



Drumbeat: January 28, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 28, 2011 - 10:19am

[Chevron exiting coal mining](#)

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) -- Petroleum giant Chevron Corp. said Friday it plans to get out of the coal industry by the end of the year.

The decision came after the company determined that new coal technologies were developing too slowly to make staying in the industry a good strategy, Chevron Mining Inc. spokeswoman Margaret Lejuste said.

One of the technologies is known as coal-to-liquids, in which coal is processed into a fluid that can be burned.

"Those technologies are so far into the future, 10 to 15 years in the future, they made the strategic decision to focus on other operations other than mining," she said of the company.

[Oil Rises Most Since 2009 on Concern Egyptian Unrest to Spread](#)

Oil surged the most since September 2009 as unrest in Egypt raised concern that protests would spread to major oil-producing parts of the Middle East.

Crude gained 4.3 percent after a day of clashes between police and protesters demanding an end to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year regime. Any disruption to Middle East oil supplies "could actually bring real harm," U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu said on a conference call.

[What Are the Implications of Political Unrest in the Middle East?](#)

For decades the Middle East has been ruled by totalitarian regimes. The United States' foreign policy toward these regimes has been determined largely by two factors: The oil reserves in these countries and/or their policy toward Israel. Indeed, until Saddam Hussein invaded oil-rich Kuwait he was not considered a threat. After all he was a sworn enemy of Iran.

[Brazil Petrobras: Output Halted At Campos Basin Platform](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO -(Dow Jones)- Brazilian state-run energy company Petroleo Brasileiro SA, or Petrobras, said Friday that it had halted oil production at a platform in the Campos Basin after an accident last week.

[US probing Gulf blowout preventer testing flap](#)

NEW ORLEANS -- The U.S. government is investigating whether a Transocean worker's handling of a key a piece of evidence in the Gulf oil spill probe affected the integrity of the examination of the device.

[Oil Equipment Foes Stand Down, for Now](#)

The assemblage of residents and business owners leading an effort to block the shipment of massive oil processing equipment across northern Idaho appear to have given up — at least as it relates to shipments planned by the oil giant ConocoPhillips.

[New York Floats Rules for Cleaner Heating Oil](#)

Buildings in New York City would burn cleaner heating oil and emit far less pollution under proposed rules announced on Friday.

[Brazilian Dam Clears Hurdle](#)

A significant hurdle in the construction of a huge dam on a tributary of the Amazon river was removed this week when Brazilian authorities approved the clearing of hundreds of acres of forest at the dam site and the construction of new roads to service the project.

[The Gaping Gap Between The Price of Nymex and Brent. Which is Right?](#)

More than ever, the price of oil depends on where you look. Oil prices have sunk to a two-month low around \$85 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, but ICE's Brent oil futures are soaring toward \$100 a barrel.

The gap between the two prices--more than \$12 as of Friday morning--is the biggest ever. Nymex March futures were recently trading up 0.3% at \$85.85 a barrel, while ICE March Brent trades up 0.6% at \$97.97 a barrel.

The yawning chasm between the two most widely quoted prices proves the power of a small Midwestern town on the global oil market. Nymex futures are reflecting steadily rising inventories in Cushing, Oklahoma, the oil storage hub where anyone holding a contract when it expires must either purchase or deliver real barrels of crude each month.

[Egypt jitters spill over to U.S. energy sector](#)

HOUSTON, (Reuters) - Escalating violence in Egypt hit the shares of Apache Corp on Friday and sparked worry the unrest might spread to other Middle Eastern countries where other U.S. oil companies, including Occidental Petroleum Corp, have operations.

[US Chu keeping eye on Egypt protests and oil market](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu declined on Friday to say specifically whether he is worried that escalating Egyptian protests could disrupt Middle East oil supplies.

"We watch these things very closely, but the best way America can protect itself against these incidents is to decrease our dependence on foreign oil," Chu told reporters.

[Israel Has Faith Mubarak Will Prevail](#)

"It seems now we have quite an earthquake," says the cabinet member, paying respects to the Al Jazeera satellite news channel and digital technologies that dispersed the power to communicate and organize. "In the time of [Egyptian president and Pan-Arabist] Gamel Abdel Nasser, Egypt had one radio channel and transistor radios were all allowed to listen to one channel."

