



Drumbeat: February 28, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on February 28, 2011 - 10:33am

[Steve LeVine: Did Saudi Arabia *really* raise its oil production?](#)

As we begin another week of turmoil in the Middle East, and countries further afield batten down the hatches in an effort to preclude being next, here are some of the things we don't know:

- Whether oil prices are going up to \$220 a barrel (and \$5 at the pump), or down to \$70 a barrel and more like \$2.50 for a gallon of gasoline in the United States;
- Whether Saudi Arabia really increased its oil production last week, or if the truth is a bit different;
- And, finally, whether Russia's gentleman president, Dmitry Medvedev, has been rummaging through Vladimir Putin's archive of paranoid off-the-cuff remarks, and truly does not grasp what is happening around him.

[Libyan oil output cut by half](#)

The uprising in Libya has cut its oil output by half, the International Energy Agency said today, but Saudi Arabia's pledge to pump more helped to prevent a further surge in the price of oil.

[The Middle East in crisis: Looters take control of Oman's streets](#)

Police have fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse a violent mob which set a supermarket ablaze in the seaside town of Sohar, in Oman.

[Gadhafi clamps down on protesters in Libya's capital](#)

BENGHAZI, Libya — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi maintained a crackdown in the capital Monday as anti-government protesters appeared in the streets of Tripoli and fighting against Gadhafi forces broke out in other cities.

[EU: Gadhafi No Longer Controls Most Oil Fields](#)

Moammar Gadhafi's regime appears to have lost control of most of Libya's oil and gas fields to opposition forces, the European Union's energy commissioner said Monday, dismissing the idea of imposing a blockade.

"There is reason to believe that the majority of the oil and gas fields are no longer under Gadhafi's control," Gunther Oettinger said after a meeting of European energy ministers.

[China, India increasing imports of Mexican crude: Pemex source](#)

Mexico City (Platts)- China and India have sharply increased imports of Mexican crude in recent months, apparently because of growing demand from their economies but also as a safeguard against the vagaries of the current market, a source in state Pemex said Monday.

The amounts are not great, but they are significant in the Mexican context, the source noted.

[Unipecc not replacing Libyan supply](#)

Unipecc, the trading arm of top Asian refiner Sinopec, has so far declined Saudi Aramco's offer of more Saudi oil to replace Libyan crude supplies.

[Saudi Arabia 'committed' to oil stability](#)

Saudi Arabia "is committed to the stability of the market" and to ensuring that oil supplies remain available, the statement said on Monday, adding that the kingdom hopes that Libya's oil production would return to normal soon.

The statements came as China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC), the nation's largest oil and gas producer, said on Monday it has halted production in crisis-hit Libya and evacuated all its employees from the country.

[Transocean workforce falls by 6%](#)

Offshore rig contractor Transocean shrunk its work force by 6% last year as increased competition for shallow-water rigs led to older rigs being set aside.

[Expert says that Venezuelan energy crisis is not over](#)

Guillermo Ovalles, the current president of the Commission on Electric Power of the Venezuelan Federation of Trade and Industry Chambers (Fedecámaras), said the

electricity crisis facing Venezuela has not been solved. “The situation has not been overcome. Chaos persists.”

[Thousands hold protests against fuel shortage in Karachi](#)

Scores of people held protests on Monday against unavailability of fuel in Karachi paralyzing life in Pakistan’s biggest city.

[Pakistan’s Energy Crisis](#)

Tensions are edging toward a boiling point as Pakistani society continues to suffer through an ever-worsening energy crisis.

[Dar on brink of darkness as power crisis deepens](#)

The energy crisis engulfing Tanzania deepened last week, as it emerged that East Africa’s second biggest economy is operating on a depleted electricity reserve that could throw it into darkness in case of an outage.

In coming weeks, authorities plan to shut down major hydro plants, the main source of power due to falling water levels.

[S.Korea grapples with inflation due to costlier energy - FACTBOX](#)

SEOUL (Reuters) - South Korea, the world's No.5 crude oil importer, is facing some of its most serious inflation threats mainly due to rising global energy and raw material prices, the finance minister said on Monday.

Analysts surveyed by Reuters last week predicted bad weather, firmer global commodities prices and recent oil price surge would lift the country's annual consumer inflation in February to a two-year high of 4.3 percent.

