



## Drumbeat: April 6, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 6, 2011 - 10:27am

### [EIA Deems Shale Gas 'Global Phenomenon'](#)

Initial assessments of 48 shale gas basins in 32 countries suggest that shale gas resources, which have recently provided a major boost to U.S. natural gas production, are also available in other world regions. A new EIA-sponsored study reported initial assessments of 5,760 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of technically recoverable shale gas resources in 32 foreign countries, compared with 862 Tcf in the United States.

In 2010, U.S. shale gas production reached 4.87 Tcf (23 percent of total U.S. natural gas production), compared with 0.39 Tcf in 2000. This shows both the rapid growth and absolute importance of the shale gas resource to the United States. Rising production from shale gas resources has been credited with both lower natural gas prices and declining dependence on imported natural gas. As is often the case with resource development, shale gas production also has raised local environmental concerns, largely centering on the amount of water used in the fracturing process and the need to handle, recycle, and treat fracturing fluids in a manner that addresses the risk of spills that can potentially affect water quality. EIA's Annual Energy Outlook 2011 Reference case also reflects the growing importance of U.S. shale gas. It projects that shale gas will account for about 46 percent of U.S. natural gas production in 2035.

### [Time Got It Wrong: Natural Gas Is No Panacea for Our Energy Crisis](#)

Millions of people are reading the latest issue of *Time* magazine believing that there is a ready-made domestic solution to the energy crisis that will guarantee abundant energy and jettison foreign oil sheiks to the dustbin of history. If it were only true.

### [Some Realism on Shale Gas](#)

It turns out that the US and Canada also had a 100 year supply of natural gas in 2001: "Natural gas is also plentiful. An estimated 2,449 trillion cubic feet of reserves in the United States and Canada is enough to meet today's demand for 100 years."

In the interim there was a panic in 2005:

"We need to declare a national crisis," Andrew N. Liveris, the chief executive of the Dow Chemical Company, said in recent testimony before the Senate. Dow, the nation's largest chemical maker, has shut 23 plants in the United States in the last three years in places like Somerset, N.J.; South Charleston, W.Va.; and Elizabethtown, Ky., as it shifted

production to Kuwait, Argentina, Malaysia and Germany, where natural gas is cheaper."

### [Douglas-Westwood warns Congress on Chinese oil & gas demand](#)

In evidence to the US House of Representatives Subcommittee on Energy and Power's hearing, April 4th, regarding the "The American Energy Initiative", Douglas-Westwood LLP's Managing Director, Steve Kopits, gave dire warnings about the likely development of China's future energy demand

"China's oil demand will likely keep pressure on oil prices for the indefinite future," said Kopits. "China consumes 10 million barrels of oil per day (mbpd) on global consumption of about 88 mbpd. ...it is already the second biggest consumer of oil in the world ...we see China surpassing US consumption levels around 2018."

### [IEA urges scrapping \\$312b fuel subsidies](#)

ABU DHABI — The International Energy Agency is calling for 312 billion dollars in fuel subsidies to be scrapped in a bid to promote clean energy sources, according to a report presented in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday.

"More aggressive clean energy policies are required, including the removal of fossil fuel subsidies and implementation of transparent, predictable and adaptive incentives for cleaner, more efficient energy options," said the Clean Energy Progress Report.

### [How the West was Lost](#)

To butcher a quote from the 2009 movie "There Will Be Blood" – the emerging markets are starting to drink our milkshakes.

The coal milkshake went first. China surpassed the United States as the world's largest coal consumer in 2009. Today, China uses more energy than the United States, by a 5-10% margin depending on who you ask.

What's the next milkshake? It might be oil. China's oil consumption doubled in the last 6-7 years:

### [An audacious new theory to compete with "Peak Oil": Hydrocarbons forever.](#)

New companies say pulling carbon dioxide straight from the air could solve global warming and provide an infinite source of gasoline.

### [How high will gas prices go?](#)

Jeff Rubin, former chief economist and managing director of CIBC World Markets, takes a different view. He thinks a gas price of \$2 per litre at the pumps could become a reality as soon as 2012 due to soaring world demand, fuelled in large part by China and India.

“China alone added over a million barrels a day last year,” said Rubin, author of *Why Your World Is About To Get a Whole Lot Smaller: Oil and the End of Globalization*. “We’re seeing absolutely no cessation in world oil demand. I think we’re looking at prices by the end of the year testing, and quite possibly exceeding, the \$147 a barrel mark we saw in 2008.”

### [Exporters oppose proposal of two holidays a week](#)

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) South Zone, Aziz Ahmed has strongly opposed the idea of two holidays a week for energy conservation.

In a statement, he said that Pakistan’s economy which is already in its lowest ebb and many sectors are facing sheer crisis, the decision to observe two days off in a week may result in total collapse of industrial sector especially the exports would have to suffer most.

### [Indonesia: Living without fuel subsidies](#)

Oil subsidies have become a serious topic for the government. Both the coordinating minister for the economy and finance minister do not hesitate to speak openly about a possible reduction of oil subsidies.

This is understandable because Indonesia’s status as a net oil importer since 2003 has stirred a panic every time world oil prices spike. The state of panic will be more severe if price volatility far exceeds the estimate used to draft the state budget.

### [South Korea: Ax the oil tax, please](#)

Price controls, which many will remember from the days of military governments, have been revived. The Lee Myung-bak administration forced four private oil refinery companies - SK Energy, GS Caltex, Hyundai Oilbank and S-Oil - to cut their oil prices by 100 won (\$0.09) per liter for three months. Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” of the market is now in the grip of the government’s very visible hand.

### [Mexico Pemex to invest \\$1 bln on pumping equipment](#)

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Mexico's state-run oil company Pemex [PEMX.UL] said on Wednesday it is seeking bids on a near \$1 billion project to buy crude extraction

equipment for use in the Bay of Campeche.

The company wants to acquire electric submersible pumps in more than 100 wells to improve production in fields already operating in Campeche state on the Gulf of Mexico.

### [Gabon's oil production gets back to normal](#)

LIBREVILLE — Gabon's oil production on Tuesday returned gradually to normal on Tuesday, producer companies said after a four-day strike, but fuel shortages affected the capital Libreville.

### [Forecasters: Above-average 2011 Atlantic hurricane season](#)

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — This year will be an above-average Atlantic hurricane season, with a forecast of 16 named storms forming between June 1 and Nov. 30, Colorado State University researchers predicted Wednesday.

### [Aramco sells 2m barrels of new crude blends](#)

(MENAFN) Saudi Aramco stated that it sold 2 million barrels of new blends of crude oil, and it plans on producing one more shipment of those blends for sale or storage, reported Times of Oman.

The oil giant also said that the 3 cargos were sold to BP and OMV in March. Aramco pointed out that the additional cargo would contain 1 million barrels.

