into a reality.

[Afghan official blames Iran for fuel shortage](#)

Kabul - Afghanistan's commerce minister on Sunday blamed Iran for the country's fuel shortage amid growing protests in the war-torn nation against its neighbour.

More than a month ago Iran cut its fuel supply route to Afghanistan for more than a month without providing a convincing reason, Anwarul Haq Ahadi told journalists.

'Afghanistan is suffering. The stoppage of fuel tankers has created great problems and a crisis for us in terms of fuel supply,' Ahadi said.

[Gulf shifts focus to domestic energy](#)

Global demand for petroleum fell by 1.7 per cent in 2009, while Middle East demand rose 3.8 per cent, partially to fuel power generation, according to a report by Credit Suisse published last July. At the peak of the summer heatwave, Saudi Arabia burns close to 1m barrels of oil a day, the report said.

While limp international demand and Opec-mandated production cuts mean that this does not eat into exports, it could dent international supply in the future and is an uneconomic way of using the kingdom's most valuable resource, experts say.

"A surprisingly large amount of oil is being burnt just to keep up with present power demand but it's clearly unsustainable to burn so much of your potentially high-value exports as low-value fuel just to keep air-conditioners working over the summer," Mr Davis says.

[Abu Dhabi wrestles with gas dilemma](#)

But as Conoco's withdrawal illustrates, Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates' capital, faces one of the trickiest gas development dilemmas in the region.

Gas is vital to the diversification that the UAE hopes will decrease reliance in the long term on hydrocarbons and boost employment opportunities.

But the supply-demand equation for gas is particularly tight. This is because of spiralling electricity consumption, caused by a growing population and demand in the petrochemical, steel and aluminium industries, combined with the need for substantial reinjection of gas into oilfields.

[The next step](#)

As part of its strategy to monetise its hydrocarbon reserves, and to add value to its oil and gas reserves, Saudi Arabia has embarked on a wave of expansion projects ranging from refining to petrochemicals. This has led to the growth of downstream service providers.

[S.Korea firms lead race for Aramco's Wasit-sources](#)

RIYADH (Reuters) - South Korean firms lead the race for deals to build Saudi Aramco's largest gas plant Wasit, which is part of the state oil firm's push to raise gas processing capacity, industry sources said on Sunday.

Gas projects have taken priority in the world's top oil exporter as they can cater for rising domestic demand and help Saudi Arabia avoid burning oil it would rather sell internationally.

[Iraq, Kuwait Lower Crude Prices on Aramco Cut: Persian Gulf Oil](#)

OPEC members Iraq and Kuwait cut their price formulas for crude for shipments in February, following Saudi Arabia's price reductions for most buyers. Refineries in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain plan maintenance stoppages in the next several weeks.

[Analysis: 2011 Newbuilds](#)

With utilization rates in the high 60th percentile worldwide, offshore rig demand is at a 5-year low. Nevertheless new rigs will hit the market this year to meet the demand for oil and gas exploration and production. Rig orders predominantly placed from 2006-2009, near the top of the offshore rig demand cycle, are ready for delivery over the next 12 months.

[Low Natural Gas Prices; No Boon for Shale](#)

The drop in natural gas prices this winter could slow down booming development in Pennsylvania's Marcellus shale natural gas reserves, industry experts and observers said.

"They're cutting production to lower costs. There's so much production coming on line overall," said Kent Moors, director of Duquense University's Energy Policy Research Group and an expert on oil and natural gas policy.

[Canadian spot natural gas surges in thin volume](#)

(Reuters) - Canadian spot natural gas prices surged to their highest level in 11 months on Monday as a cold snap in western Canada boosted demand and crimped some supplies.

[Oklahoma landowners challenge TransCanada's Keystone pipeline](#)

TransCanada TRP-T is facing new battles in its \$12-billion project to build an oil sands pipeline to the U.S. Gulf Coast, as landowners in Oklahoma challenge its right to expropriate land for its right of way.

[Canadian Natural unsure when Horizon can restart](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Canadian Natural Resources does not know when oil production at a key facility will resume as it has still not been able to assess the damage from a fire 11 days ago, Vice-Chairman John Langille said.