[High gas prices rattle drivers and businesses](#)

NEW YORK — High fuel prices are putting a squeeze on drivers' wallets just as they are starting to feel better about the economy. They're also forcing tough choices on small-business owners who are reluctant to charge more for fear of losing cost-conscious customers.

[TransCanada repairing mainline pipeline break](#)

Reuters) - TransCanada Corp has begun repairs on a portion of its main gas pipeline after it ruptured on Feb. 19, restricting natural gas flows to Central Canada and the U.S. Northeast, the company said on Monday.

[US approves first deep-water well in Gulf](#)

NEW YORK (AP) -- The U.S. has approved the first deep-water drilling permit in the Gulf of Mexico since last year's massive oil spill.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement says the permit is to continue work on a well about 70 miles southeast of Venice, La.

[Venezuela assigns exploration rights to Gazprom](#)

Venezuela has assigned new gas exploration rights to Russia's Gazprom for \$20 million, according to today's official government gazette.

[Transocean eyes Deepwater Horizon rig recovery](#)

Transocean may attempt to recover some or all of the Deepwater Horizon rig that exploded and sank during last year's Macondo well disaster.

[Kurt Cobb - When the believers stop believing: Chesapeake dumps shale gas assets](#)

Only two years ago Chesapeake Energy Corp. president Aubrey McClendon was telling us about the limitless future of natural gas in North America. It was going to free us from foreign oil by allowing us to convert our vehicle fleet to run on domestically produced natural gas from vast shale deposits. Technology was now making these deposits accessible, and McClendon offered up "research" done by a nonprofit largely funded by his company that showed that these deposits could power America for another century.

It is a good thing that McClendon, who still runs Chesapeake, isn't taking his own advice these days. Back in mid-2008 when natural gas prices leapt above \$13 per thousand cubic feet, the company was riding high as the darling of the shale gas drillers.

[Will oil force the Fed's hand?](#)

Supporters of the Fed would point out that its easy money policies have helped nurse the economy back to a steady, if not spectacular, rate of growth. Low rates, combined with QE and QE2, may also be a big reason behind strong corporate profits and a roaring bull market that's about to hit its second birthday.

However, the recent spike in crude prices to about \$100 a barrel and resulting stock sell-off in the wake of the turmoil in Libya reminded many of how fragile the recovery still is. It even has some wondering if more monetary stimulus is needed to ensure that the economy doesn't suffer from an oil-induced shock.

[Common currency - forget the Gulf, the real default risks lie closer to home](#)

Events in North Africa and in other Arab states are evidently unsettling not just for their own people but for investors globally. But compared to the other elephants in the room, even the likes of Libya is ultimately a distraction. (Awkward questions will undoubtedly be asked about the support of western governments for those autocrats now being messily if democratically removed from office by their own people.) Peak oil deniers will doubtless point to the anticipated post-crisis abatement in Brent and WTI prices; provided there is something approaching resolution to these local uprisings, equity markets may regain a sense of poise. But there are huge and unresolved problems out there that haven't gone away, even if they may have been temporarily blown off the front pages – or the business sections – by rising tensions in the Maghreb and elsewhere.

[Mid-East Violence Won't Send U.S. Into Double-Dip Recession; Big Oil's a Solid Bet](#)

Violence in Libya has caused talks of a double-dip recession to once again gain steam. The story goes that Gaddafi's forces will destroy oil infrastructure as they flee, or that different tribal groups will come to control the oil fields, then go to war with each other. Who destroys the oil infrastructure of Libya does not really matter for the story, so long as it gets destroyed. The interruption in the flow of Libyan oil will drive up oil prices, crimping a fragile American consumer, and crushing economic growth. At the same time, doomsayers insist violence will engulf Saudi Arabia, and as that regime is toppled oil flow from Saudi Arabia will also stop. This will cause oil prices to rocket to \$220 a barrel, crushing economic growth and crippling the world. While not quite an M Night Shyamalan story, media pundits and stock market bears have painted quite a scary tale. Here's why it won't come true, and how to profit off of it.

[Richard Heinberg: 2008 all over again?](#)

As oil prices reach \$100 a barrel for the first time since 2008, many people are wondering whether 2011 will see a replay of crashing car sales, nose-diving airlines, and fuel-starved farmers. Food prices—which these days move almost in lockstep with oil prices—are already at frightening levels, leading Lester Brown of Earth Policy Institute to warn of “The Great Food Crisis of 2011.”

But there are differences, now versus then.