### [The 20 million barrels of floating oil that could calm the market](#)

Tiny Gabon has been among the places that have roiled oil markets this week. Workers in this west African country settled a four-day strike yesterday, but not before helping to send the widely traded U.K.-traded crude benchmark above \$120 a barrel for the first time in almost three years. It involved just 240,000 barrels a day of production, but demonstrated the market's jitteriness since Libya's 1.1 million barrels a day of export oil was lost. There is a crisis premium of \$15-\$20 a barrel in the price of oil, most analysts agree, and probably more.

Yet all this time, between 20 million barrels and 36 million barrels of surplus oil have been anchored in floating storage (ships such as the tanker pictured above) in the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea, reports Thomas Strouse. This bounty belongs to Iran, which is the object of a United Nations sanctions regime that among other things seeks to stop its flow of crude oil revenue. If this oil were freely sold, it -- along with Saudi Arabia's increased exports -- would easily compensate for the lost Libyan cargoes for almost a month.

### [Gates tries to soothe Saudis rattled by unrest](#)

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Defense Secretary Robert Gates tried to smooth the worst rift in years with Arab ally and oil producer Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, reassuring the Saudi king that the U.S. remains a steady friend despite support for pro-democracy revolutions in the Middle East.

The Saudi king, looking thin after months of medical treatment in the United States and elsewhere, welcomed Gates for what the Pentagon chief later said was a cordial and warm visit.

### [What Saudi's king has learned from Libya](#)

Libya has bared an uncomfortable truth to Saudi King Abdullah, Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev, Kuwaiti Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and the rest of the petro-autocrats of the world:

When politically expedient, Washington will help to push you out of power.

### [Gadhafi to Obama: Please end airstrikes](#)

WASHINGTON — Moammar Gadhafi has appealed directly to President Barack Obama to halt what the Libyan leader called "an unjust war" and wished Obama good luck in his bid for re-election next year.

In a rambling, three-page letter to Obama obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press, Gadhafi implored Obama to stop the NATO-led air campaign, which the Libyan called an "unjust war against a small people of a developing country."

### [Attacks by Gadhafi forces damage rebel oil fields](#)

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) -- Three days of attacks by supporters of Libyan ruler Moammar Gadhafi have halted oil production in rebel-held fields in the country's east, a rebel spokesman said Wednesday.

The rebels had just begun exporting oil again after a weeklong hiatus in effort to raise funds for their struggle against Gadhafi who still controls the western half of the country.

### [Ex-Libyan oil minister says many Gadhafi insiders too scared to defect](#)

LONDON — Several members of Moammar Gadhafi's inner circle want to defect but are

too scared about the safety of their families and friends to do so, Libya's former energy minister said Wednesday.

### [Eni delays sale of stake in Libya field to Gazprom](#)

(Reuters) - Eni and Gazprom have delayed an agreement on the sale to Gazprom of a part of Eni's stake in the Elephant oil field in Libya, Paolo Scaroni, the CEO of the Italian oil and gas company, said on Wednesday.

### [Al Qaeda Smells Blood](#)

As President Ali Abdullah Saleh steadily loses support at home and abroad—including in Washington and Riyadh—al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula seems increasingly poised to be a major winner in Yemen. The AQAP threat to American cities and to the other states in the peninsula is going to increase as al Qaeda adapts to the new environment in the Muslim world.

### [Alberta Will Tighten Oil-Sands Regulation](#)

The Alberta government said Tuesday it intends to set new environmental standards -- including outlining specific benchmarks for water contamination -- for areas affected by Canada's vast and growing oil-sands production in the western part of the country.

### [Failed Gulf blowout preventer didn't get overhaul](#)

METAIRIE, La. — Components of the blowout preventer blamed for failing to stop last year's BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico were inspected regularly and replaced or repaired as needed, but the device, in service for nine years, never received a complete overhaul recommended after five years.

### [US, Mexico Work to Raise Bar in Gulf](#)

Offshore drilling regulators from the U.S. and Mexico met Monday in a bid to strengthen standards governing oil and gas exploration throughout the Gulf.

U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said the goal was a single "gold standard" for all Gulf of Mexico drilling, whether in U.S. or Mexican territorial waters.

### [Rolling blackouts ending this month in TEPCO areas](#)

TOKYO — The Japanese government is working on ending within this month controversial rolling blackouts now conducted by Tokyo Electric Power Co to conserve



electricity, government sources said Wednesday.

### [In Wake Of Nuclear Crisis, TEPCO's Plans Questioned](#)

More than three weeks after an earthquake and tsunami set off one of the world's most serious nuclear accidents at Japan's Fukushima Dai-ichi plant, experts are intensifying their scrutiny of how the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., has handled the crisis.

Some events TEPCO couldn't have foreseen — such as the massive size of the tsunami that swamped the coastal facility. But nuclear experts say that in the days following the initial series of explosions and fires inside the reactors, which caused fuel rods to melt and subsequent large releases of radiation, TEPCO made very costly — and avoidable — mistakes.

### [How radiation will change Japan](#)

Radiation experts are painting a sobering picture of the Fukushima nuclear disaster's long-term impact on Japan in a series of reports published today by the journal Nature. At best, the country faces more than a decade of expensive cleanup, including the decommissioning of the reactor complex and the disposal of contaminated debris. At worst, wide areas of land around the complex will have to be abandoned, as they were in Ukraine after Chernobyl.

"On the basis of the Fukushima data so far, it seems likely that in some areas, food restrictions could hold for decades, particularly for wild foodstuffs such as mushrooms, berries and freshwater fish," the University of Portsmouth's Jim Smith, co-editor and lead author of "Chernobyl: Catastrophe and Consequences," wrote in a Nature commentary.

### [Japan faces another dilemma: Radiation-contaminated bodies](#)

As if the Japanese government did not have enough on its hands, now it has this dilemma: What to do with as many as 1,000 bodies near the leaking Fukushima nuclear plant that may be contaminated with radiation.

### [Why the World Needs Nuclear Power](#)

James Hansen, the head of NASA's Goddard Institute, explains how future fourth generation nuclear power plants will be cleaner and safer because they will be able to burn highly radioactive spent fuel rods. Harnessing this technology will be pivotal for America's future, he says.

### [Thorium is a great alternative energy source](#)

The instability of nuclear power is being demonstrated at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant. According to CNN, the radiation levels in seawater near the plant are 1,850 times higher than normal. Uranium is a volatile, dangerous energy source. What if there was a material that could yield higher energy levels than uranium, and it was cheap, safe and clean?

There is. It's called thorium, and it's everywhere.

### [Democrats raise concern about nuclear plant](#)

(Reuters) - Democratic lawmakers warned a Pennsylvania nuclear power plant would be at risk of a meltdown in the case of a severe emergency, though top U.S. nuclear officials said the chances of such an event occurring were not likely.

### [End of the Nuclear Renaissance and the Future of Natural Gas](#)

It may be hard to believe, but of all the nuclear power plants currently operating in the United States, every one broke ground prior to 1975. Even the most youthful nuclear facility is now approaching 40 years of age. There are currently 104 actively operating nuclear reactors in the United States (see the accompanying map) and despite more than 3 decades without a single new plant constructed, the installed base of nuclear generating capacity still produces 20% of all the electricity consumed in the United States.