[National Bank of Kuwait hosts energy expert at International Symposium](#)

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), the highest rated in the Middle East, will host foremost energy expert and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Dr. Daniel Yergin as a speaker for its International Symposium series. Dr Yergin is a highly respected authority on energy, economics and international relations.

[Goldman Says 'Too Early' for OPEC to Raise Oil Output](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC is unlikely to boost oil production amid rising prices because global inventories are still above five-year averages, said Jeff Currie, London-based head of commodities research at Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

"It's still too early for OPEC to be raising production and their decision historically has not been price-based," Currie said today in an interview. "The key driver of their decision to raise output will be when inventories will reach the five-year average."

[Oil-rich Norway welcomes BP-Rosneft Arctic deal](#)

(Reuters) - Norway, the world's fifth-largest oil exporter and a neighbour of Russia with great ambitions for energy exploration in the High North, welcomed on Monday the share swap and Arctic exploration deal between BP and Rosneft.

[TNK-BP boss predicted break-up of Russian joint venture](#)

BP's top executive in Russia predicted that its TNK-BP subsidiary would be carved up by the end of this year by Rosneft, the British oil company's new partner, acting with Gazprom, according to leaked US embassy cables.

[Factbox: BP's energy ventures in Russia](#)

(Reuters) - Russia's largest oil producer, state-owned Rosneft, and British oil major BP have struck a deal to swap shares and jointly develop Russia's Arctic offshore, making BP the first foreign company to be granted access the prized Russian oil frontier.

Following are BP's energy projects with Russian firms:

[Russia's Rosneft, BP to start Arctic drilling in 2015](#)

The Russian and British oil giants Rosneft and British Petroleum (BP) plan to start drilling in the Arctic's Kara Sea in 2015, Rosneft's vice president said on Monday.

[Arctic Oil Spills 'Would Be Visible From Space'](#)

Russian environmentalists will appeal to BP and Rosneft shareholders to thwart the companies' plans to drill for oil in a remote part of the Arctic, amid concerns that a spill in the icebound sea could be unreachable for up to nine months.

[Sakhalin II construction threatens endangered gray whales](#)

The construction of a third oil platform for the Shell-led Sakhalin II energy project may threaten a critically endangered population of gray whales off Russia's eastern coast, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said on Monday.

The company, which already has two platforms in the Russian Far East, announced in December its plans to build another one near the crucial feeding habitat of the gray whale population.

[Three charts to start your week](#)

In the longer term, he says, currencies will be pulled down by three “irreversible trends”: the world’s aging population; the outsourcing of jobs away from the major industrialized nations, particularly the U.S; and the approach of “peak oil.”

“These three mega-trends will continue to lower the GDP, lower the tax revenue, create higher trade deficits, create higher unemployment, resulting in the need for further currency creation,” Mr. Barisheff said. “This will cause inflation to rise as currencies depreciate in value and create higher universal debt. All of this means the gold price will continue to rise.”

[Are oil investors using the wrong indicators of value?](#)

The truth is that oil companies are running out of places to find more oil and the end game is not far off. A recent Deutsche Bank analyst report suggested that high oil prices over the next few years coupled with an accelerating decline in the cost of battery technologies for electric vehicles will precipitate a global peak in demand for oil by 2020. Indeed, analysis from the International Energy Agency suggests that we must aggressively reduce oil use in order to meet climate change goals. Meeting the climate objective would peak oil demand by 2018.

[Nigeria: 3 die in riot over voter registration](#)

JOS, Nigeria -- A university graduate volunteering to register voters for Nigeria's upcoming elections and two others have died in violence in the oil-rich country's troubled central region.

[Syrian-Chinese gas co-op progressed:minister](#)

DAMASCUS, Syria - Syrian Oil and Gas Minister Sufian Allaw said here on Monday petroleum cooperation between Syria and China has made a remarkable progress and achieved fruitful results.

[Tunisia unity govt may not satisfy protesters](#)

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP) — Tunisia's prime minister announced a national unity government Monday, allowing opposition into the country's leadership for the first time in a bid to quell civil unrest following the ouster of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali amid huge street protests.

However, at least one union leader said the changes were not enough and predicted demonstrations would continue until all key figures in the old regime had been swept from power.