[We Need Better Oil Price Journalism](#)

Left unasked are any questions about why the mere possibility of a 2% drop in global oil production would trigger such a panic. It's easy to blame *speculators*, but why are these investors so willing to bet on volatility in the first place?

Why, for that matter, was oil trading as high as \$80 a barrel throughout last year, a year the world was supposed to be just crawling out of a sharp recession?

[Oil versus light: Jeremy Leggett](#)

This civilization uses oil for its blood. Almost everything we make, buy, and use has oil in its food chain. You know that.

Never mind that we are bleeding carbon into the sky and the ocean, or the developing climate shift. Even if oil was lily white, we are still running out of the cheap stuff - that we need for a global economy feeding billions of humans.

And we are determined to drive right off that cliff, without a Plan B.

[What Do We Do When The Oil Runs Out?](#)

Time is running out on cheap petroleum fuels. Recent research states that we have little more than 40 years of steadily decreasing supplies of that type of energy while concurrently its price grows prohibitively high. Then it's no more cheap oil. Then what? That's the question being asked -- and answered -- by Howard Johnson, an engineer and author of *Energy, Convenient Solutions: How Americans Can Solve the Energy Crisis in Just Ten Years* from Senesis Word.

[Kunstler: Wake Me, Shake Me](#)

It's coming on springtime and things are breaking loose all over the place. I give Saudi Arabia three weeks before it starts to blow up. And even Iran might get the fever. Plan on a staycation this summer and start thinking about that garden because it's not altogether certain that we'll keep up the conveyor belt of Little Debbie Snack Cakes and other staples of the American table into the supermarkets when diesel fuel hit \$10 a gallon and the truckers stay home to watch the Kardashians. I'm already getting hungry.

[The end of cheap oil - and life as you know it](#)

In spite of what the giant oil companies want you to believe, the end of oil is coming. Regardless of your politics, your nationality, your religion or anything else, if you live on Earth, your life is going to change. The end of oil is coming.

[\\$100 a barrel oil: Bad for Wall Street, good for green cars](#)

When oil prices go into three digits, it's panic time on Wall Street. But on the bright side, expensive oil is good news for green cars.

[Food: Getting fossil fuels off the plate](#)

Each ingenious new invention made it easier to get food to the plate—at an energy cost. In 1840 the U.S. food system depended almost entirely on renewable energy sources, including labor from 70 percent (12 million) of the 17 million Americans of the day, more than 2 million of whom were enslaved.¹ By 1900 the population had grown to 76 million, less than 40 percent (30 million) farmed, slavery had finally been abolished, and the food system consumed about 3 quadrillion Btu of fossil fuel.

[Rich Americans flock to fast food](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- When it comes to cutting back, the rich are learning a little secret the rest of us have always known: fast-food is cheap and good (if not good for you).

Quick service restaurants, such as McDonald's and Subway, saw a bigger rise in spending by ultra-affluent consumers than any other restaurant type last year, according to the most recent data by American Express Business Insights.

[A liberating \(but damned uncomfortable\) conversion](#)

What do we economists have to learn from Wendell Berry? Many things, but here I will mention only two. First is a definitional correction regarding the basic nature of our subject matter—exactly what reality matters most to our economic life and why? Second, what mode of thinking does this reality require of us in order to understand it as well as possible, without seducing us into spurious substitutes for honest ignorance?

[Clive Thompson on How Games Make Work Seem Like Play](#)

But McGonigal dreams bigger. She thinks we can use games to tackle some of our biggest challenges, like global warming. In 2007, she helped design a role-playing game called *World Without Oil*, which encouraged thousands of players to brainstorm solutions to peak oil. A group of designers is currently developing *Lost Joules*, an online game that will get players to compete to save energy. What if every smart meter plugged your home into a rollicking worldwide game of seeing who can consume the least? Imagine having bragging rights for all of North America!

[Bill McKibben: My life as a communist](#)

My life as a communist actually began without me knowing it, on Friday evening, when Glenn Beck spent his program explaining about a "communistic" conspiracy that included 10 groups in America. One was 350.org, a global campaign to fight climate change that I helped found three years ago. He even put our logo up on his whiteboard - and next to it a hammer and sickle.

[Tim DeChristopher on trial for sabotaging oil and gas land auction](#)

The climate activist, who bid \$1.7m for land parcels for which he could not pay, faces up to 10 years in jail if found guilty.