### [75 year old killed Georgia, Armenia internet](#)

Georgian police arrested a 75-year-old woman who single-handedly cut off Internet connections in Georgia and neighbouring Armenia, the interior ministry in Tbilisi said on Wednesday.

The pensioner was digging for scrap metal when she hacked into a fibre-optic cable which runs through Georgia to Armenia, forcing many thousands of Internet users in both countries offline for several hours on March 28.

### [Rest in Fleece: Woolen Coffins Offer Green Goodbye](#)

Thanks to a growing demand for green funerals in Britain, Hainsworth's Natural Legacy caskets — each woven from the fleece of three sheep and capable of holding 840 lb. (380 kg) — have begun to carve out a share of the U.K.'s coffin market, which typically numbers around 500,000 a year.



## [Dmitry Orlov: Financial totalitarianism](#)

Those who care to look can easily turn up plenty of evidence that the value of every type of financial asset, not just fiat currency or debt instruments, is unsupported. Its value derives from the goods and services provided by a functioning global industrial economy, which is quickly running out of every type of resource it requires; not just high-EROEI fossil fuels, but also metals, rare earth elements, phosphate, irrigation water and arable land. As industrial activity dwindles, worker productivity will decline precipitously. Many people point to precious metals as the ultimate storehouse of value, but without industrial equipment a man can only put out about 100 Watts of energy—a light bulb's worth—and won't dance any faster no matter how many gold or silver coins you throw at him.

## [TLC's 'Extreme Couponing': Little piggies go to market, and clean up on Aisle 5](#)

But my real beef, which I'm selling for half-off today, is that the subjects of "Extreme Couponing" are never seen stopping at a food bank on the way home to share some of their largess — except once, in the original "Extreme Couponing" special.

Everyone else on the show selfishly stores it away in hyper-organized garages, basements and spare closets — where all the labels must face a certain way, ordered by expiration date, before Mommy can sit down, relax, and clip and file still more coupons. "In a zombie apocalypse, we'd be fine for two years," chuckles the overweight boyfriend of an extreme couponer in St. Louis, after he counts up 50 bags of snack chips.

## [Freedom through Frugality](#)

Montpelier resident Jane Dwinell has followed the method in *Your Money or Your Life* to live frugally and retire in her mid-fifties. She celebrates and elaborates on the method in her new book, *Freedom through Frugality*.

Annie McCleary is coordinator for Transition Town Montpelier, part of the worldwide Transition movement, which helps Vermonters take control of their food, energy, and other resources, while moving from oil dependence to community resilience.

## [How California Can Reduce Its Dependence On Oil](#)

Much of the Canadian oil is from the tar sands of British Columbia and Alberta. But California's refineries and anti-pollution regulations require use of "sweet" (low sulfur) crude oil so our state's imports are coming from Saudi Arabia and Ecuador.

The good news in our energy picture is natural gas. Alpert described it as "cheap, available and found in the U.S.A." Its cost is only one-quarter that of oil and it produces only half the greenhouse gases of coal.

## [A film review: 'Gasland'](#)

The second half of the oil age will be very, very different from the first half. It is truly, to coin the term usually used to describe football, “a game of two halves”. The first half was awash with cheap, easy-to-find and easy-to-produce oil and gas. The second half will be the story of expensive-to-produce hydrocarbons, from increasingly inaccessible places, with a rapidly falling energy return on investment and an increasing impact, both environmentally and in terms of carbon emissions. It will be (unless we are able to break our addiction to hydrocarbons sooner rather than later) a wretched and increasingly desperate time of squeezing fuel out of anything we can. It will be the societal scraping of the barrel. If you want to know what that looks like, ‘Gasland’ offers a powerful, chilling, and enraging insight.

## [Richard Heinberg: Business Development: The cavalry's on the way](#)

A remarkable book appeared in 2004 to almost no fanfare and little critical notice. The author was Mats Larsson, a Swedish business consultant, and his book was titled *The Limits of Business Development and Economic Growth*. Unlike the thousands of business books published each year that promise to help managers become more effective, or that hint at new opportunities for profit, Larsson's conveyed a sobering message—one that the business community evidently didn't want to hear: Our human ability to invent genuinely new activities is probably limited, and most recent inventions have consisted merely of finding ways to speed up activities that humans have been performing for a very long time—communicating, transporting themselves and their goods, trading, and manufacturing. These processes can only be taken to the limits where things can be done at almost no time and at a very low cost, and we are fast approaching those limits.

## [International Conference on Global Land Grabbing](#)

The focus of the conference will be on the politics of global land grabbing and agrarian change. Papers are expected to address some of the most urgent and strategic questions around global land grab.

## [Ethanol: How Much Can We Produce?](#)

According to the paper, which was recently published by the Society of Chemical Industry in its *Journal of Chemical Technology & Biotechnology*, there is enough biomass in the United States to substantially reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil if that biomass is converted to ethanol.

That is a remarkable conclusion, and deserves recognition by the broader audience of policymakers and regulators working in Washington, DC, on our nation's energy crisis.

## [BP's Landis Sees 'Tremendous' Opportunities in Biofuels](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Katrina Landis, chief executive officer of BP Plc's alternative-energy unit, discusses the outlook for the London-based company's investments in clean energy. Landis spoke yesterday with Erik Schatzker at the 2011 Bloomberg New Energy Finance Summit.

### [Lakeport City Council votes to take action against SmartMeter installations](#)

LAKEPORT, Calif. – The Lakeport City Council voted Tuesday night to bring back an ordinance similar to those passed last month by the Board of Supervisors and the Clearlake City Council to implement a moratorium on Pacific Gas & Electric's SmartMeter devices.

### [Cities, Towns, and Suburbs: Local government in a time of peak oil and climate change](#)

Many responses to peak oil urge individual and community solutions, ignoring government. They argue that since government hasn't done anything to address the problem, citizens and businesses must take matters into their own hands. Some even argue that government is part of the problem, particularly federal and state governments.

This attitude is shortsighted.

### [Ed Koch: Energy and a Needed Czar](#)

Requiring all existing 18-wheel trucks to use natural gas instead of diesel fuel, I've been told, would reduce oil imports from OPEC nations by half. The cost of conversion for current trucks would be approximately \$64,000 per truck. Why not mandate the change, providing subsidies if required and appropriate? Why not require auto companies to only manufacture natural gas using trucks in the future?

### [John Ikerd: Dwindling Energy Resources Will Put The Economy at Risk](#)

In this twelfth video in the series "Peak Oil and a Changing Climate" from *The Nation* and On The Earth Productions, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics of the University of Missouri at Columbia John Ikerd argues that humans cannot wait much longer to address the reality that economic growth is unsustainable—because the world is running out of energy resources. "We simply can't continue to grow at the rate we've been growing in the past."

Ikerd calls for a decentralized energy system using wind, solar or photovoltaic energy. As he outlines the problems of energy as they relate to economic prosperity, he says that we don't have to have continued economic wealth to have progress and happiness.

Finally, Ikerd says we "have to paint a vision for future" that can give people hope. We must show there is at least a possibility we will be able to tackle the impending peak oil

and climate change crises.