[Learning from Tata Motors' Nano Mistakes](#)

It's been a rough season for Tata Motors' much-publicized "people's car," the Nano. In November, while overall auto sales in India's booming economy rose more than 22%, Tata sold only 509 Nanos, down precipitously from the 9,000 it sold the previous July, news that's been trumpeted in disparaging headlines from New York to Sydney.

[Home builders see green prefab potential](#)

"I kept looking for something that was middle-class green," she recalls. She signed a contract for a two-bedroom, one-bath \$160,000 prefab from Blu Homes, a Massachusetts-based company, in April that was completed in September. The price included delivery but not land.

"It was a lot easier than what others around me experienced," she says, noting the on-budget, quick delivery.

[The energy to foster the next bright idea](#)

There will be no magic bullet to meet the world's growing energy needs. A cleaner energy future is possible but it will require the biggest energy companies to collaborate with visionaries from small-start ups who offer something new. And whether large enterprises or small, nations or cities, families or individuals, all must find new ways to conserve. The example of Dipal Barua helps to illustrate both these points, which should be remembered as The World Future Energy Summit begins today in Abu Dhabi.

[Ban Ki-Moon Calls for 'Clean Energy Revolution'](#)

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon is pushing for an overhaul of current energy consumption trends and for more investment in green technology.

Speaking at the fourth annual World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, Ban said renewable energy could help solve a number of the planet's most pressing problems.

[Norway oil fund raises Vestas stake above 5 pct](#)

COPENHAGEN (Reuters) - Norway's sovereign wealth fund has raised its stake in Danish wind turbine maker Vestas Wind Systems to 5.05 percent, becoming its second largest shareholder.

[Naomi Klein's TED Talk: We've "Entered the Era of Extreme Energy"](#)

"How else to describe this, but as a form of mass insanity. Just when we know we need to be learning to live on the surface of our planet, off the power of sun, wind and waves; We are frantically digging to get at the dirtiest, highest emitting stuff imaginable..."

[7 Book Reviews in Cleantech and Energy](#)

Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution by Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, L. Hunter Lovins

If there was one key to turning around the damaging business and environmental practices of modern culture, what would it be? 'Natural Capitalism,' the seminal 1999 call for a broader focus on sustainability, presents an overwhelming case that the key is resource efficiency and effectiveness. Just as conventional capitalism is all about using financial capital effectively, so 'natural capitalism' is about expanding that bottom line focus to include the natural resources and ecosystem services underlying the ability of business and society to function in the first place. The authors argue that with appropriate shifts in business perspective and government policy, our economy could be something like 90% more efficient in its use of irreplaceable natural resources, thereby mitigating ecosystem impacts, enabling global development, and staving off climate change.

["Globalized Consumer Society Without Oil is Nonsense" - the Findhorn Film](#)

I have posted a video before that explored the ecovillage at Findhorn, now there is a whole DVD based around this pioneering sustainable community. Only this DVD isn't just about the community—it's also about lessons we may all need to learn in the face of the impending ecological and resource challenges we face.

[Sharon Astyk: On not jumping the gun](#)

The pleasure we get from being taken seriously in periods of high prices will be short-lived if we are not careful about framing this issue. Our messages have to work when oil prices are high or low. We cannot rely on price run-ups occurring at convenient moments; nor can we allow price volatility to interrupt life-or-death societal preparations because people feel that the crisis is over now.

[Kurt Cobb - A dramatic shift in the peak oil discussion: "You don't have to take my word for it"](#)

When it comes to murkier matters such as peak oil, we must admit that our perceptions and conclusions are always based on incomplete information. In such instances, humans, being social creatures, seek confirmation from others when they receive information that is new and not easily verified. They wonder, quite rightly, whether other people accept such information as correct.

Now, as we know, the mere fact that large numbers of people accept a certain conclusion is not necessarily proof of its veracity. Still, with little to go on and little time to do independent research, many people essentially resort to polling. Does my reference group, the people I hang out with most, accept a particular conclusion? Does the broader public, reflected through the media, accept it?