A retired major general found other metaphors — and more cause for concern. "We need to understand that we are living on a volcano," Ya'acov Amidror, former head of the Israel Defense Forces' Research and Assessment Directorate, told the *Jerusalem Post*. "Conditions can change from today until tomorrow. We must ask ourselves, what is the worst case scenario. We are on thick ice, but even that melts eventually."

[What protesters in Arab nations do -- and don't -- have in common](#)

(CNN) -- Protesters who have taken to the streets in several Arab nations of North Africa are angry at their own governments, and lashing out over some specific problems in their countries. But what they're looking for -- and, in the end, what inspired them to stand up and demonstrate -- is very similar, experts on the region said Thursday.

"They all want the same," said Emile Hokayem, with the International Institute for Strategic Studies in the Middle East. "They're all protesting about growing inequalities, they're all protesting against growing nepotism. The top of the pyramid was getting richer and richer."

[Today's Trends: Panning Out](#)

Panning out the zoom on our lens, gasoline and crude prices are up 11% and 18%, respectively, compared to 2007 levels. Interestingly, foreign exchange rates (after posting steady growth over the last two years) are sitting exactly where they were in 2007. At present, the typical inverse relationship between crude prices and the US dollar is not holding to form. Spot oil prices are 5% below their YTD average, even while the US dollar has softened versus the Euro. A shift by traders to more emphasis on fundamentals and macroeconomic data would be the most obvious explanation for the recent correlation breakdown.

[Mexico oil output hits seven-month high in December](#)

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Mexican crude oil output rose to its highest in seven months in December aided by a rebound in production at the country's two largest fields, state monopoly Pemex said on Wednesday.

Pemex pumped 2.574 million barrels per day last month, up from 2.512 million bpd in November when production took a hit due to maintenance at Ku Maloob Zaap, Mexico's largest field.

Average oil output declined last year to a 20-year low of 2.576 million bpd but fell only 1 percent from 2009, the smallest annual decline since 2004 when Mexican oil output peaked at 3.383 million bpd.

[Lower 48 U.S. Nov natgas output up from Oct-EIA](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Gross natural gas production in November in the lower 48 U.S. states rose 1.1 percent from slightly revised October output, data released on Friday by the U.S. Energy Information Administration showed.

[Talisman suspended shale fracturing in December](#)

CALGARY, Alberta (Reuters) - Talisman Energy Inc shut down its North American hydraulic rock fracturing operations for eight days last month following a fluid release at a shale gas drilling site in Pennsylvania, a spokeswoman said on Friday.

[Lawmakers Get Crash Course on Marcellus Drilling](#)

Some state lawmakers are getting a crash course in Marcellus Shale drilling issues, one of the most complex topics they'll confront this legislative session.

[Brazil central govt primary surplus doubles in 2010](#)

BRASILIA (Reuters) - Brazil's central government primary budget surplus doubled in 2010 compared to the previous year thanks to a strong economy and income linked to

the capitalization of oil giant Petrobras.

[WikiLeaks: For Norway, Oil Wealth and Humanitarianism Go Hand in Hand](#)

To judge from the WikiLeaked cable, the combination of Norway's financial heft with its righteous ethical stance concerned American diplomats because, well, it disproportionately affects US corporations — specifically, America's highly profitable and politically influential arms manufacturers.

[Aramco planning shutdown of gasoline unit at Jeddah refinery](#)

Saudi Aramco, the state-owned oil and gas producer, is planning a maintenance shutdown of a unit that produces gasoline components at its refinery in Jeddah, a person with knowledge of the plan said.

[Chevron 4Q Earnings Soar to \\$5.3B](#)

Chevron reported earnings of \$5.3 billion (\$2.64 per share - diluted) for the fourth quarter 2010, compared with \$3.1 billion (\$1.53 per share - diluted) in the 2009 fourth quarter. Results in the 2010 period included gains of nearly \$400 million from downstream asset sales. Foreign currency effects decreased earnings in the 2010 quarter by \$99 million, compared with a decrease of \$67 million a year earlier.

[The disastrous impact of fuel crisis](#)

MEDIA reports last week claimed that the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (Noczim) had had their entire cash resources seized by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra) due to default in payment of fuel importation duties and other imposts.