### [The Cuckoo that won't sing. Sustainability and Japanese culture](#)

Now, the two centuries and a half of the Edo Period are very interesting in terms of sustainability. It was not just a period of peace; it was also a period of stable economy and of stable population. Actually, that is not completely true, population increasing during the first part of the Edo period, but when it arrived to about 30 million, it stayed nearly constant for almost two centuries. I don't know of another society in history that managed such a period of stability. It was an example of what we call today "steady state" economy.

...In order to attain steady state, the Japanese had to manage well their resources and avoid wasting them. One thing they did was to get rid of the armies of the warring period. War is just too expensive for a steady state society. Then, they made big effort to maintain and increase their forests. You can read something on this point in Diamond's book. Coal from Kyushu may have helped a little in saving trees, but coal alone would not have been enough - it was the management of forests that did the trick. Forests were managed to the level of single trees by the government; a remarkable feat. Finally, the Japanese managed to control population. That was possibly the hardest part in an age when there were no contraceptives. From what I read, I understand that the poor had to use mainly infanticide and that must have been very hard for the Japanese, as it would be for us today. But the consequences of letting population grow unchecked would have been terrible; so they had to.

### [Canada needs to make emergency planning a priority](#)

Today, thanks to its wise investments in the 1970s and 1980s, Denmark is a world leader in wind turbine technology. Not only do they use wind power themselves, they make and sell the turbines used throughout the world. As global warming goes from threat to crisis, and as peak oil again drives up fuel costs, Denmark is set to get rich while everyone else is going broke.

### [OPEC says can do no more to control \\$120 oil](#)

(Reuters) - OPEC can do little to control prices driven by speculators betting on "worst case scenarios" and has already supplied the market with the oil it needs, members of the producer group said on Wednesday.

Oil on Wednesday traded above \$122 a barrel for Brent crude, near two half-and-a-half year highs set this week.

"There is little we can do in terms of price control," UAE Oil Minister Mohammed bin Dhaen al-Hamli told an oil conference in Paris.

## [Iraq Deputy PM: High Oil Price Not Hurting Global Economic Growth](#)

PARIS -(Dow Jones)- The current high oil price doesn't appear to have hurt global economic growth, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Hussain al-Shahristani said Wednesday.

## [Oil could hit \\$200-\\$300 on Saudi unrest-Yamani](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Oil prices could rocket to \$200- \$300 a barrel if the world's top crude exporter Saudi Arabia is hit by serious political unrest, former Saudi oil minister Sheikh Zaki Yamani told Reuters on Tuesday.

Yamani said he saw no immediate sign of further trouble following protests last month calling for political reforms but said that underlying discontent remained unresolved.

## [Gazprom CEO, Belgian Crown Prince discuss gas storage, transit](#)

“The sides discussed the development of bilateral energy cooperation, particularly Russian natural gas transit to third countries,” Gazprom said in a press release on Wednesday.

According to Gazprom, the participants in the meeting considered ways to expand cooperation between the Russian gas giant and Belgium’s Fluxys, including prospects for using the underground gas storage facility in Loenhout. The facility can expand its capacity in 2011.

## [Cuba to drill five new oil wells by 2013](#)

Cuba has announced plans to drill five deepwater oil wells in the Gulf of Mexico beginning this summer, expressing confidence that its efforts will be rewarded with major new energy finds.

"We're about to move to the drilling phase," said Manuel Marrero, an official with the government authority tasked with overseeing Cuba's oil sector.

## [Norway Expects More Arctic Oil Drilling After Barents Sea Strike](#)

Norway expects more drilling in its Arctic waters after Statoil ASA (STL)'s announcement last week of the first commercial find in the Barents Sea in more than 10 years.

“After Statoil’s discovery, we’ll be going through those maps again to see whether there are any opportunities we might have missed,” Bente Nyland, head of Norway’s Petroleum Directorate, said yesterday in an interview in Hammerfest, a town on

country's northern tip. "You'll see more companies who've had a wait-and-see attitude coming in."

### [Transocean execs donating safety bonuses to fund for oil spill victims](#)

SAN FRANCISCO — Executives at the offshore drilling contractor at the center of last year's Gulf of Mexico oil spill are donating bonuses they got for the company's safety record last year.

The decision announced Tuesday comes just days after Transocean disclosed the bonuses deep in a regulatory filing, triggering intense criticism.

### [From Sea to Sea to Sea: Ignatieff looks to update Canada's motto](#)

Soon after becoming leader of the federal Liberals in 2009, Ignatieff endorsed the idea of rewriting Canada's coat-of-arms catchphrase — "From Sea to Sea" — to "From Sea to Sea to Sea," symbolically recognizing that the country is bounded not only by its Pacific and Atlantic coasts, but also by the Arctic Ocean.

### [Ex-Tesco boss Leahy dismisses consumer doomsters](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - Terry Leahy, the former boss of British supermarket giant Tesco, dismissed predictions of a major consumer downturn on Wednesday, saying a slow and steady recovery would come through when oil prices stabilise.

"I think we are in recovery. The economy will grow this year. It will be slow and steady," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Retail London conference.

### [UK output shock raises rate hike doubts](#)

LONDON — British industrial output fell in February, confounding analysts' forecasts for a rise on the back of a big monthly decline in oil and gas extraction due to maintenance work.

### [Brazil oil agency to regulate ethanol-report](#)

SAO PAULO (Reuters) - Brazil's National Petroleum Agency will regulate the chain of production of ethanol, the country's president, Dilma Rousseff, decided this week, a local newspaper reported Wednesday.

The agency known as ANP will begin drafting regulations that will treat ethanol as a "strategic fuel" and no longer as an agricultural commodity, reported Valor Economico



newspaper. The fuel currently falls more under the control of the agriculture ministry.

### [Solar Power: Ready, Set, Grow](#)

Even before Japan's nuclear nightmare began, the solar power market in the U.S. and abroad were set for another year of remarkable growth, according to several analysts and industry leaders.

One such individual suggested recently that the only close analogy to the coming surge in solar photovoltaic panels (PV) is Apple, Inc.'s performance last year after the iPad took off.

### [Sewage Holding Tank Bursts, and Two Men Are Killed](#)

Two workers died on Tuesday and millions of gallons of largely untreated sewage spewed into a river when a holding tank wall collapsed at a treatment plant in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

The river, the Little Pigeon, flows through the town of Pigeon Forge, which is seven miles north of the plant and is home to the Dollywood amusement park. It also flows through part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The treatment plant was rendered inoperable.

### [Brazil Rejects Panel's Request to Stop Dam](#)

SÃO PAULO — Brazil's government emphatically refused on Tuesday to suspend work on a huge hydroelectric dam in the Amazon, despite pleas that the project could displace tens of thousands of indigenous people and cause environmental harm.

### [To Cut Smog, Navistar Blazes Risky Path of Its Own](#)

From 2010 onward, all new truck engines must achieve tough, near-zero limits for NOx, a chief ingredient of smog. Virtually every truck maker besides Navistar chose to use an add-on system to their existing engines that uses a fluid cocktail to help neutralize the pollutant as it makes its way out of the exhaust.