[Nothing interesting in Albany? Wrong](#)

Jeff Rubin, a renowned energy expert, in his book "Why Your World Is About To Get A Whole Lot Smaller," predicts that the price of oil will soon rise so high that it will cause people to leave their homes in suburbia and move back into cities, preferably walkable cities. Young people, many of whom have lived their entire lives in suburbia are wanting to live some place different. Cities are where they want to be. Cities are interesting because of what they have to offer. As people abandon the suburbs, the attraction of a walkable, safe community will be sought after. Albany, and especially the Delaware Avenue neighborhood, have the characteristics that these folks will seek out and find. Delaware Avenue will be an even more vibrant and even more interesting street in 15 years than it is today. I believe this is inevitable.

[IEA sounds oil price alarm](#)

The head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) has warned that current oil price levels are "alarming" and could have a negative impact if allowed to spiral upwards.

With oil prices surging towards \$100 a barrel, market eyes are on Opec to see whether the producers group will boost crude supplies to dampen prices.

IEA executive director Tanaka told reporters on the sidelines of an industry conference that Opec "needs to show more flexibility" in increasing oil production according to Reuters. "If the current price continues, it will have a negative impact," he said.

Oil hit a record \$147 a barrel in 2008 and there are fears that prices could rise significantly above \$100 if Opec does not signal its intent to lift supplies.

[OPEC raises forecast for 2011 world oil demand growth](#)

VIENNA - THE OPEC oil cartel revised upwards on Monday its 2011 world oil demand growth estimate given the pace of global economic recovery, as well as the cold winter weather in the northern hemisphere.

'Given the latest upward revision in world GDP (gross domestic product), world oil demand growth is forecast at 1.23 million barrels per day (bpd) averaging 87.3 million bpd in 2011, 50,000 bpd higher than last month's estimate,' the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries said in its latest monthly bulletin.

[Oil slips to near \\$91 after China tightening move](#)

BANGKOK – Oil prices skidded to near \$91 a barrel Monday in Asia as the dollar gained against the euro and after China's latest move to restrict lending raised the prospect of weaker demand for crude.

[Hedge Funds Raise Oil Bets as Prices Reach 27-Month High](#)

Hedge funds raised bullish bets on oil by the most in five weeks as crude reached the highest level in more than two years amid signs that the global economic recovery is gaining momentum.

[No Opec action as \\$100 oil looms](#)

Iran, which holds the rotating presidency of Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), says it sees no need for oil exporters to hold an emergency meeting if crude prices rise to \$100 a barrel. Amid mounting fears about the impact on Western economies, Iran's Oil minister, Masoud Mir-Kazemi, said: "The increase toward \$100 is not worrisome enough to warrant an emergency meeting. None of the Opec members considers this figure as being unreasonable."

[Venezuela says no threat from higher oil prices](#)

CARACAS: Rising oil prices do not threaten the global economic recovery and there is no need for an emergency OPEC meeting to consider increasing supply, Venezuela's Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said on Saturday. Brent crude prices rallied this week to around \$98 a barrel while US oil futures were at about \$91, well above the \$70-\$80 range that OPEC's top exporter Saudi Arabia says is comfortable for both producers and

consumers.

[Global Oil Production Update](#)

For oil production data-heads the EIA's decision to terminate the International Petroleum Monthly has produced a small tremor. Yes, the data *supposedly* will be available each month through one of EIA's databrowsers. However, these embedded browsers are actually not as user-friendly as the EIA might assume. For chart-makers like myself, we need Excel files. And many of us hope (and assume) there will be an extractable Excel file for global crude oil production data once the transition is made. For now, EIA has just produced its last IPM (December 2010) which updates data through October of 2010. Let's take a look at the most recent revisions, and latest production levels.

[Discoveries fuel China's resource security](#)

BEIJING - Chinese geologists have detected "super-thick" oil and gas-bearing strata in the northern part of the South China Sea and identified 38 offshore oil and gas-bearing basins, a senior official said on Saturday.

[Oil Prices, Consumer Anxiety and the Inverse Demand Corollary](#)

It's no secret that when gas prices go up, consumer anxiety also increases. Given the example of January's consumer spending figures, and ongoing high unemployment in this economy, one could speculate that there is an Inverse Demand Corollary in effect which has significant implications for Peak Oil theorists and traders in oil futures.