The reports stated that, with the seizure of its funds, Noczim was unable to effect payment for the petroleum which it had purchased, which petroleum was in tanks at Beira, in Mozambique, pending forwarding to Zimbabwe through the Beira Corridor pipeline. As a result, the reports said, a fuel shortage in Zimbabwe was imminent, with a major scarcity already prevailing in Harare.

[The energy crisis can be overcome if we switch off the lights when we leave the room](#)

KARACHI: The energy crisis in Pakistan can be overcome if we individually make an effort to conserve energy.

[Power shortage linked to unaffordable fuel cost](#)

KARACHI: The power shortage is not due to lack of capacity but it is owing to unaffordable fuel cost while the issue of load-shedding could not be resolved unless theft and misuse of the electricity are halted.

[Argentina Looks to Wind for the Answer to its Energy Woes](#)

Buenos Aires, Argentina -- In 2004, Argentina received a wake up call. The Latin American nation experienced a deep energy crisis as a result of a shortage in natural gas caused by the demand for energy skyrocketing and outstripping supply. Since then the country has made a conscious effort to diversify its energy sources, with wind power attracting particular attention.

[Fear of debt: Should I finance my dream?](#)

The '80s farm crisis was a good example of how dangerous too much, or the wrong kind of, debt can be. But it's also true that if it weren't for the banks that line the main streets of farm communities across the country, there wouldn't be many farmers on the land at all.

In a perfect world, we wouldn't need an institutional loan to get our farm off the ground. But I've watched too many entrepreneurs try to eke their way through and fail, partly because they were under-capitalized.

[John Michael Greer: The power that remains](#)

The passing of fitness icon Jack Lalanne, who died last Sunday at the age of 96, called up a modest flurry of tributes and retrospectives in the media, and a great many of these made a point I don't think their authors had in mind. If I'd tried to dream up an imaginary example of the way our culture's obsessions distort our sense of history, I doubt I could have managed anything half so telling.

[Bamboo bikes factory set to put Africa into motion](#)

Bamboo is grown locally in many regions of Africa and the manufacturing of bicycle frames does not require costly infrastructure or electricity. Bamboo-framed bicycles are lighter and stronger than steel-framed bikes, adaptable to difficult road conditions and can be easily modified for different needs, such as carrying farm loads, passengers, food, water and medicine.

[Climate benefits of natural gas may be overstated](#)

The United States is poised to bet its energy future on natural gas as a clean, plentiful fuel that can supplant coal and oil. But new research by the Environmental Protection Agency — and a growing understanding of the pollution associated with the full "life

cycle" of gas production—is casting doubt on the assumption that gas offers a quick and easy solution to climate change.

Advocates for natural gas routinely assert that it produces 50 percent less greenhouse gases than coal and is a significant step toward a greener energy future. But those assumptions are based on emissions from the tailpipe or smokestack and don't account for the methane and other pollution emitted when gas is extracted and piped to power plants and other customers.

[Exxon says drills record Sakhalin well](#)

(Reuters) - Exxon Mobil Corp said on Friday it has drilled a well that has a record horizontal reach of 7.13 miles (11,475 meters) from a land-based rig to the Odoptu field offshore far east Russia.

The well, part of the Sakhalin-1 project, underscores the difficulty oil companies increasingly need to overcome to tap oil and gas reserves.

[Unrest in Egypt LIVE](#)

Follow Reuters' coverage as a wave of unrest grips Egypt over President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year rule.

[Analyst Sees Volatility For Apache On Egypt Ties](#)

NEW YORK -- Analysts at Houston energy research firm Tudor Pickering Holt on Friday said Apache Corp. could continue to come under pressure in the face of political uncertainty in Egypt. "APA probably bleeds for while until Egypt order restored (already off 8% this week)," analysts said in a note to clients.

[Fuels debate should focus on science, not politics](#)

“Cheap oil made Sweden rich.”

In testimony before the House Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality on Dec. 7, 2005, Professor Kjell Aleklett of Uppsala University in Sweden made this startling public confession. Sweden is often upheld by my more liberal friends as a model for enlightened democratic socialism and state welfare, something like capitalism, but with all the sharp edges rounded off.