Navistar went a different route, deciding to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to refine an engine that produces minimal NOx in the first place. At the same time, the company attacked the competing systems, suing federal air quality regulators and claiming that the add-on technology was so flawed that it failed to meet the clean-air requirements.

### [Better Cleanup Planned at Former Chrome Plant](#)

Under a federal court settlement announced on Tuesday, PPG Industries of Pittsburgh has again committed itself to removing chromium waste from a 17-acre site in a densely populated area of Jersey City where the company and its predecessors ran a chromium manufacturing complex from 1924 to 1963. The project includes pollution that reached homes in the neighborhood. The new deal sets a higher standard for the cleanup than was previously agreed to.

### [Companies use microbes to turn Wyo. coal into gas](#)

GILLETTE, Wyo. – New scientific research has a pair of energy companies betting that the future of the U.S. natural gas industry lies in persuading microorganisms to treat old coal deposits like all-you-can eat buffets.

### [The Rich Are Different: They Can Buy More Sand](#)

An economist, an oceanographer and an expert in complex systems have just published a study posing a question: What happens if physical predictions about the erosive force of future storms are entwined with economic predictions of how coastal towns deal with the loss of their beaches?

Their models essentially yield this answer: If the cost of replacement sand increases as the supply decreases, richer communities will use up most of the sand. That will hold true whether or not the wealthier towns are more prone to erosion than those with lower property values.

### [Fossil Fuels Growth Criticized by IEA as Energy Leaders Meet in Abu Dhabi](#)

Global hunger for coal and natural gas is outpacing demand for renewable energy, the International Energy Agency said in a report asking governments to ramp up incentives to clean power and cut them for fossil fuels.

Coal, the dirtiest carbon-based fuel widely used for power generation, has met 47 percent of new worldwide electricity demand in the past decade and gas accounted for 33 percent, the Paris-based agency said in a report. That compares with a 6.5 percent share for plants that burn waste or use renewable sources such as the wind and sun.

### [Cost of gas weaves its way into all aspects of life](#)

WASHINGTON — Quick: What do these things have in common? Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi. The Japanese earthquake and tsunami. Wall Street volatility. A cranky, even angry American populace.

Answer: They all have something to do with gasoline.

No matter what happens in the world today, just about everything seems to point back to fuel and the tricky politics that emerge when prices spike.

The links aren't lost on President Barack Obama, and for good reason. Like death and taxes, this cycle is a certainty: Prices at the pump rise, the public's mood falls and the president gets punished.

### [6 surprising ways oil prices affect you](#)

Oil shows up in thousands of places besides your car's fuel tank and engine. It's true that most oil is used as a source of energy in the United States and that's not likely to change anytime soon. The average barrel of oil yields the following: gasoline (42%), diesel (20%), jet fuel (9%), heating oil (4.5%), heavy fuel oil (4.5%), liquefied petroleum gases (4.5%) and other products (16%).

### [Biggest market risk: Middle East turmoil](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- No one saw it coming. As champagne corks popped and confetti swirled to usher in 2011, most experts pointed to Europe's ongoing sovereign debt crisis as the market's biggest hurdle this year.

But all that changed in January, when violence and chaos heated up across the Arab world, starting with massive protests that toppled Tunisia's longtime authoritarian leader. It didn't end there: Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia are among the hottest spots right now, and not in a good way.

### [Cost of driving has risen 3.4%, study finds](#)

Rising gas prices. Costlier tires. Lousy deals on vehicle resales. If it seems that it's costing more to operate a motor vehicle these days, that's because it is — 3.4% more than a year ago, according to auto club AAA.

The average annual cost to own and operate a sedan in the USA, based on 15,000 miles of driving, rose 1.9 cents per mile to 58.5 cents per mile, or \$8,776, says AAA's 2011 "Your Driving Costs" study.

The increased costs to own and operate a vehicle were driven mainly by large increases in fuel prices, depreciation costs and tire prices, says John Nielsen, AAA national director of auto repair, buying and consumer programs.

### [Oil hovers above \\$108 amid mixed US supply report](#)

Oil prices hovered above \$108 a barrel Wednesday, boosted by a weaker dollar and the unrest in Libya, even as a U.S. crude supply report showed mixed signals about demand.

### [Jeff Rubin: Only recessions can deliver Obama's energy targets](#)

In many ways, Obama's plan is reminiscent of his predecessors by supporting more government subsidies for energy alternatives such as nuclear and bio fuels. Higher fuel efficiency standards will be mandated for cars and trucks. And, of course, there will be increased reliance on offshore drilling for deep water oil and on hydraulic fracturing in pursuit of America's new wonder fuel: shale gas.

Unfortunately, these initiatives have in one way or another been tried before by previous administrations. And many look less credible than they have in the past.

### [ClearView's Book Says 'Peak Oil' Discussion Is 'Silly'](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Kevin Book, managing director at ClearView Energy Partners LLC, talks about Saudi Arabia and the outlook for oil.

### [Energy options limited by peak oil and climate change](#)

The International Energy Agency, the energy watchdog to industrialised countries, says global crude oil output peaked in 2006, meaning the world is now forced to glean oil from unconventional sources like oil sands and natural gas liquids.

Those alternatives, as well as renewable energy and nuclear power, are more expensive and would force the world into a more frugal future, according to Richard Heinberg, who coined the notion of "Peak Everything" in his 2007 book of the same title.

### [Will 'Peak Oil' save the planet?](#)

But as the ranks of nations snapping up the energy-intensive vision of the developed world has grown, with the vast populations of China and India eagerly joining the party, some harsh realities are starting to kick in. Simply put, the oil pantry is starting to look increasingly bare; the long strides up of oil production, to meet burgeoning demand, have faltered. To many geologists, the long shadow of 'Peak Oil' is upon us - and that could mean serious problems for a world addicted to oil.

### [Novorossiysk Loses Cargo as Putin Sends Oil Flows to Asia](#)

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's quest to sell oil to China, the world's hungriest market, may lock in a \$797-million decline in value at the country's biggest port.

OAo Novorossiysk Commercial Sea Port on the Black Sea, Russia's biggest outlet to the Mediterranean, is likely to lose crude volumes to a new pipeline to Russia's Pacific coast and to China. The project creates "notable competition" to European deliveries, Putin, 58, said in August at the ceremonial opening of the China spur in eastern Siberia.

### [China to raise gasoline, diesel prices from Thurs - oil exec](#)

(Reuters) - China will raise retail gasoline prices by 500 yuan per tonne and diesel by 400 yuan per tonne from Thursday, an oil executive told Reuters, confirming an earlier industry report.

### [Kuwait to put \\$340bn into oil and gas industry](#)

KUWAIT CITY // The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is spearheading a US\$340 billion (Dh1.24 trillion) investment master plan to transform the nation's energy policy.

In the next five years alone, state-owned KPC is due to spend \$90bn on oil and gas projects, Hashim al Rifai, its managing director, told an oil and gas summit in the capital yesterday.