[Regulation Lax as Gas Wells' Tainted Water Hits Rivers](#)

With hydrofracking, a well can produce over a million gallons of wastewater that is often laced with highly corrosive salts, carcinogens like benzene and radioactive elements like radium, all of which can occur naturally thousands of feet underground. Other carcinogenic materials can be added to the wastewater by the chemicals used in the hydrofracking itself.

While the existence of the toxic wastes has been reported, thousands of internal documents obtained by The New York Times from the Environmental Protection Agency, state regulators and drillers show that the dangers to the environment and health are greater than previously understood.

The documents reveal that the wastewater, which is sometimes hauled to sewage plants not designed to treat it and then discharged into rivers that supply drinking water, contains radioactivity at levels higher than previously known, and far higher than the level that federal regulators say is safe for these treatment plants to handle.

[Oil rises \\$1/bbl as Oman protests fan supply concern](#)

(Reuters) - Brent crude rose on Monday, crossing \$114 a barrel, as protests in Oman fueled concern about security of supply from the Middle East and North Africa even as top exporter Saudi Arabia pumps more.

[Oil above \\$114 after Libya cuts](#)

Brent crude rose more than \$2 a barrel today as concerns persisted about security of supply from the Middle East and North Africa.

The concerns come even after top exporter Saudi Arabia boosted supply to meet the shortfall caused by a cut in exports from Libya, after violent revolt shut down as much as three-quarters of the North African nation's output, according to some estimates.

As protests have intensified and spread through the Arab world, investors fear any impact on output from Saudi Arabia.

[Oil Trades Near Highest in Two Years as Unrest Spreads to Oman](#)

Futures had the biggest weekly gain in two years last week on estimates that Libya's crude flow was cut by as much as two-thirds, while hedge funds raised bullish oil bets to a record. In Oman, two demonstrators were killed and several wounded in clashes with police yesterday, hospital and government officials said. The country is the largest Middle East oil producer outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

"The flash-fire is spreading," said Thorbjørn Bak Jensen, an analyst at Global Risk Management in Middelfart, Denmark. "The situation in Oman creates speculation the unrest will spread to Saudi Arabia itself, though living standards in Saudi are higher and the country is much richer."

[Oil price set to double if production is cut off](#)

Analysts say a Saudi collapse is unlikely, but if it happened the impact would be dire. "If Libya was Saudi, there would be no producer of last resort," says Chris Skrebowski of Peak Oil Consulting. "It would be like 1974 all over again and the price would go off the charts."

[Turmoil rocks Libya's oil sector, slashing output](#)

BREGA, Libya (AP) -- The massive oil terminal at Brega feels strangely deserted for Libya's second-largest hydrocarbon complex. After more than a week of turmoil in the country, production has been scaled back by almost 90 percent with many employees fleeing and ships not coming to collect its products.

The most activity on the site Saturday appeared to be a squad of boys from the nearby town finishing the job of tearing apart the local headquarters of Moammar Gadhafi's Revolutionary Committee.

[Libyan chaos stirs global panic over oil supplies](#)

Libya's oil industry is in chaos, and that's no exaggeration.

Armed men loot equipment from oil field installations. British commandos execute secret raids in the Libyan desert to rescue stranded oil workers as security disintegrates rapidly in remote camps.

Libyan port workers, frightened of being caught up in Moammar Gadhafi's violent crackdown on protesters, fail to show up for work, leaving empty tankers floating around the Mediterranean Sea waiting to load crude.

[Secret military mission into Libya](#)

Berlin - British and German military planes swooped into Libya's desert, rescuing hundreds of oil workers and civilians stranded at remote sites, as thousands of other foreigners are still stuck in Tripoli by bad weather and red tape.

The secret military missions into the turbulent North Africa country signal the readiness of Western nations to disregard Libya's territorial integrity when it comes to the safety of their citizens.

[Iran sees oil price falling once Libya calm - Fars](#)

(Reuters) - Oil prices will fall back to pre-crisis levels once calm returns to Libya, Iran's OPEC governor was quoted as saying on Monday, recommending OPEC not rush into any action to calm the market.

"As soon as calm returns to normal in Libya, oil prices will return to their previous level," Mohammad Ali Khatibi said, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

[Qatar Says OPEC Can Make Up for Loss of Libyan Production](#)

OPEC members and oil producers outside the group can compensate for any halt in crude shipments from Libya, Qatari Oil Minister Mohammed Saleh Al Sada said, after prices surged last week to a two-year high.