[Analysis: Russia opens Arctic to BP to remain top oil nation](#)

(Reuters) - Russia's move to open up its prized Arctic reserves to oil major BP is driven by the Kremlin's desire to avoid a fall in production and remain the world's leading oil nation.

Analysts and bankers told Reuters that the deal, in which BP agreed to a multi-billion-dollar share swap with state major Rosneft, is a boost to Russia's investment climate, though any stocks rally would be capped by political and oil tax regimes uncertainties.

The deal gives BP a direct line to powerful Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and access to new reserves as it emerges from its Gulf of Mexico spill disaster. But it also locks BP into a partnership with any Kremlin regime for the decades to come.

"For Russia to maintain production at or above 10 million barrels per day, the investments required are huge. Decline rates in West Siberia are very steep and projects in East Siberia are fairly limited," said Amrita Sen, a commodity analyst at Barclays.

[ANALYSIS - Risky Rosneft tie-up shows BP's zeal for a deal](#)

(Reuters) - BP's share swap and arctic exploration deal with Rosneft show the London-based oil major is ready to take commercial risks rivals might shun even after its battering from the Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

[TNK-BP may take part in BP-Rosneft Arctic deal-AAR](#)

(Reuters) - The deal between Rosneft and BP to develop Arctic oil and gas could be done by the British major's Russian JV, TNK-BP, an official for the JV's Russian shareholders said on Monday.

TNK-BP is a 50-50 joint venture between BP and AAR, the vehicle of four Russia-connected oligarchs.

[BP-Rosneft pact 'called into question'](#)

BP's share swap and Arctic exploration deal with Rosneft is reportedly under scrutiny by partners in the UK supermajor's Russian joint venture TNK-BP over whether it violates the terms of their partnership.

[BP's Russian deal: What the analysts say](#)

The deal looks like a typically bold BP move accessing a new region considered highly prospective. In theory, by being in partnership with the state-run Rosneft, BP would hope to circumvent some of the problems it encountered with TNK and RDS encountered over Sakhalin.

However, this is an exploration opportunity so while it may be a good medium to long-term strategic investment, delivery is years away.

[Rosneft deal: BP is getting back to strategy](#)

Analysts have been quick to argue that the deal is fundamentally earnings dilutive in the short-term. BP will have to bear a disproportionate burden of the drilling costs in an oil field that will probably not yield returns this decade. Goldman Sachs has suggested an earnings per share dilution of approximately 5% from this deal.

So why pick such a high profile fight if the payback is long into the future? Quite simply because BP is a strategic not tactical operation. While the past year has been spent managing the tragic short-term implications of the US oil spill the greatest asset BP possesses if truth be told is not its now tarnished reputation but its strategic oil reserves.

[BP Rosneft deal: One giant game of Russian roulette](#)

The speed and secrecy with which BP decided to climb back into bed with Moscow and hand it a strategic stake in Britain's largest industrial enterprise suggests a supremely confident company.

But nothing could be further from the truth.

[BP 'in bed with the KGB' over £5bn arctic oil deal](#)

BP faced a mounting backlash on both sides of the Atlantic last night over its controversial deal to sell a £5bn stake to the Russian government.

[China gets first overseas order for LNG ships](#)

BEIJING - China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) signed a contract with Exxon Mobil and Mitsui & Co Ltd on Saturday to build four LNG ships (liquefied natural gas), the nation's first overseas order for such an advanced carrier.

[China's L.N.G. firms eye Iran, and beyond](#)

BEIJING: China may have the technical capability to build a natural gas liquefaction plant within five years, potentially opening the door to vast reserves in Iran where sanctions have kept away Western firms.

A breakthrough for Chinese firms would allow them to tap Iran's vast gas reserves, the largest in the world outside Russia, as long as they are prepared to brave sanctions that have scared off Western oil majors.

[Iran finds \\$50b gas field: minister](#)

Iran, OPEC's second largest oil exporter, has discovered a new onshore gas field with reserves valued at \$US50 billion (\$A50.34 billion), Oil Minister Masoud Mirkazemi said on Sunday.

The Khayam field east of Assaluyeh on the Gulf has "260 billion cubic metres (9.18 trillion cubic feet) of gas, of which 210 (billion) can be exploited, which is about 24 million cubic metres per day," the minister told reporters.