### [Iran: No emergency OPEC meeting](#)

CAIRO - Iran's OPEC governor says there is no need for the producer group to hold an emergency meeting, even as oil prices have surged by 30 percent since February over unrest in the Arab world.

### [Citigroup Boosts Commodity Investment Team to Tap Demand as Prices Surge](#)

Citigroup Inc. (C), the third-largest U.S. bank by assets, is seeking to expand its commodity investment product team by a third over the next two years to tap growing demand as copper, gold and cotton gain to records.

The bank plans to add 10 people to the 30-strong group, Iain Armitage, a managing director and London-based head of the team, said in an interview in Singapore. Citigroup is also setting up a commodity trading unit in Shanghai, he said. China is the world's biggest user of raw materials.

### [Ex-militants pose latent threat to Nigerian oil](#)

PORT HARCOURT, Nigeria (Reuters) - Sat at the bar in a dingy former hotel on the edge of Nigeria's oil hub Port Harcourt, Silas Pyale lifts a muscular arm and points to a deep gash in his head.

"A bullet did that," says the 31-year old, staring into the middle distance. "We all hope those days are over but if there are no jobs, no money, it will be back to the old ways ... But even worse than before."

### [Germany won't funnel oil money from India to Iran](#)

A German official says a deal to funnel oil payments from India to Iran through Germany's central bank has been scrapped.

The official said Tuesday that the Indians involved decided "they wanted to use other means of payment from now on."

### [Saudi Arabia steady amid the turbulence](#)

Fuelled by surging oil prices, higher crude output and increases in government and consumer spending, Credit Suisse expects Saudi Arabia's real GDP to grow 5.7 per cent this year and 4.9 per cent next year.

### [China to drive world oil demand](#)

China trails only the U.S. in oil consumption and is expected to drive world demand in coming years.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, China's growing energy appetites will account for about 40 percent of increased world demand this year. China will boost oil consumption this year by another 600,000 barrels per day. The U.S. will increase consumption by 130,000 barrels per day.

### [Algeria's ex-energy minister warns Arab turmoil to have 'dramatic' effect on energy market](#)

PARIS - Algeria's former energy minister warned Wednesday the ongoing political and social turmoil in the Arab world will have "dramatic" implications for energy markets in coming years.

While the outcome of the Arab revolutions is "by no means certain," it is already evident that "important changes are in progress that are likely to impact energy markets in the long term," Nordine Ait-Laoussine said.

### [Gulf between Arab-Iran rivals grows stormy](#)

This is a lesson in the new tone of the Gulf after the jolt of the Middle East uprisings:



louder, more confrontational and pulling the region's Western-backed militaries out of their long-standing background roles and into complicated conflicts in Bahrain and Libya.

The immediate message is that the Mideast upheavals have thrust the Gulf Arab rulers into self-preservation mode. But nearly all their key decisions also are shaped by long-range concerns about Iranian influence.

Now, a growing confidence and unity on how to confront Iran may be among the main policy shifts within the Gulf states after years of letting Washington take the lead, experts say.

### [Gates to discuss Arab upheaval with Saudi king](#)

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Defense Secretary Robert Gates arrived in the Saudi capital Wednesday for talks with King Abdullah on coping with the political upheaval sweeping the Arab world, blunting Iranian efforts to exploit the unrest, and upgrading the kingdom's defenses against Iranian missiles.

### [Lebanon-Israel Tensions Rise over Offshore Oil and Gas](#)

For most countries, the existence of a massive fossil-fuel deposit within its sovereign territory would be gratefully welcomed as an economic windfall. But the delight in Israel at the recent giant gas discovery off its northern coastline is tempered by the knowledge that it could provide the spark to ignite the next war between the Jewish state and its mortal foe to the north, Lebanon's militant Shi'ite Hizballah.

The stakes are enormous. Both Lebanon and Israel currently have little or no oil or gas deposits, and are dependent on neighboring countries for importing fuel and power. Israel presently relies on Egypt for most of its gas, but the durability of that arrangement has been cast into doubt following the ouster of Hosni Mubarak's regime. The Egyptian pipeline supplying gas to Israel and Jordan was blown up in January and only began operating again last week.

### [NATO Blamed as Libyan Rebels Flee Assault By Qaddafi Forces](#)

Libyan rebels retreated under heavy fire from the central oil port of Brega, prompting their top commander to lash out at NATO for not doing enough to stop artillery attacks by Muammar Qaddafi's forces.

### [Libya imports gasoline as lengthy queues abound](#)

TRIPOLI (AFP) - The government of Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi has imported 19,000 tonnes of gasoline, a source close to the state oil company said on Wednesday, as the capital suffers from fuel shortages.

### [Libyan rebels to resume oil exports through tanker](#)

A tanker arrived in Libya's rebel-held port of Marsa el-Hariga on Tuesday to load up a shipment of oil for export, potentially giving opponents of Moammar Gadhafi crucial funding amid escalating violence.

The Equator tanker, which can carry 1 million barrels of oil, was chartered by Geneva-based oil trader Vitol SA, according to London-based shipping data provider Lloyd's Intelligence and a person with knowledge of the vessel's movements.

### [Russia Says Unrest In Middle East Is Threat To Its Oil Interests](#)

(RTTNews) - Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, who is touring the United States, has said that surging unrest in the Middle East, particularly in major oil exporting countries, is a threat to Russia's oil interests.

Talking to Russian reporters after meeting with high-ranking U.S. officials in Washington, Ivanov said "such conflicts, which result in instability and an inevitable sharp increase in energy prices, are not beneficial for Russia."

### [Why Overthrowing Gaddafi Is Overrated](#)

As Obama pointed out in his speech, deposing Gaddafi by force would involve a military commitment that Americans neither want nor can afford. And even if the U.S. were not already struggling to extricate itself from two land wars, a concerted military campaign to remove Gaddafi from power would be shortsighted and strategically foolish. Despite the claims of armchair generals in Washington, there's no evidence that stopping the large-scale slaughter of civilians — the stated reason for international intervention in Libya — requires Western-sponsored regime change. Nor is it obvious that the Libyan people would be better off in the long run. In fact, history suggests that employing U.S. military power to overthrow Gaddafi would do Libya more harm than good.

### [Crime wave grips Egypt, absence of police blamed](#)

A police state barely three months ago, Egypt has seen crime soar 200 percent since Hosni Mubarak's ouster from the presidency. Murder, violent theft and kidnapping are leading the surge, security officials said.

In many ways, this country of more than 80 million has become a free-for-all for criminals taking advantage of a weakened police force and political uncertainty. The spike in crime has made some nostalgic for Mubarak days, when the mostly corrupt and now discredited police force used torture, intimidation and blackmail to keep crime in check.

### [Gbagbo's home in Ivory Coast comes under attack](#)

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast – Heavy arms fire rang out Wednesday near the home of the country's strongman who remained holed up in a subterranean bunker, as forces backing his rival assaulted the residence to try to force him out, diplomats and witnesses said.