[Andrew McKillop: Islamic power returns to Tunisia](#)

For external players, the political economic element occupies the high ground, with political Islam conceived as totally hostile to Western economic interests. This usually relegates the other components far behind, or simply ignores them. In Iraq, but also in Afghanistan and in the standoff between Iran and the west, the understandable but not excusable obsession with present and future oil and gas supplies is underlain by oil depletion fear, pushing deciders to take quick and wrong decisions as the Peak Oil clock counts down. Unfortunately, these vital interests for the outside world are almost irrelevant to political Islam.

[Obama's Sputnik Moment: Strategy Over Substance](#)

Did you hear anything surprising in Obama's State of the Union address last night? Anything truly visionary? Me neither. Of course, that wasn't the point.

The SOTU was a continuation of what appears to be a strategic move to the political center, in preparation for a presidential campaign that's set to begin anew later this year.

[The War - Did We Sacrifice A Million Lives And A \\$Trillion Cash Just To Hand Our Jobs To China?](#)

While the Tea Partiers and the liberals squabble over important domestic issues, America's corporate and military titans, at the expense of America's workers and taxpayers and with the blessing of Congress and the President, are creating China's economic miracle. The military, at a cost of over \$1 trillion, has paved the way for China to acquire and the U.S. to lose access to vast mineral and petroleum resources. The oil industry, with U.S. government assistance, is building a safe haven in East Asia from the imminent crash of oil everywhere else, by cornering the entire supply. And foreign investment, largely American, is giving China on average nearly one million new jobs a month while American unemployment soars.

[6 things you can do to screw up 2011](#)

Buy that gas-guzzling car you've secretly wanted

Oil experts are predicting we'll pay \$5 for a gallon of gas within a year or so. You don't believe it? Oil reserves are being used up while demand and oil prices are rising with the economic recovery. Tree hugger environmentalists say it's one impact from "peak oil," the point where half of the Earth's oil has essentially been depleted. (It's explained by the old supply and demand equation.) And when oil and gas prices go up, transportation, durable goods and everything from food to fertilizer — anything that is made from crude oil, which is pretty much everything — costs more. Unless you are one of those people who can afford anything, or you are living off the land, now is a good time to think about living more efficiently. If you plan ahead, you will be glad you bought that greener car.

[Dunedin retailer blames big-box stores for shop's demise](#)

Big-box development had been a trend for many years.

While there was some expectation that factors such as peak oil could change shopping trends, "that might be some time away and may be product-specific", she said.

[10 essentials for surviving Doomsday 2012](#)

If the Mayans are correct, doomsday is scheduled for Dec. 21, 2012. That gives you less than two years to get ready. Good thing I've gathered many of the tools and equipment you will need to survive, right here in this list.

[World on the Edge: how to prevent environmental and economic collapse](#) by Lester Brown

In this urgent time, *World on the Edge* calls out the pivotal environmental issues and how to solve them now.

We are in a race between political and natural tipping points. Can we close coal-fired power plants fast enough to save the Greenland ice sheet and avoid catastrophic sea level rise? Can we raise water productivity fast enough to halt the depletion of aquifers and avoid water-driven food shortages? Can we cope with peak water and peak oil at the same time? These are some of the issues Lester R. Brown skillfully distills in *World on the Edge*. Bringing decades of research and analysis into play, he provides the responses needed to reclaim our future.

[Lilypad floating city concept](#)

With global sea levels predicted to rise significantly over the next century due to climate change, a lot of people living in low lying areas are expected to be displaced from their homes. Architect Vincent Callebaut has come up with a possible relocation destination for these climate change refugees in the form of the "Lilypad" concept – a completely self-sufficient floating city that would accommodate up to 50,000.

[Total's high friends in low places](#)

De Margerie is one of the few energy executives who believe that peak oil is just around the corner. In a few years, he argues, supplies will top out at 95 million barrels per day (up from a record 88 million bpd now) and no amount of investment or ingenuity will be sufficient to push the total higher. "There will be a lack of sufficient energy available," he says, leading to significantly higher prices and more wealth and power for state-owned national oil companies, and the bullies who lord over them, which control access to some 70 per cent of the world's remaining conventional reserves. To stave off a global energy crisis, De Margerie asks, "Do we sit and wait?" Or exploit every opportunity from every

source, including coal, solar and nuclear?