"We think there is no shortage of supply," Al Sada told reporters in Doha today. "OPEC and others outside OPEC can make up for the loss of Libyan production."

[Libya highlights China's lack of strategic reserves](#)

Beyond the current price spike, Libya's oil crisis will have far more long-term repercussions in China and India. The supply disruption is a real wake up call for Beijing and New Delhi to speed up the construction of strategic reserves.

The result? Higher oil prices as both countries import extra oil for their reserves.

[Aramco Says Ready to Make Up for Shortfall in Libyan Crude](#)

Saudi Aramco, the world's largest state oil company, is ready to compensate for any shortfall in crude supply from Libya by pumping more oil of its own, Chief Executive Officer Khalid Al-Falih said.

“We’re ready to supply incremental change in demand from our customers,” Al-Falih told reporters in the eastern Saudi city of Khobar, when asked if Aramco would increase its production to meet a gap in Libyan supply. He declined to specify the amount of additional oil Aramco would provide.

[U.S. Offers Aid to Libya Opposition as Unrest Spreads to Oman](#)

The U.S. said it will assist Libyan rebels trying to force Muammar Qaddafi from power, as pro- democracy protests that have swept the Middle East spread to Oman and reignited in Tunisia.

[Food prices spiral in Libya capital amid crackdown](#)

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) -- The West moved to send its first concrete aid to Libya's rebellion in the east of the country, hoping to give it the momentum to oust Moammar Gadhafi. But the Libyan leader's regime clamped down in its stronghold in the capital, where residents said food prices have skyrocketed.

[India May Cut Taxes on Crude Oil, Motor Fuels, Times Reports](#)

India’s Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee may cut excise duties on gasoline and diesel by 2 rupees to 3 rupees a liter and reduce the import tax on crude oil to 5 percent from 7.5 percent today, the Hindustan Times reported, without saying where they got the information.

[January air traffic picks up, high oil prices loom: IATA](#)

ZURICH (Reuters) - International air freight and passenger traffic picked up in January but rising oil prices caused by political unrest in the Middle East could make 2011 a challenging year, airline body IATA said on Monday.

[Petrobras Profit Rises 38% to Record On Higher Oil Output at Brazil Fields](#)

Petroleo Brasileiro SA, the world’s third-largest oil company by market value, said fourth-quarter profit surged 38 percent to a record after production increased.

[March fuel oil exports from Saudi Arabia steady at 500,000-550,000T](#)

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - March-loading fuel oil volumes from Saudi Arabia, the Middle East's largest supplier, hit 500,000-550,000 tonnes for the month, steady to February, with not much more expected, traders said on Monday.

[Just how vast are Saudi Aramco Reserves?](#)

WikiLeaks trove of diplomatic dispatches continue to trickle out. A recent release has excited the the "peak oil" theorists because it suggests that Saudi Aramco reserves are overstated by 40% and production may collapse. The Saudi official estimate of proved reserves is 267 barrels. Over the decades, recovery factors have advanced from 10% to 35% today and sometimes higher. Officials have discovered 70 major oil fields that are not on production. Last year the Saudis drilled about 500 wells.

[Leary: Peak Oil. The New York Times' Op-ed Gets it Right and Wrong](#)

The Times' Op-ed, as did the earlier Huffington Post piece, raises serious doubts about the 'peak oil' theory. Lynch hits the issue squarely on the head when he comments about Saudi Arabia "Officials there have discovered approximately 70 major oil fields that they've left untapped over concerns that increased Saudi production would cause global oil prices to collapse." Well and good and so much for the timeliness of the New York Times' revelations.

[7 Reasons Crude Is Going to \\$80/Barrel](#)

Putting aside my long-term bias toward believing in peak oil, I must admit that in the short-run, nearly all signs point to crude going down. A fairly rapid fall to \$80/barrel or further is quite likely.

Here are seven reasons why.

[Iraq's Basra oil exports restored to 1.872 mln bpd](#)

(Reuters) - Oil exports from Iraq's southern Basra terminal were restored to 1.872 million barrels per day (bpd) on Monday after slowing to 1.2 million bpd in the last two days due to bad weather, a shipping source said.

[Russia may extend preferential oil export duties to three more deposits](#)

The Russian government may include three more oilfields in the list of deposits that enjoy preferential oil export duties, Deputy Economic Development Minister Andrei Slepnyov said on Monday.