### [Oil Sands Lobbying without End, Vows American Petroleum Institute](#)

Cindy Schild enjoys living in Washington, D.C. It's got a small, "walkable" downtown, she says, and isn't "sprawling and vanilla" like many other American cities.

Schild does public relations for the American Petroleum Institute (API), considered the top oil and gas lobby group on Capitol Hill. Part of its job is to lead lobbying campaigns that keep the U.S. reliant on high-carbon Alberta crude.

Schild would love to see less gasoline being pumped into people's cars, but let's face it, she says, "We certainly don't have consumers that are willing to conserve."

### [Government eyes blowout preventer rules](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – The government is weighing whether more standards are needed for the emergency devices that failed to prevent last year's massive BP oil spill, after an investigation uncovered a possible design flaw, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said on Tuesday.

### [US to share BP oil spill lessons at international forum](#)

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The United States has invited energy officials from a dozen countries to a forum next week to share lessons learned from last year's devastating Gulf of Mexico oil spill, a US official said Tuesday.

"The idea of the containment forum is to share information that we have learned from our searing experience with the Macondo well," US Deputy Interior Secretary David Hayes told a news teleconference from Mexico.

### [Transportation Chief to Unveil Pipeline Safety Effort](#)

WASHINGTON – With so many pipeline accidents in the last few months that federal investigators cannot get to them all, the secretary of transportation plans to introduce a safety campaign on Monday aimed at coordinating federal, state and local oversight and making more information available to the public about potential hazards under foot.

### [Survivors of Calif explosion to address regulators](#)

SAN FRANCISCO – Survivors of a deadly gas pipeline explosion that ravaged a suburban neighborhood near San Francisco were preparing to testify before California regulators on Tuesday, as officials sought input on how to strengthen crucial safety rules for the industry.

### [Japan nuke firm offers 'condolence money'](#)

TOKYO — The operator of Japan's crippled nuclear power plant started paying "condolence money" Tuesday to victims of the worst nuclear crisis since Chernobyl as highly radioactive water continued to pour into the sea.

### [Japan stops radioactive water leak into ocean](#)

The utility that owns Japan's crippled nuclear reactor says that highly radioactive water has stopped leaking into the ocean.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. spokesman Naoki Tsunoda said today that TEPCO's attempt to stem the leak — by injecting 400 gallons of "water glass," or sodium silicate, and another agent near a seaside pit where the water was leaking — appeared to have been successful.

### [Fishing Halted in Japan's Ibaraki After Radioactive Water Contaminates Sea](#)

Fishermen in Ibaraki prefecture, Japan's fifth-largest seafood producer, halted operations after tainted fish were detected south of Fukushima, where radioactive water from a stricken nuclear plant contaminated the sea.

### [Worried about a radioactive ocean? A reality check](#)

NEW YORK – This week, workers at the stricken Japanese nuclear plant dumped radioactive water into the ocean to make room for storing even more highly contaminated water on the site. The water dumping came after earlier leaks of radioactive water that had already raised concerns about its effects in the ocean, raising questions about health and safety. Here are answers to some of those questions.

### [Crisis Saddles Village With Unwanted Notoriety](#)

Iitate, near the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, is struggling with questions about safety, evacuations and farming.

### [Should rural towns in Japan be rebuilt?](#)

Like many rural communities in the USA, Rikuzentakata and countless towns and villages along Japan's ravaged coastline were home to largely elderly populations, left behind by younger people who moved inland and to the south for better jobs than the fishing and agricultural work this area could offer.

Now, the question of how — or whether — to rebuild such rural communities hangs over reconstruction efforts.

### [U.S. Sees Array of New Threats at Japan's Nuclear Plant](#)

United States government engineers sent to help with the crisis in Japan are warning that the troubled nuclear plant there is facing a wide array of fresh threats that could persist indefinitely, and that in some cases are expected to increase as a result of the very measures being taken to keep the plant stable, according to a confidential assessment prepared by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

### [Nicole Foss Provides an Education on Nuclear Energy](#)

(Investorideas.com Mining stocks newswire) The following interview took place just after the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear tragedies occurred in Japan. I found my guest, Nichole Foss to be one of the best interviews I have conducted. She spoke coherently and more importantly she provided a very educated objective view on nuclear energy in terms of its risks and its necessity if humankind is going to avoid freezing to death. I expect to have her on my show again in the very near future to explore the connections between energy and the global economy as well as to discuss the horrible condition our financial markets are in. Here is the transcript of my discussion with Nicole Foss.

### [Germany falls back on coal](#)

Germany will extend the life of coal-fired power stations to replace supply from the nuclear plants that could be shut down in the wake of the Fukushima disaster in Japan.

### [Republicans Open Inquiry on Yucca Mountain Shutdown](#)

Republican leaders have begun a formal inquiry into the Obama administration's decision to halt development of a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

### [South African plan includes 9.6GW of nuclear 05 April 2011](#)

South Africa's cabinet have approved a 20-year Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) that calls for nuclear power to fuel a fifth of country's new electricity production by 2030. The document is currently going through promulgation or the process of being declared as a new law.

### [Hitachi president says to review nuclear target - Kyodo](#)

(Reuters) - Hitachi Ltd will review its target to secure 38 nuclear power generation projects over the next two decades, in light of Japan's protracted nuclear crisis, Kyodo news agency quoted the electronics firm's president Hiroaki Nakanishi as saying on Wednesday.

### [Toyota sells its millionth Prius hybrid in the U.S.](#)

Toyota accompanied every dessert at its greeny-green Sustainable Mobility Seminar last night in La Jolla, Calif., with its own sweet news: a press release announcing it has just sold its 1 millionth Prius hybrid in the U.S.

### [Our view: Greenlight high-speed rail in dense corridors](#)

Travelers in China, Japan, France and several other countries can hop onto sleek bullet trains and race between cities at 150 to 220 miles per hour, zipping past clogged highways and bypassing airport hassles. Picture that here. New York City to Washington, D.C., for example, now takes almost three hours, even on Amtrak's Acela. Imagine cutting that trip to, say, 90 minutes or less. Sweet.

### [Opposing view: Fast train to nowhere](#)

Experts agree that the most successful rail corridors in Europe and Japan are those linking major cities 100 miles to 400 miles apart. What many studies neglect to mention, however, is that those cities are highly concentrated, with major fractions of their jobs in a traditional "central business district," unlike the large majority of decentralized U.S. metro areas. So most people there do want to go downtown-to-downtown, whereas most Americans need to travel suburb-to-suburb.

### [All aboard the train](#)

You might have seen the bumper sticker *Without trucks Australia stops*: a sad but true comment on our addiction to oil. Few appreciate the role transport plays in creating the wealth that most take for granted. Adam Smith pointed out in *Wealth of Nations* that specialization of tasks leads to greater efficiencies and higher production. But to realise the wealth that increased production potentially brings, a product must be delivered to a consumer.