[Tom Keene's Econo Chat: A Sell-Off Ahead for Oil?](#)

Is peak oil discredited as a theory?

The peak oil guys are like the guys who didn't like the Cold War ending in the late 1980s. They keep looking for more evidence, but they are finding it harder and harder to define that peak oil is here. We're about to see North Dakota become a bigger producer of oil than Alaska. There is oil wherever people are putting holes in the ground.

[Exxon Mobil's 2030 forecast: Natural gas to surpass coal as energy source](#)

Exxon Mobil Corp. forecast Thursday that by 2030, natural gas will surpass coal as an energy source, oil demand will rise to 100 million barrels a day, and gasoline consumption will decline despite 400 million more cars on the world's roads.

Rex Tillerson, CEO of the Irving-based oil giant, forecast that "newly unlocked supplies of shale gas and other unconventional energy sources" will prove "vital" in meeting a projected 35 percent rise in overall energy demand.

[Oil: into new frontiers](#)

Depending on your perspective, it can be argued that at least one positive development has resulted from the sharp rise in oil prices of recent years. The influx of capital to oil companies from high prices, combined with expectations that prices are unlikely to fall very far, has boosted investment in oil exploration and production, especially in what the industry terms "frontier" areas – namely enhanced oil recovery (more oil from existing fields), the deep (or ultra-deep) water and the Arctic. Massive new reserves have been identified, proven up, and brought to production – whilst reserves previously considered impossible to reach are now no more than a horizontal drilling or steam injection technique away. All this should help ensure supply can meet global demand for far longer than was expected just a few years ago – pushing back the oft-cited "peak oil" date by decades.

[The Peak Oil Crisis: Tradable Energy Quotas](#)

Last week the British MPs, who make up the All Party Parliamentary Group on Peak Oil (APPGOPO for short), released a proposal for allocating fossil fuel-based energy to control carbon emissions and to ensure equitable allocation of energy during an era of declining availability.

The proposal is rather ingenious in that it incorporates a mechanism to limit and control carbon emissions into the atmosphere as well as dealing with the shortages that will develop from declining production of oil, coal, and eventually natural gas. A plan to

equitably allocate energy and to restrict carbon emissions by all the peoples of the earth obviously has too many intricacies to discuss in detail here (If you are intrigued, as you should be, visit the following web site <http://www.teqs.net/report/>).

[Recovering lost knowledge about exhaustion of the Earth's resources \(such as Peak Oil\)](#)

One of the saddest aspects of the Internet is that it so often fails to make us smarter. In a mutant version of Gresham's Law, loud amateurs too-often drown out the voices of experts. Here we an excerpt from a 1975 book that tells us more about Peak Oil than a typical dozen posts on most peak oil websites. It's an example of expert knowledge effectively lost to society by the proliferation of mental chass. At the end are links to more on this subject.

[Welcome, 'Peak Oil'](#)

The day of reckoning is approaching and the world does not have a contingency plan.

The truth is that the world's output of conventional crude oil peaked in 2005 and global oil exports are also past their prime. Furthermore, the unconventional sources (tar sands, heavy sour crude, ethanol, natural gas liquids, bio-fuels and shale) are struggling to keep up with the ongoing depletion in the world's largest oil fields. Therefore, it is *probable* that the world's current production of total liquids is at or near maximum capacity.

[Oil below \\$86 amid weak indicators, earnings](#)

That the U.S. economy, the world's biggest, continues to crawl was underlined by weak growth in durable goods orders for December and a rise in the number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits last week.

Meanwhile U.S. companies that are bellwethers for consumer spending reported disappointing earnings.

[Oil May Rise to \\$90, Escaping 'Bear Trap': Technical Analysis](#)

Oil is likely to rise to between \$88 and \$90 a barrel in the coming weeks and yesterday's decline below a Bollinger Band support level may mislead investors into seeking an extended price drop, Cameron Hanover Inc. said.

[Oil majors BP, Shell concerned about high oil price](#)

(Reuters) - Oil giants Royal Dutch Shell Plc and BP Plc fear rising oil prices may hinder

the recovery of the global economy, chief executives from both firms told Reuters on Friday.