[Statoil bangs drum for gas](#)

Norwegian giant Statoil today launched a marketing campaign to promote gas as the fuel of the future to meet Europe's energy needs while satisfying environmental goals.

[Nigeria loses \\$150 billion to gas flaring](#)

Environmental degradation has remained a major headache in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta. From the estimate of some environmentalists the nation must have lost over \$150b due to lack of enforcement of environmental standard.

[Norway's new Vikings explore oil technology frontiers](#)

AAGOTNES // A millennium after Viking ships plied the North Atlantic to establish Norse colonies as far afield as Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland, Norwegian oil firms are continuing the national tradition of exploring new maritime frontiers.

That has propelled Statoil, the biggest Norwegian oil producer, far beyond the relatively shallow waters off Norway's coast to develop deep-water oilfields in the Gulf of Mexico, West Africa, and, recently, Brazil.

[BP takes Australian permits](#)

Supermajor BP has taken four of seven offshore exploration permits issued by the Australian government today.

[Norway keen to offer oilfield help to Arab states](#)

OSLO // Norway's relations with Arab states are shaped more by energy interests than bilateral trade.

The Nordic country's decades of experience with managing resource wealth gives it common ground with other major oil producers, including those from the Middle East, says Espen Barth Eide, the Norwegian deputy minister of foreign affairs.

[Trans Alaska Crude Oil Pipeline Resumption Delayed By Ongoing Leak Repairs](#)

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. plans to start its Trans Alaska Pipeline today after repairs to the line that carries 11 percent of U.S. crude production took longer than scheduled.

The operator intends to resume flows through the line "early" local time, according to a situation report by the Unified Command in Fairbanks, Alaska, which was formed in response to the leak and includes Alyeska, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

[Norway on hunt for Belgium gas storage](#)

Norway's Oil and Energy Ministry said today state-run explorer Statoil was exploring ways to co-operate on long term gas storage with Belgium's Fluxys in a move to secure gas supplies for Belgium.

[Gazprom: May Build LNG Plant Near Vladivostok With Japan](#)

MOSCOW -(Dow Jones)- Russian gas giant OAO Gazprom said Monday it has signed an agreement with Japan on cooperation in the Far East, including jointly designing a liquified natural gas plant near Vladivostok.

[Mauritius Plans to Build \\$2 Billion Oil Refinery, In Talks With Mangalore](#)

Mauritius plans to build a \$2 billion oil refinery by the end of 2014 as the country diversifies its economy away from agriculture and tourism, Trade and Commerce Minister Shawkutally Soodhun said.

[Hyundai Oilbank Completes Building New \\$2.3 Billion Plant South of Seoul](#)

Hyundai Oilbank Co., South Korea's fourth-largest refiner, completed building a 2.6-trillion-won (\$2.3-billion) heavy oil upgrading plant to raise output of higher-priced, cleaner-burning fuels.

[US-Chinese ties: Clashing interests in energy, economy despite pledges to cooperate](#)

BEIJING (AP) — In late 2009, President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao announced an ambitious array of joint clean energy research projects touted as a mark of a maturing relationship and an alliance to fight climate change.

A year after Obama's visit to China, the envisioned partnership has largely evaporated. The U.S. has filed a complaint at the World Trade Organization against China's policies favoring its producers of wind and solar equipment. Cooperation in climate change talks has been rare.

[The final BP cleanup](#)

Last year's Gulf of Mexico oil spill has dropped out of the headlines, and according to a recent federal report, the spilled oil itself has mostly vanished. The only thing left to clean up is the nation's regulatory system, but that's shaping up to be a tougher job than skimming crude from the ocean.

[Nigeria's Promise, Africa's Hope](#)

Many analysts see a direct link between crude oil and the corruption in Nigeria, that creating a system to prevent politicians from having access to petrodollars is needed to reduce large-scale corruption. For most people, the solution is straightforward: if you commit a crime, you should be brought to book. But in a country like Nigeria, where there are no easy fixes, one must examine the issue of accountability, which has to be a strong component of the fight against corruption.