## [Peak Stuff?](#)

Riversimple's strategy is based on a belief that with peak oil you can't modernize cars incrementally -- you need transformative change. That change must deal with the reality that, although resource/oil-intensive vehicles may have a very low purchase price, we can't afford to operate them. But innovative solutions, if conventionally marketed, will cost too much to take over the market. And that is why a different ownership model is necessary. (Indeed, one of the major cost components of the lithium ion batteries being used by the Nissan Leaf is an overbuilding of the battery to meet the current 40,000-mile warranty of power trains -- when no one really knows how long these batteries will last.)

## [Will you commute via 'personal rapid transit?'](#)

(CNN) -- Imagine stepping onto a cold, windy platform at 2 in the morning and waiting just a few seconds for the transit car to show up.

Imagine getting in the car and zipping right by stations as you go directly to your destination.

Imagine always having a seat on the train.

Believe it or not, you're imagining a concept that's more than 50 years old, but still very rare in the real world.

## [Chaos in energy sector drives gains in clean energy](#)

NEW YORK — Funds that invest all their cash in companies tied to alternative energy, clean technology, the oil industry and other natural resources soared 13.7% in the first three months of the year, benefiting from turmoil in the oil-rich Middle East and the anti-nuclear sentiment after the accident in Japan.

## [Solar Costs May Already Rival Coal, Spurring Installation](#)

Solar panel installations may surge in the next two years as the cost of generating electricity from the sun rivals coal-fueled plants, industry executives and analysts said.

Large photovoltaic projects will cost \$1.45 a watt to build by 2020, half the current price, Bloomberg New Energy Finance estimated today. The London-based research company says solar is viable against fossil fuels on the electric grid in the most sunny regions such as the Middle East.

## [Solar power brings night-time soccer to Kenya slum](#)

NAIROBI (AFP) – It is eight in the evening and amateur teams of youngsters drawn from one of Nairobi's toughest slums are locked in a five-a-side soccer match.

Normally they would have gone home long before dark to avoid the unsafe night-time streets of Mathare. But that was before the stadium became the first in Kenya to get solar-powered floodlighting, an incentive to stay on.

### ['Saudi Arabia of Wind' Has Trouble Figuring Out How to Get the Power Out](#)

Often referred to as the "Saudi Arabia of wind," North Dakota has a big stake in the nation's wind power development. So do the farmers and landowners whose property the turbines go on. Some are getting easement payments that add up to \$10,000 a year, explained Chad Weckerly, a grain, wheat, corn and soybean farmer, and many of those payments increase 2 percent each year.

So far, though, backers of the proposed trans-Dakota line have been on a learning curve, running into a snarl of reasons showing that very little is easy about being green.

### [Global wind power grows 24 percent on China boost](#)

(Reuters) - Global wind power capacity grew 24 percent to 197 gigawatts in 2010, due to revised figures for new installed capacity in China, the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) said on Wednesday.

### [Let There Be Light Bulbs](#)

The great thing about this battle, which has spawned predictions of widespread light-bulb-hoarding, is that it will take your mind off Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and the pending government shut-down. It's a little like the Donald Trump presidential candidacy, only less irritating.

### [Energy and tech jobs: where job hiring is \(finally\) happening](#)

Postings for tech jobs were up 30 percent last month compared with a year ago, according to Craigslist. Job hiring already resulted in upbeat employment numbers last week.

### [China sees the evil of plastic bags](#)

For years, I've been going after Friedman hammer and tongs for his authoritarian fetish. But perhaps the most damning critique is that banning plastic bags isn't necessarily the optimal policy.

## [Energy Efficiency Has Yet to Learn the Drill in the Military](#)

Three years ago, the Army began coating its tents in Iraq with 3 inches of spray-on foam in an effort to slash energy needs and trap costly air conditioning inside.

The initiative was widely praised as a major success -- helping curb the number of fuel-toting convoys weaving through dangerous terrain and significantly tamping down energy bills -- to the tune of more than \$1 million a day, according to Army numbers.

But even as Defense Department officials herald the effort as a triumph and point to it as one of their chief success stories on curbing battle energy use, the Army has quietly stopped using the foam, citing a variety of reasons in a series of phone calls and emails with ClimateWire.

## [KKR Barbarians Go Green as Buyout Firms Profit Cutting Energy](#)

For much of 2006 and into 2007, Environmental Defense Fund had been battling to stop TXU Corp., Texas's largest power producer, from building 11 coal-fired plants. The barrage of lawsuits, town-hall meetings and online community groups was also becoming a major headache for KKR & Co., TPG Capital and Goldman Sachs Group Inc.'s private-equity arm, which were planning the world's biggest leveraged buyout of the utility company.

## [Welsh farms 'lead food security battle'](#)

Welsh family farms will play a pivotal role in maintaining food security as the world meets the challenges of global warming, rising sea levels and peak oil production, according to the Farmers Union of Wales.

## [Oklahoma sees driest 4 months since Dust Bowl](#)

Oklahoma was drier in the four months following Thanksgiving than it has been in any similar period since 1921. That's saying a lot in the state known for the 1930s Dust Bowl, when drought and high winds generated severe dust storms that stripped the land of its topsoil.

Neighboring states are in similar shape as the drought stretches from the Louisiana Gulf coast to Colorado, and conditions are getting worse, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The area in Texas covered by an extreme drought has tripled in the past month to 40 percent, and in Oklahoma it nearly doubled in one week to 16 percent, according to the monitor's March 29 update.

## [White House Promises Veto of Anti-E.P.A. Bill](#)

In case there was any doubt, the White House on Tuesday issued a formal statement opposing a bill now before the House that would bar the Environmental Protection Agency from regulating greenhouse gases for the purpose of combating climate change.

### [Krugman: The Truth, Still Inconvenient](#)

So the joke begins like this: An economist, a lawyer and a professor of marketing walk into a room. What's the punch line? They were three of the five "expert witnesses" Republicans called for last week's Congressional hearing on climate science.

But the joke actually ended up being on the Republicans, when one of the two actual scientists they invited to testify went off script.

### [China government academy urges carbon emissions peak by 2030](#)

BEIJING - China, the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter, should strive to reach a peak in emissions by 2030, a new government-sponsored study says, warning of the approaching limits to the nation's coal-powered economic ascent.

China's high and rapidly climbing output of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas pollutant from burning coal, oil and gas, has put it in the centre of negotiations for a new world pact to reduce the emissions that fuel global warming.

### [UN climate chief urges action on Kyoto Protocol](#)

BANGKOK (AFP) – The United Nations' climate chief warned Tuesday that the success of this year's global warming negotiations hinged on countries resolving deep differences over the future of the Kyoto Protocol.

Christiana Figueres said breakthroughs made at an annual UN summit in the Mexican resort of Cancun in December allowing other actions to combat climate change could be jeopardised by the stalemate over the protocol.

### [Arctic freshwater pool could change climate](#)

AMSTERDAM — Scientists are monitoring a massive pool of fresh water in the Arctic Ocean that could spill into the Atlantic and potentially alter the key ocean currents that give Western Europe its moderate climate.

The oceanographers said yesterday that the unusual accumulation has been caused by Siberian and Canadian rivers dumping more water into the Arctic and from melting sea ice. Both are consequences of global warming.



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