Oil prices nearly touched a \$100 a barrel this week, however prices fell on Friday to a near two-month low on weak economic data and talk of OPEC raising output to cool prices.

"We are concerned about the current price of oil, we don't want recovery slowed," Shell's Peter Vosser told Reuters at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

[Gas Profit at 7-Year Low Reduces Storage Growth](#)

The returns for buying natural gas this spring and selling it for use next winter have dropped to the lowest level in seven years, discouraging companies from building new storage sites in the U.S. and threatening to put excess supplies on the market.

[The price of gasoline](#)

The scientific reason is more complicated. We have been producing oil in large quantities for about 70 years and still finding new sources of oil, however most of the easily produced oil has been found. The easily produced oil is about one quarter of all the oil that is known to exist. For the remaining 75 percent we know where it is and how much is there but it is difficult to produce. There are many technologies available but the costs are high. This means the price of gasoline will be higher.

[JPMorgan Says OPEC Acts to Slow Oil, May Raise Later](#)

OPEC will have to raise oil prices in coming years to maximize revenue even as it acts to quell crude's rally toward \$100 a barrel in the short term, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Indications that members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries are raising output unilaterally are the first signs of a response to rising prices, said analysts at the second-largest U.S. bank by assets. Crude fell to a five-week low Jan. 24 after Ali al-Naimi, the oil minister of OPEC's biggest member, Saudi Arabia, said the 12-member group will boost supply this year.

[Indian leader: Unleash energy on tribal lands](#)

WASHINGTON – To achieve energy independence, the United States should focus on tribal lands with vast untapped supplies of coal, natural gas, oil and wind, the leader of the nation's largest Indian organization said Thursday.

Jefferson Keel, president of the National Congress of American Indians, said tribal lands contain about 10 percent of U.S. energy resources, but provide less than 5 percent of

national energy production. He blamed bureaucratic obstacles that prevent tribes from generating an estimated \$1 trillion in revenue from energy sources.

[Oil chiefs 'upbeat' for this year](#)

Oil price volatility has failed to dampen the spirits of most oil executives who are optimistic that the future will be bright, a report reveals.

Oil companies are "upbeat" about capital investment, expect stable crude prices this year and see Asia and natural gas as emerging market opportunities, according to a study sponsored by the UK consulting and technical services company GL Noble Denton and published this week by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

[AAR believes Russia govt not fully informed by BP-source](#)

(Reuters) - The Russian shareholders of TNK-BP do not believe BP fully informed Russian authorities of their shareholder agreement before securing a lucrative deal with Rosneft, a source told Reuters.

"We don't believe that BP has informed Rosneft and (Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor) Sechin or (Prime Minister Vladimir) Putin fully in detail on their obligations to TNK-BP," the source close to TNK-BP board told Reuters on Friday.

[Rosneft, Exxon ink Black Sea exploration deal](#)

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) – Russian energy giant Rosneft and US group Exxon Mobil struck a \$1 billion deal Thursday to hunt for oil under the Black Sea, and promised more joint ventures to come.

Rosneft president Eduard Yurevitch Khudaynatov said he hopes to find a billion tonnes of oil and gas -- mainly oil -- in the 11,200-square-kilometre (4,320 square mile) Tuapse Trough, in waters off the Krasnodar region.

[Shell's Voser Looks to Rosneft for Exploration Deal](#)

Peter Voser, chief executive officer of Royal Dutch Shell Plc, said he's looking at a partnership with Russia's state-owned OAO Rosneft to hunt for oil reserves.

"We are talking about potentially exploration" together, Voser said today in a Bloomberg Television interview in Davos, Switzerland. "Partnership with national oil companies is part of our business model. This is the way to go, we are driving this, and we're quite happy to have these relationships."

[Cnooc Falls Most in Eight Months After Forecasting Output Growth Will Slow](#)

Cnooc Ltd., China's biggest offshore energy explorer, fell the most in more than two years in Hong Kong trading after forecasting slower production growth.

[Iran oil payments issue to be resolved soon: source](#)

(Reuters) - The impasse over payments to Iran for crude shipments to India is likely to be resolved in the next few weeks, a senior Indian government source told Reuters on Friday.

[Iran continues flows to India](#)

Iran will continue to supply oil to India for the time being, Iranian sources and Indian company officials said today, even though the two countries have yet to resolve a row over oil payments.