The current list of oil deposits, which are mostly located in East Siberia and the North Caspian Sea and enjoy a favorable export regime, amounts to 24 fields.

[Pothole politics could drive gas tax rise](#)

A few years ago, when Maryland's economy was cruising along and the tax money was rolling in, Howard County Executive Ken Ulman could count on receiving about \$16 million a year from the state to keep local roads in good repair.

But this year, like the year before, he didn't even get \$500,000. And unless the state can tap into a new stream of money, things aren't looking much better for 2012.

[Warren Buffett Shareholder Letter – It Appears Peak Oil Was Part of the Burlington Northern Investment Thesis](#)

One thing that I have been hoping to learn is the thinking behind the huge investment Buffett made when he purchased Burlington Northern. Specifically I wanted to get some insight into Buffett's thinking on the future of oil prices.

[Panel Report on Gulf Spill Is Delayed](#)

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A federal panel investigating the cause of the Deepwater Horizon explosion and the resulting oil spill will not finish its final report by the first anniversary of the disaster as it had hoped.

[Recovery in the Gulf of Mexico](#)

Jane Lubchenko announces the beginning of the formal public process for restoration of the Gulf of Mexico following the oil spilled at the BP Deepwater Horizon rig during 2010. Vikram Rao discusses the risks involved in underwater drilling for oil. He suggests as regulations are imposed, the likelihood of avoiding spills is high and the likelihood of avoiding environmental impact is extremely high. He says the Gulf of Mexico oil spill has been a grand experiment and the damage may not be as bad as what was originally thought.

[John Perkins on His Best-Selling Book 'Confessions of an Economic Hit Man' and the Unsustainability of Modern Capitalism](#)

Daily Bell: Are you a proponent of Peak Oil? Are we running out of energy?

John Perkins: I don't think that the concern is so much we are running out of energy as that we cannot afford to continue drilling for oil and sending carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The bigger problem is how we use oil not whether we are running out of it or not.

[So Long, Chicken Little](#)

It's one thing for reformed oilman T. Boone Pickens or former CIA Director R. James Woolsey to argue that industrial societies should end their reliance on fossil fuels in order to reduce their dependence on hostile petrostates or combat global warming. But it's quite another to claim that such a massive shift is necessary because we're about to run out of the stuff.

[It's Well Past Time to Start Taking Peak Oil Seriously](#)

Peak Oil is often called a "theory", as though it wasn't a fact that oil is a finite resource, and as though it wasn't a mathematical reality that production must peak, just as global oil discovery peaked in the 1960s, and just as U.S. domestic oil production peaked in the early 1970s. That oil production must reach a peak, after which point it must decline, is not some kind of paranoid delusion. It's a mathematical certainty we've *already* witnessed as historical fact, on the national scale. *Global* peak oil production is likewise not a question of *if* but *when*. According to world-renowned petroleum geologist Dr. Colin Campbell, the data shows that the peak of world oil production is already behind us, having occurred sometime between 2005 and 2008.

[The Next 20 Years In America](#)

Oil's decline will change everything! We will not be driving personal cars because we will be forced to use mass transit. It will change the way we shop, eat and travel. Bicycles, my favorite mode of transportation, will become more dominant in our cities. Unfortunately, we do not and have not found a replacement for oil even close to its energy-density and ease of transport.

Peak Oil will change how we grow food and its cost. It will change transport of food and materials. It's already happening! With our humongous 312 million population, it will be interesting to see if we can afford to eat or if we can grow enough food TO eat.

[Iceland Channels Volcanoes to Win Europe's Energy-Supply Race](#)

Europeans left stranded at airports last year as an Icelandic volcano spewed ash across the continent may soon benefit from the power that seethes beneath the remote north Atlantic island.

[U.S. Department of Energy and Masdar Collaborate in Testing Cutting-Edge Solar PV Coating Technologies](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Masdar, Abu Dhabi's multifaceted renewable energy initiative, announced that they will collaborate to test the performance of specially coated solar photovoltaic modules designed to avoid the moisture and cementation problems currently faced by PV module producers worldwide and prevent dry dust adhesion.

[Ethanol may hold key to future economy](#)

One reason ethanol is a viable product is because the oil used to manufacture gasoline is becoming an increasingly expensive commodity. Many people say oil is becoming more costly as it becomes more scarce. A few people even believe the world has already reached peak oil production, although that is a hotly disputed hypothesis.