[Israeli Test on Worm Called Crucial in Iran Nuclear Delay](#)

The Dimona complex in the Negev desert is famous as the heavily guarded heart of Israel's never-acknowledged nuclear arms program, where neat rows of factories make atomic fuel for the arsenal.

Over the past two years, according to intelligence and military experts familiar with its operations, Dimona has taken on a new, equally secret role — as a critical testing ground in a joint American and Israeli effort to undermine Iran's efforts to make a bomb of its own.

Behind Dimona's barbed wire, the experts say, Israel has spun nuclear centrifuges virtually identical to Iran's at Natanz, where Iranian scientists are struggling to enrich uranium. They say Dimona tested the effectiveness of the Stuxnet computer worm, a destructive program that appears to have wiped out roughly a fifth of Iran's nuclear centrifuges and helped delay, though not destroy, Tehran's ability to make its first nuclear arms.

[Speculation: Finders Keepers](#)

Oil prices certainly affect food prices, but is there direct speculation in food? In the Minyanville chart below, coffee, corn, wheat, oats and soybeans all outpace gold.

[The U.S., China and food](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17 (UPI) -- Of all the geopolitical and geoeconomic issues that the Chinese and American presidents will discuss in their Washington summit this week, the looming world food crisis isn't on the agenda. It should be because, each in its own way, these two countries share a massive responsibility.

They are the world's largest food producers and the largest consumers of meat protein. Since it requires 13 to 17 pounds of vegetable protein to produce 2 pounds of meat protein, their appetite for meat is a major strain on the world's limited supply of arable land.

[Judy Bonds, an Enemy of Mountaintop Coal Mining, Dies at 58](#)

Ankle deep in the stream by the house where his coal-mining family had lived for generations, Judy Bonds's 6-year-old grandson, Andrew, scooped up fistfuls of dead fish one day back in 1996.

"What's wrong with these fish?" he asked.

"I knew something was very, very wrong," Ms. Bonds told Sierra magazine in 2003. "So I began to open my eyes and pay attention."

[Masdar to use the cooling power of the sun](#)

ABU DHABI // Masdar, Abu Dhabi's clean energy company, is testing a new technology that uses the power of the sun to keep buildings cool.

The technology went on show yesterday on the eve of the World Future Energy Summit.

[Aviation Biofuels: Real or Green Fantasy?](#)

Sometimes, the more you learn about a thing, the more information you gather and the more people you talk to about a specific topic, the harder it is judge. That's definitely the case with aviation biofuels which are, in a sense, leading the charge towards a greener, bio-based fuel economy. I have pored over dozens of reports, research presentations, studies and news articles on this topic and conducted a number of interviews.

The impression I get is of an industry operating on an underlying assumption that biofuels are an inevitability. The typical headline reports on some new development or milestone that's been achieved, but down in the body of the story, you rarely see the offsetting qualifier noting that the entire edifice isn't out of the R&D phase yet. There's a strong tendency to green wash everything, including editorial coverage. When you ask, "how much," people stop talking.

[Stiglitz Says Effect of Global Crisis Will Last Another Two to Three Years](#)

Nobel prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz said the impact of the global financial crisis would last for another two to three years, and that investment to reduce the impact of climate change may help to spur recovery.

[Climate research reveals role of ocean warming](#)

A study by New Zealand scientists has concluded that ocean warming rather than rising

sea levels is the major factor causing Antarctic ice sheets to retreat.

Lead author Andrew Mackintosh from Victoria University says it was previously thought the retreat of ice sheets was caused by a combination of global sea level rises and warmer oceans.

[Thaw of Earth's icy sunshade may stoke warming](#)

OSLO (Reuters) – Shrinking ice and snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere is reflecting ever less sunshine back into space in a previously underestimated mechanism that could add to global warming, a study showed.

Satellite data indicated that Arctic sea ice, glaciers, winter snow and Greenland's ice were bouncing less energy back to space from 1979 to 2008. The dwindling white sunshade exposes ground or water, both of which are darker and absorb more heat.

The study estimated that ice and snow in the Northern Hemisphere were now reflecting on average 3.3 watts per square meter of solar energy back to the upper atmosphere, a reduction of 0.45 watt per square meter since the late 1970s.



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