[Australian LNG Project Costs to Rise, Macquarie Says](#)

Woodside Petroleum Ltd., Santos Ltd., Oil Search Ltd. and Origin Energy Ltd. may need to spend \$20 billion more than expected on Australian gas projects as labor competition intensifies, Macquarie Group Ltd. said.

That's assuming the ventures experience 32 percent cost increases in line with the "blowouts" reported in the country in the past, Sydney-based analysts Adrian Wood and Kirit Hira wrote in a report today. The four companies now estimate their liquefied natural gas projects will cost a combined \$64 billion during the next six years, the Macquarie analysts said.

[Egypt protesters clash with police after prayers](#)

Regional television stations were reporting clashes between thousands of protesters and police in several other major Egyptian cities, including the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria, Minya and Assiut south of Cairo and al-Arish in the Sinai peninsula.

Earlier, Internet service in Egypt was disrupted and the government deployed an elite special operations force in Cairo on Friday, hours before an anticipated new wave of anti-government protests.

[Alabama's new AG pursuing BP suit as lead attorney](#)

MONTGOMERY, Ala. - Alabama's new attorney general says he will be lead counsel in the state's lawsuit against BP PLC and others over the Gulf oil spill and that he hopes his presence at a federal court hearing shows the judge how important the case is to residents harmed by the disaster.

Luther Strange said Wednesday that he'll take the lead since the state is no longer using private law firms for the case.

[Potential scams top 7,000 in BP spill compensation](#)

NEW ORLEANS — The \$20 billion fund responsible for compensating victims of BP's Gulf of Mexico oil spill has received more than 7,000 potentially fraudulent claims, many of which have been referred to the Justice Department for criminal investigations, the fund's administrator told a Senate panel on Thursday.

[BP Investors Push Dudley to Sell More Oil Fields After \\$5 Billion Dividend](#)

BP Plc shareholders said they want Chief Executive Officer Robert Dudley to expand the company's record asset sale program, raising cash that will help fund a \$5 billion a year dividend.

[Report: Gulf oil spill was deadly time for turtles](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. – More sea turtles were killed or injured in the Gulf of Mexico in the months following the BP oil spill than in any similar period during the past two decades, a report released Wednesday found.

[EU moots link between resource efficiency and budgetary targets](#)

EUOBSERVER / BRUSSELS - The European Commission is preparing to publish a set of resource efficiency targets in a paper this summer, potentially forcing member states to limit their consumption of fuels, minerals and water, amongst other items.

[Obama seeks new path to environmental goals](#)

WASHINGTON – Facing a Congress that is more hostile to environmental regulation, President Barack Obama is moderating his environmental goals: a clean energy standard that mixes nuclear, natural gas and "clean coal" with renewable sources such as wind and solar.

[Urban renewal revived as 'intelligent cities](#)

When the economy was roaring and housing booming, reining in suburban sprawl dominated the development debate under the name of "smart growth."

Now that the economy and housing have tanked, prompting more people to stay put, growth is taking a back seat. But smarts still matter. The new buzzwords: "intelligent cities."

[Futuristic Volkswagen XL1 gets 261 miles a gallon](#)

Delivering both stunning looks and high fuel economy, Volkswagen has unveiled a streamlined diesel plug-in hybrid XL1 concept in the Persian Gulf nation of Qatar for a big auto show there.

The fuel mileage works out to about 261 miles a gallon, says *Automotive News*. VW calls it the most efficient car in the world.

[Electric car sales may get a boost](#)

The day after President Barack Obama called for popularizing electric cars in his State of the Union address, two Michigan Democrats proposed legislation that would spend billions more on incentives for consumers to buy them.

[GM: We don't need gov't loan to go green; Volt coming to 50 states](#)

WASHINGTON — General Motors(GM), in another sign of its progress since a government-led bankruptcy, said Thursday that it is withdrawing its application for \$14.4 billion in federal loans it had sought to help build more fuel-efficient cars.

[For Excess Solar Flow, a Veg-O-Matic for Voltage](#)

Until very recently, the solar industry was mainly concerned with getting a toehold in the production of electricity at a utility-level scale. Now a New Jersey company is looking for its niche in a different field — how to handle a system that is saturated with solar energy, sometimes enough to destabilize the electric grid.