[Solar 'Gold Rush' in U.K. May Die With Incentive Roll-Back](#)

Cornwall, the poorest county in England, said five months ago it expected a "gold rush" of \$1.6 billion in solar energy investments. Now, the U.K. government may get in the way.

[Khosla-Backed Sunborne Says India's Budget Ignores the Solar Industry](#)

James Abraham, managing director and chief executive officer of SunBorne Energy Technologies, a solar power developer backed by billionaire Vinod Khosla, said India's proposed budget for the fiscal year starting April 1 ignores the needs of the solar sector.

[Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 5 restarts](#)

On February 18, Unit 5 of the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station (NPS), owned and operated by the Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), was returned to commercial service, nearly three and a half years after the station was struck by the Niigata Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake on July 16, 2007, according to the Japanese Atomic Information Forum. A periodic inspection had been underway at Unit 5 when the earthquake occurred.

[Lawyer representing Texas in environment and health suits has ties to industries](#)

A prominent Washington lawyer long connected to conservative causes is helping craft legal strategy for the State of Texas as it fights federal proposals on health care and environmental regulation.

[U.N. leader asks Hollywood for help in fight against global climate change](#)

'Together we can have a blockbuster impact on the world,' U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon tells Hollywood heavyweights at a forum on global climate change.

[China minister warns pollution, waste imperil growth](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - China faces acute environmental and resource strains that threaten to choke growth unless the world's second-biggest economy cleans up, the nation's environment minister said in an unusually blunt warning.

[China vows to cut energy, carbon intensity by 2015](#)

China aims to cut the amount of energy and carbon dioxide emissions needed for every unit of economic growth by 16 to 17 percent from this year to the end of 2015, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said on Sunday.

[Not a carbon copy of the U.S.](#)

Hong Kong, Singapore and other cities that are providing Asia with a path from poverty to prosperity also provide an urban approach to reduced energy use.

[Could a small nuclear war reverse global warming?](#)

Nuclear war is a bad thing. Right? Scientists from NASA and a number of other institutions have recently been modelling the effects of a war involving a hundred Hiroshima-level bombs, or 0.03 percent of the world's current nuclear arsenal, according to National Geographic.

The research suggests five million metric tons of black carbon would be swept up into the lowest portion of the atmosphere.

The result, according to NASA climate models, could actually be global cooling.

[India Will Use Coal Tax to Fund 2 Billion Rupee Green Clean-Up](#)

India will use 2 billion rupees collected from its carbon tax on coal to clean up the nation's air, lakes and rivers.

[New rice varieties can temper high prices -IRRI](#)

Rice prices are likely to remain high as demand rises, but countries can boost supply and temper prices by switching to climate change-ready varieties, the head of a rice research agency said on Monday.

[If climate scientists are in it for the money, they're doing it wrong](#)

So, are there big bucks to be had in climate science? Since it doesn't have a lot of commercial appeal, most of the people working in the area, and the vast majority of

those publishing the scientific literature, work in academic departments or at government agencies. Penn State, home of noted climatologists Richard Alley and Michael Mann, has a strong geosciences department and, conveniently, makes the department's salary information available. It's easy to check, and find that the average tenured professor earned about \$120,000 last year, and a new hire a bit less than \$70,000.

That's a pretty healthy salary by many standards, but it's hardly a racket. Penn State appears to be on the low end of similar institutions, and is outdone by two other institutions in its own state (based on this report). But, more significantly for the question at hand, we can see that Earth Sciences faculty aren't paid especially well. Sure, they do much better than the Arts faculty, but they're somewhere in the middle of the pack, and get stomped on by professors in the Business and IT departments.

[Federal spending favours fossil fuels, study finds](#)

AUSTRALIAN taxpayers spend 11 times more encouraging the use of fossil fuels than on climate change programs - and the sum is growing.

Fossil fuel incentives and subsidies will cost an estimated \$12.2 billion this financial year, compared with \$1.1 billion spent on programs designed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and boost clean energy research.

[Can a group of scientists in California end the war on climate change?](#)

The Berkeley Earth project say they are about to reveal the definitive truth about global warming.

[Philippines considers climate change "survival fund"](#)

BANGKOK (AlertNet) – Lawmakers, aid workers and activists in the Philippines are throwing their weight behind a national "survival fund" to tackle climate change after severe flooding caused by unseasonal and persistent heavy rains.



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