[Oil Decline Rate And Population](#)

The rapid increase in the world's population over the last hundred years is not merely coincident with the rapid increase in oil production. It is the latter that has actually allowed (the word "caused" might be too strong) the former: that is to say, oil has been the main source of energy within industrial society. It is only with abundant oil that a large population is possible. It was industrialization, improved agriculture, improved medicine, the expansion of humanity into the Americas, and so on, that first created the

modern rise in population, but it was oil in particular that made it possible for human population to grow as fast as it has been doing (Catton, 1982). When oil production drops to half of its peak amount, world population must also drop by half.

[Iraq's largest hydropower dam grinds to halt](#)

BAGHDAD (AFP) – Record low water levels at Iraq's largest hydroelectric dam have ground turbines there to a halt, amplifying a power shortage that led to riots last summer, a top official said on Thursday.

Adel Mahdi, advisor to the electricity minister, said water levels at the Mosul dam on the Tigris River had fallen to 298 metres (977 feet) above sea level.

"It is the first time since 1984 when the dam was built that water levels have fallen this low," Mahdi told AFP.

[Peak Water: What Is it -- and Are We There Yet?](#)

Peak water is coming. In some places, peak water is here.

We're never going to run out of water -- water is a renewable natural resource (mostly). But increasingly, around the world, in the U.S., and locally, we are running up against peak water limits.

[Koch Industries Unamused by Climate Spoof](#)

From the sometimes bizarre front lines of the climate-change culture wars: It seems the brothers Koch, proprietors of the giant, Kansas-based industrial conglomerate and well-heeled supporters of Tea Party causes, have now set their sights on a group of anonymous pranksters who spoofed a Koch Industries press release last month — one that suggested the brothers were having a change of heart on climate change.

[Lufthansa, Delta Jockey for Free Carbon Permits](#)

The biggest expansion of Europe's carbon market is pitting Deutsche Lufthansa AG against Japan Airlines Corp. and Delta Air Lines Inc. in a contest for free permits as traders struggle against computer hackers.

[Climate tax on meat and milk could help reduce Europe's carbon footprint](#)

Working on the conclusions of past studies that have put the proportion of global greenhouse emissions caused by the food production process at between 20 and 25 per cent, scientists at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden looked into the potential

benefits of a special 'climate tax' on both meat and milk. They found that, simply by placing a tax of €60 per ton of carbon dioxide produced on the meat and dairy industry - less than half the amount levied by most European countries on petrol – overall greenhouse gas emissions could be cut by around seven per cent, almost overnight.

Perhaps more importantly, should the land that would inevitably be freed up by a movement towards more efficient agriculture be used for bio-energy production, then the decrease in the amount of harmful carbon being emitted into Europe's skies could be six times greater.

[Will climate change burst the global 'food bubble'?](#)

Lester Brown argues the pressures of rising population, consumption, water stress and global warming will pose the first serious challenge to civilisation through our food.

[UN climate talks in focus at Davos forum](#)

DAVOS, Switzerland – Businesses, especially U.S. ones, must get more involved in the global effort to slow climate change and help pressure politicians to enact policies that promote green growth, international leaders said Thursday.

"They are part of the problem and they must be part of the solution," South African President Jacob Zuma said at the World Economic Forum.

[EU Will Show Stricter CO2 Goal Is Cost-Effective, Hedegaard Says](#)

A European Union report next month will show that moving to a stricter emissions-reduction target will be cost-effective for the 27-nation bloc, Climate Commissioner Connie Hedegaard said.

[Monster snowstorms still spell global warming](#)

New York (CNN) -- The weather seems to be going berserk, with more snow dumped on our beleaguered Northeastern cities in a month than in a year, paralyzing business and our lives. Records are being broken even as we speak.

Common sense says that it's the freezing cold that is behind the freaky weather. But physics says otherwise.

[Warming North Atlantic Water Tied to Heating Arctic](#)

ScienceDaily — The temperatures of North Atlantic Ocean water flowing north into the

Arctic Ocean adjacent to Greenland -- the warmest water in at least 2,000 years -- are likely related to the amplification of global warming in the Arctic, says a new international study involving the University of Colorado Boulder.



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